Instagram MARKETING MASTERY



HOW TO BUILD AN AUDIENCE AND MARKET YOUR BUSINESS ON INSTAGRAM – EVEN IF YOU'RE JUST A BEGINNER

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Table of Contents

Introduction **5**

Chapter 1. The Value of Instagram **9**

Knowing the Instagram Audience 9

Knowing Your Niche and Value Proposition 10

Chapter 2. Getting Set-Up and Creating a Plan **15**

How to Set Up a Profile 15

Switching to a Business Account 17

Request Authentication 18

Chapter 3. Gaining Traction for Your Channel **19**

Choosing What You Want to Be 21

Chapter 4. Growing Your Audience – Best Practices, Tips, and Tricks 23

Description 24

Mentions 25

Hashtags 26

Geotag 28

Tagging People 28

Medium and Presentation 29

Timing 30

Social 30

Chapter 5. Taking Beautiful Pictures (And Other Options) **31**

Taking and Editing Better Photos 31

Shooting Great Video 34

Smart Use of Filters 34

How to Succeed on Instagram Without Taking a Single Photo or Video 36

Use Stock Footage 36

Share Other Photos 37

Drawings 37

Chapter 6. Instagram Live, Stories, and More **38**

Stories 39

Instagram Live 40

IGTV 41

Promotions 42

Ads 42

Another Way to Promote 43

Chapter 7. Integrating Instagram With Your Larger Marketing Strategy 45

Chapter 8. Monetization **48**

Shopping on Instagram 48

Bio 49

Instagram Stories 50

Sponsors 50

Conclusion **52**

Introduction



At this point, it is now common knowledge that Instagram should not be thought of as an ancillary social media platform: that it is in fact one of the biggest and most important social networks for any internet marketer to consider.

Right now, Instagram has over 1 billion active users – which is an insane number when you consider there are only 7.53 people *on Earth*. That accounts for 60% of all adults using the internet, as well as 25 million businesses.

This is a gigantic audience then, and it's one that is constantly growing. Whereas Facebook (which owns Instagram) has been slowing down slightly in the past few years (not to mention facing numerous high-profile scandals), Instagram has been going from strength to strength.

One of the biggest reasons that many marketers overlook the importance of Instagram, is that they assume it is less flexible due to its purely visual nature. How can you sell something with just a picture?



In fact though, the opposite is true: Instagram's visual nature is what *makes* it so valuable. Due to this fact, Instagram allows creators to minimize the amount of work and time they put into projects.

It takes only a matter of minutes in some cases to snap a great photo – a few more if you're going to edit it – as opposed to the larger amount of time it takes to compose a message or think of something witty to say. You can easily take large batches of photographs and then upload them on a schedule, or even use stock images and just add some kind of inspiring quote on top.

The point is that the amount of time and effort you invest into your account is relatively low, considering the amount of value you will get *out of it*. It has a great ROI.

There are other unique advantages to choosing Instagram over another platform too that we will get into more in a moment. But suffice to say that choosing Instagram over other options will give you a platform that can build a HUGE amount of engagement and turn your followers into real *fans* who are willing to buy the items

you recommend, or just keep coming back to your site time and time again.

Instagram is a tool that will allow you to build brand awareness and brand loyalty in a manner that other channels just can't match.

Instagram should be considered an absolute focus for *any* marketing strategy then, but it becomes even *more* powerful when you combine it with a general marketing plan that incorporates other platforms and forms of media.

In short, Instagram could well be the missing piece of the puzzle for your online marketing strategy. If you have already conquered Facebook and Twitter, then Instagram may well be final frontier. Alternatively, many companies that have struggled to make a success of marketing on other platforms, may find that Instagram is the place where they have runaway success – and there are many factors that make this more likely.

In this book, you will learn how to do all of that and how to absolutely maximize the potential of Instagram as a marketing tool. You will learn:

- The unique advantages of choosing Instagram for your marketing
- How to set up an Instagram account
- How to create a business account
- How to create consistent, high quality content that will build loyal followers

- How to use tags, timing, and other strategies to accelerate your growth
- How to create a strong brand and mission statement for your account and your business
- How to utilize tools and advanced features
- How to take amazing photos
- How to run an Instagram account with *no* photography necessary!
- Monetization for your account
- How to use video, Instagram Live, stories and more
- Advertising for Instagram
- How to become an internet celebrity leveraging the power of Instagram
- And much more!

If you're looking for a way to gain more visitors, build more engagement, and increase your profits… then Instagram is the answer.

Chapter 1. The Value of Instagram



In this chapter, you will learn a little about what makes Instagram tick. Why are people drawn to Instagram? What are its unique selling points? By understanding this, you will better be able to thrive on the platform and reach the fullest potential for your audience.

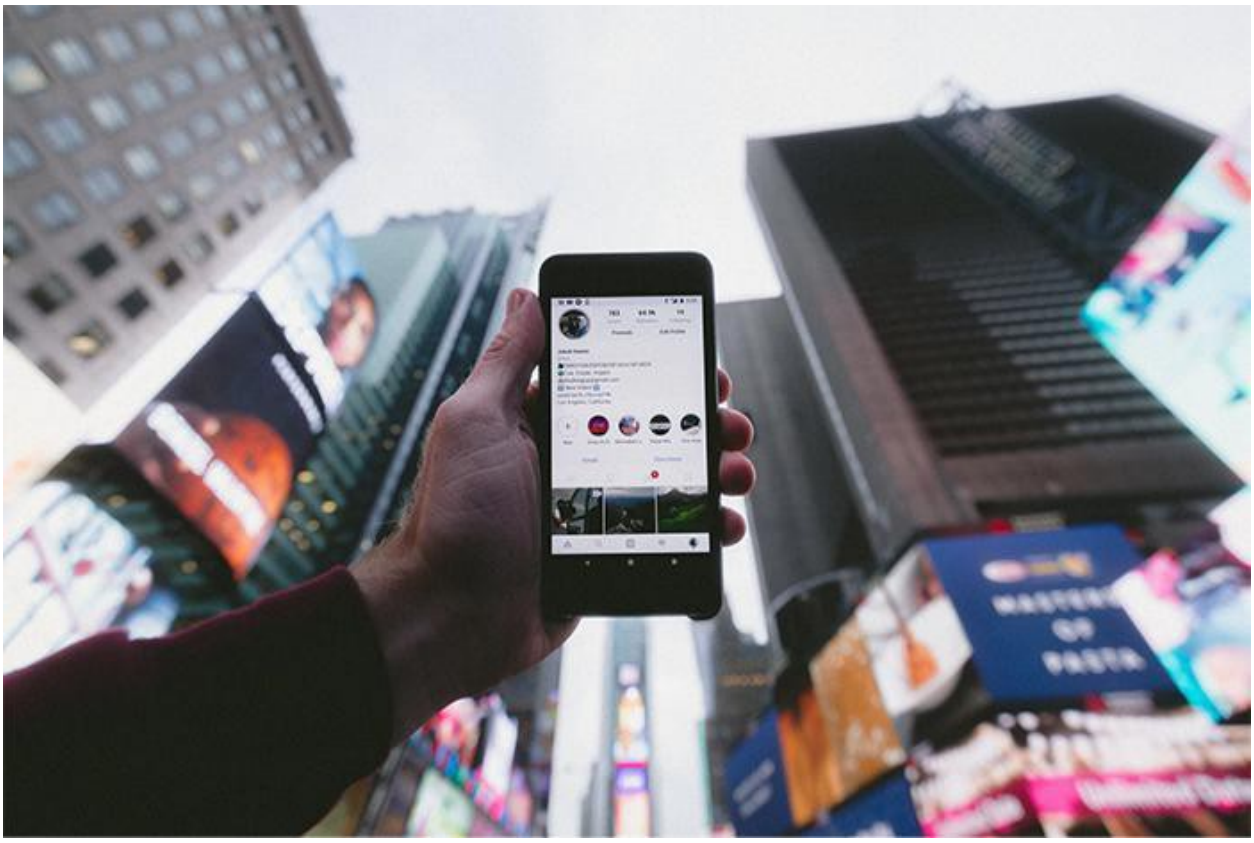
Knowing the Instagram Audience

While Instagram's visual nature is in some ways one of its biggest advantages, this also changes the game for creators. That's because it will force them to think in a different way, and to change their approach. It also affects who will be the most engaged by this type of content, and which types of products it will lend itself to most.

For example, did you know that 80% of Instagram's audience is based outside of the US? This makes it a fantastic choice for any business that is looking to increase its scope, or that commonly sells outside of the country.

At the same time, Instagram has an audience that is famously more female (39% vs 30% with the rest being undisclosed) and a little younger than many of the other platforms. It is thought of as being more 'trendy' than the likes of Facebook, which has become overrun by Mums and Grandmas at this point.

Knowing Your Niche and Value Proposition



It should come as no big surprise to learn the top niches on Instagram:

- Health and fitness
- Beauty
- Travel
- Business/Making money online
- Fashion
- Luxury/Lifestyle
- Animals
- Relationships
- Gaming
- Family/Parenting
- Food

These niches are all – with the possible exception of making money online – particularly visual in manner. They all lend themselves very well to photography, and eye-catching imagery.

But there is something else that all these concepts have in common, and that also helps to explain the popularity of the cultures we've seen emerge on the platform: they all have a very clear **value proposition**.

Or to put this another way, they all very clearly sell a *dream*.



While it's easy to point a finger at Instagram and blame it for a more shallow generation, obsessed with food, good looks, abs, and fake Rolexes, the truth is that this is simply a reflection of what most of us *want*.

And this is the crux of all business.

The saying goes that you don't sell hats, you sell warm heads. What that means, is that no one buys a product for its physical properties. You don't buy a computer for its weight in plastic and silicon.

But likewise, nor do you buy a computer for its processing power and performance. Not really.

The real reason you might spend so much on a computer – and the reason that Apple has enjoyed such phenomenal success – is that you are interested in what that computer can *do for you*. How it can affect your life.

A powerful computer is a status symbol that you can show off to friends. A great laptop is something you can feel cool about when you bring it to Starbucks (especially if you snap a shot and share it to Instagram).

Likewise, a computer lets you create art or be productive: hopefully leading to more money and more respect.

The most successful products understand this. They are marketed in a way that is *aspirational*. They promise their buyers that they will help them to feel more successful, wealthier, happier, sexier…

And this is what Instagram is so *perfectly* suited to doing. You can say with a picture what would take a thousand words. If you are trying to build an audience interested in fitness, then nothing is going to engage them and mobilize them as well as a picture of someone in the gym with incredible abs, looking focussed and determined.

This **inspires** people. It makes them think: “If I buy that t-shirt/supplement/training program, then I could look and feel like that too.”

People like looking at this stuff because it makes them feel excited for the future and encourages them to hit the gym. That’s

why they subscribe. And then they buy, because they are so motivated by the emotions that have been stirred up.

This is what we're going to try and accomplish with your Instagram account: getting people excited for the value you offer. Helping them to feel inspired, and ultimately motivated into making a purchase.

Identify your niche, and then ask how you can communicate your value proposition in a manner that will appeal to your target demographic within the larger audience of Instagram.

Chapter 2. Getting Set-Up and Creating a Plan

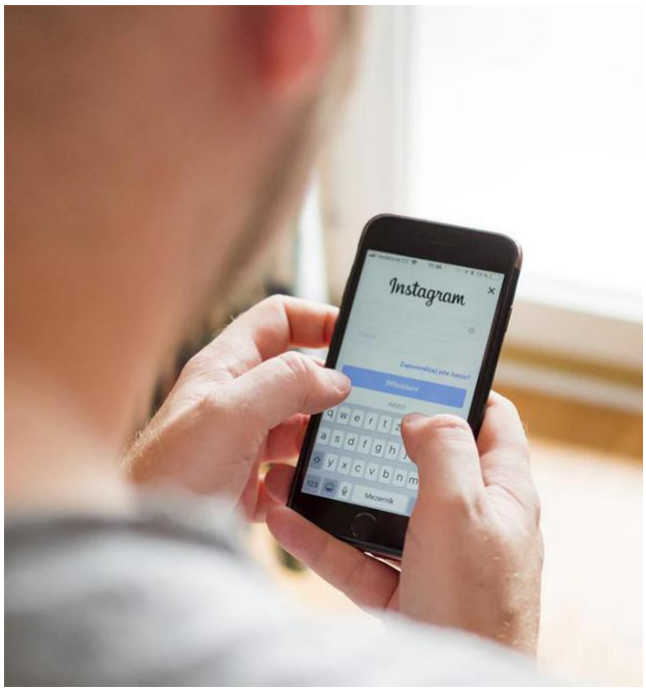


So that's the big picture, now let's focus in on the details. It's time to actually build your Instagram account.

How to Set Up a Profile

First things first: decide if you want a personal account or a business account. A personal account is useful if you plan on building a **personal brand**.

In other words, if you have a personal blog where you write about fitness and occasionally sell affiliate products, then you can go ahead and create a personal account to begin with.



In truth though, a business account will make the most sense in the vast number of cases – and even if you create a personal brand, you will likely wish to switch to a business account at some point down the line. That's because it will give you more access to more controls and features that will help you to grow your account.

That said, the only drawback is that you can change a personal account into a business account at any time, but not make the transition the other way. So if you are on the fence for any reason, then starting with a personal account might make more sense.

There's very little difference in terms of what the user sees between a business account and personal account, so for the remainder of this section the assumption will be that you're going with a business account.

Getting set up is extremely easy. Download the app on a phone or tablet (the iPad Instagram app is currently extremely lacking, as is the website). Sign up using a business email to avoid linking your Instagram with your personal Facebook account.

You will then be prompted to provide some details. Where it says 'Full Name', enter the name of your business. This is what will be

displayed on your profile – and isn't necessarily the same as your account name.

The username on the other hand is what other accounts might search for, and what they will use to tag you using @YourUsername.

For the sake of consistency, it's a very good idea to choose a username that matches your profile name, and ideally that also matches your branding across the web. The aim is to try and make sure your brand is **everywhere**. So someone can enjoy your content on Facebook under one name, then visit your Facebook page under the same name, and then see you on their Instagram feed under the *same name*. This looks more professional, it avoids confusion, and it helps more people to find your content when they are looking for it.

From here, you'll also be able to add your bio and your profile image. In both cases, the objective is to ensure that people know from a glance exactly what you're all about. You can include a link to your website here too, and it's a good idea to use a shortened URL from Goo.gl (https://goo.gl/) or from Bitly (https://bitly.com) so as not to use up too much of your 150 character limit. The profile picture should be representative of the kinds of images you'll be posting.

Switching to a Business Account

At any time, you can switch to a business account. To do so, hit the settings button in the top right of the UI while you are on your

own profile page (it is located in the hamburger menu). Now choose ‘Account’ and then ‘Switch to Business Account’. Here, you will be given the scoop on what this means for your profile. Basically, you’ll be able to get stats and metrics from your users, as well as using the promoted posts option. You’ll be given the opportunity to pick a category for your business (for many reading this, the answer will be ‘blogger’) and to choose your business name and number. You can also connect to a Facebook page.

Request Authentication

If you’ve ever seen a celebrity or a notable brand on Instagram, then you may have noticed a small blue icon next to their name. This denotes that the account has been ‘verified’, which essentially means that it is ‘really them’. This has several advantages, firstly allowing you to make your account seem more professional, and secondly giving it a little extra color to stand out in search.

This is very much worth applying for, as it will give you a number of additional tools you can use in your marketing. You’ll need a form of identification to do this, and of course some form of notoriety in order for Instagram to grant you the badge.

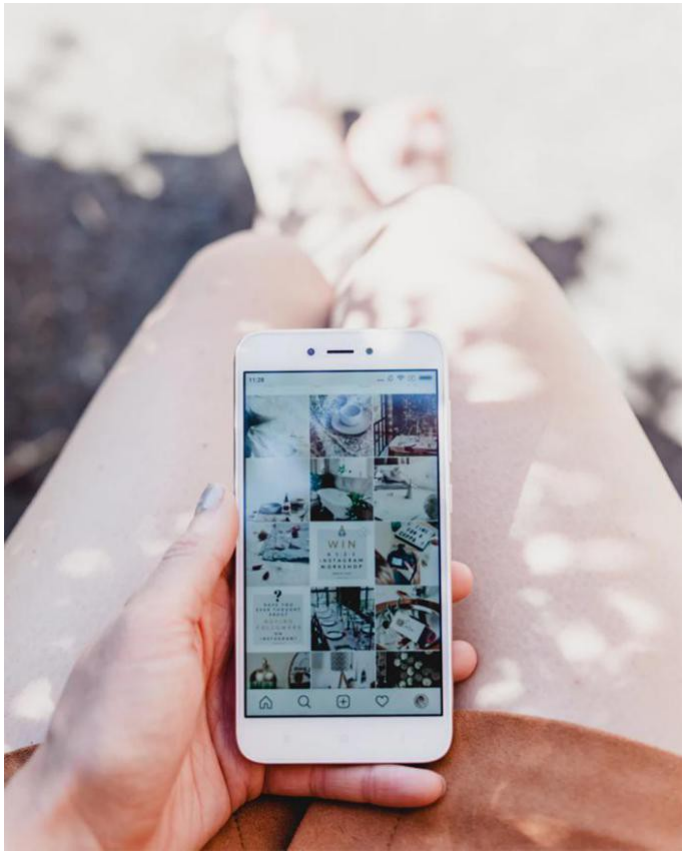
Chapter 3. Gaining Traction for Your Channel



Now you have an account, it's time to start growing it. You'll begin with your very first post, and from there the most important thing is consistency. If you go two weeks without posting a single thing to your Instagram, then any momentum you build up will get lost. You'll find that your posts don't show so highly, and that you lose the subscribers you had previously gained.

How often you post is going to depend on your goals, the nature of your content, and more. But the basic rule for this is to post *pretty frequently.* The ideal is one to three times daily, and the average for most businesses comes in at 1.5 times daily. You should consider the absolute *minimum* to be twice weekly, but you should definitely aim to go higher.

In short, posting more frequently means creating more opportunities for new followers to discover your page. Not only that, but it means that your *existing* followers will feel more engaged with your brand as they keep seeing it come up and keep getting reminded that you exist. Engagement is absolutely *critical* to success when it comes to internet marketing.



Something else to consider here, is that in one recent survey, it was found that the average user misses 70% of all posts uploaded. That means that if you post an image, then only a subset of your viewers will see it. Therefore, you'll need to post twice a day for the majority of your visitors to see at least one post.

Going much higher than three times daily though can start to negatively impact on your growth. That's because some of your images will inevitably be less successful and some of your visitors can end up feeling too bombarded by content.

Choosing What You Want to Be

That is not all we mean by consistency though. Just as important is being consistent in *what* you upload. What kinds of videos and images? What is the theme? How will you make them look?

Aim to have a consistent look AND a consistent tone.

One piece of advice that is shared fairly often, is to try and make your images look as consistent as possible on your page. That means that you should have a particular style that you stick with, and you should aim not to vary too greatly from that.

Take a look at the feed of a particular photographer that you like, or a fitness brand. What you'll notice is that all their pictures use a similar filter, that they are composed in a similar manner, and that they're on the same topic.

Sticking to just one topic is absolutely essential. This is why it's so important to have a business account that is separate from your personal account. If you don't, then people who follow you for your fitness pictures/motivational quotes/business advice, will quickly get fed up of seeing photos of you in the pub or photos of your dog. That will lead to people *unsubscribing*.

This is somewhat acceptable for a personal brand. If you have a very successful blog or YouTube channel and people are interested in you *personally*, then occasionally showing a little bit of your lifestyle and personality won't hurt. On the whole though, you should absolutely aim to post *predominantly* on the precise topic you have chosen.

Think about your target audience – the demographic you will ultimately be selling to. What are they interested in and what will they respond well to?

And think about what you are passionate about. There are lots of angles you can choose for most niches, so pick the one that speaks to you AND your audience. Then stick with it.

Chapter 4. Growing Your Audience – Best Practices, Tips, and Tricks



At this point, you should now have a business account that you are posting high quality pictures to on a consistent basis. Simply doing this will not guarantee success however, as at this point we still aren't really providing an audience with any way to find our page!

There are a few different tricks then that can help you to ensure that your Instagram account isn't just a great one, but one that grows organically. We'll talk more about promotions shortly, but for now these are some easy things that you can do regularly to ensure you see consistent growth.

Description

Instagram marketing is a form of content marketing. For those not in the know, that means that it's all about bringing more people to your page by providing them with value. Typically, we think of content marketing in relation to posting to a blog, but in fact it simply means providing *some kind of value* via content in order to encourage people to listen to you and to keep coming back. Usually, that content is going to be advice, entertainment, news etc.

In the case of Instagram marketing, things get a little different. That's because the main value you provide is particularly abstract: it's 'inspiration'. How can you quantify inspiration?

Keep in mind though, that this isn't the *only* form of value you can provide through Instagram. Just as important, is how you provide entertainment and information – which you will do via the description.

The word limit for Instagram is huge: up to 2,200 characters! That means you can get away with writing a short essay or story. The image in this case is the hook, and the text then provides information and entertainment, along with context for the image that provides even more value.

A great example of an account that does this is @LondonHistorian. As the name suggests, this is a British account that posts historical content about London. A follower or user might see a picture of London that catches their eye because they like history, architecture, England, London etc. But they will

then learn something by reading the description, which will make them feel as though they got something from the interaction.

Keep in mind too, that a lot of growth on Instagram is the result of word of mouth.

So provide tips, information, stories, and more and you will offer more value from your posts. You don't need to write an essay every time, but a hundred words is ample to get something of value across.

Oh and another tip: ask people to share, follow, and subscribe. It costs nothing and if it leads to a few more actions, then it's more than worth it!

Mentions

Also: consider mentioning businesses and users in your descriptions. You can do this as simply as using the @ symbol in your post and typing the name out. If you trained at a particular gym, then mention the Instagram account of that gym. If you went to a particular commercial location, then mention that business too. This will potentially lead to a re-post or a shout-out, either of which can be hugely beneficial! It also has the benefit of creating an association between you and that brand in the eyes of your followers and visitors.

Hashtags



So we're halfway through the book and we've just gotten to hashtags! That's because it's crucial to lay the groundwork, but as you can imagine – hashtags are also a HUGE part of what will lead to your success.

Hashtags are effectively search terms. By using a hashtag, you can help more people to find your content, and quickly define what your page is all about.

Hashtags help people find your images through search, but also by looking at the suggested images provided by Instagram. Instagram will base these on hashtags that are relevant to the user, as well as the feedback from other similar users.

Here is a quick primer on what you need to know about using hashtags:

- Use lots – You are allowed up to 30 hashtags and each one of those could bring in a new viewer searching for something. Think about it this way: each one of your tags is like entering into a lottery. Why would you only enter once if you could enter thirty times for free?
- Choose a balance – The best hashtag is one that is popular, but not overwhelmingly so. Post an image with the hashtag #babygirl and you'll be going up against 59,533,397 public posts! That means that your image isn't going to hang around in the search results long at all, and will soon be drowned by the volume of *new* posts. On the other hand, a hashtag with 10 public posts likely isn't getting searched much. Something with 30,000 or so searches will hit that sweet spot of being popular, but also specific. Note that you can see these numbers as soon as you start typing out the hashtags when posting your image or video. Instagram will suggest relevant terms and show you the volume of posts for each one.
- Use a range – As well as having a balanced popularity for your tags, you should also think about using a variety of tags. Including a few massively popular tags won't hurt and there's always the odd chance one will go crazy. But by including some smaller ones as well, you'll
- Be trendy – Think about trending topics (try Google trends at trends.google.com/trends) and also about the most trendy subjects within your niche. For example, fitness is popular all the time, but 'functional fitness' and 'mobility' are topics that are currently hot in this field. Likewise, food is always a hit,

but ‘avocado’ is winning. There are also common hashtags used within any niche that you can ‘borrow’ for your own purposes. Of course if you can use a trending hashtag that is linked to something that’s been in the news, or the cultural discourse, then even better!

- Be consistent – Consistent use of the same hashtags is a good strategy for communicating what your brand is about to Instagram’s algorithms.
- Don’t use them in your bio – This won’t make your bio searchable through those hashtags, so stick to using only your own branded hashtags here (if any).

Geotag

As well as using hashtags, you should also make sure to use geotags. These of course tag the location that the photo was taken, and that can help a lot of people to find them. To do this, just choose your photo and then on the ‘New Post’ page, click ‘Add Location’. If lots of people attend an event, then they might look to see other photos from that event and this creates another new in-road for you.

Tagging People

You can also tag people, and this is a great way to get their attention – and even to show up on high profile pages (your photo will appear in a separate category on the users’ page. This is ideal if you want to get the attention of a big channel or brand (along with their audience), but it can also be extremely annoying and get you into trouble if you abuse it.

The best advice then, is only to do this if you have a very good reason. If you actually *have* a photo with that person, then make sure you tag them in it. Meeting influencers face to face as gigantic value for any brand or marketer.

Likewise, if you want to issue a challenge, a response, or similar, then consider using the tag. But ONLY after you have considered the spirit that it will be taken in. And only rarely.

Medium and Presentation

You may think that Instagram is all about the pictures rather than the videos, but in fact video posts will receive 38% more engagement than images! So you know what you need to do: get your camera out and film!

Keep in mind that your videos will need to be short (up to one minute, though you can link multiple together) and that you should always choose a good thumbnail from the video that will help to communicate instantly what it's all about and get people excited to check it out.

Other specific formats also work really well. We'll get to memes and similar options later in this book, but one good example is Boomerang – which creates a short 'bouncing' video that lasts just a couple of seconds. You can download Boomerang from the Google Play Store or iOS App Store.

If you're going for arty, then you could consider using a pictogram – a still image with just one element moving.

For images, consider using a collage. You can make these using Instagram's own tool (Layout From Instagram) or a third party solution such as the excellent Pixlr.

Finally, keep in mind that when it comes to images, taller tends to work better. That's because the feed is vertical and by using a taller image, you actually take up a larger proportion of the screen and stay *on* the screen for longer. All else being equal, crop your photos to be tall and slim!

Timing

The time you post your images can have a surprisingly big impact on their success. Research shows that the most popular photographs go out between 10am-3pm during weekdays in their local region (why aren't people working?).

But if you're aiming at a global audience, then the most successful time is 6pm GMT+0 (11am PT). If you post twice a day, then aim to post during each of these times.

Social

Remember: Instagram is a *social* media account. That means that it is a form of communication, and it works best when you remember that. Follow accounts, like them, comment on pictures, and be *sure* to answer any messages or comments you receive.

Better yet, galvanize your audience into your own marketing team by running competitions, or getting them to use set hashtags!

Chapter 5. Taking Beautiful Pictures (And Other Options)



For all you can try and beat the system by approaching Instagram marketing in a smart and logical manner, at the end of the day there is simply no way to succeed without being able to create and share images and videos that people want to see. So how do you go about doing that?

Taking and Editing Better Photos

We've already talked at length about the importance of selling the value proposition with your content – of promoting the 'dream' that will mobilize your troops to buy and subscribe. So I won't go into that in depth here, other than to say that you should consider trying to tell a story with your photos. Don't just take a photo of a

scene or an object, show it just after it has been used, show it in action, or show it in a context that raises questions.

Think about the Mona Lisa. People like it because there's a story behind it: the smile. Try and get your audience engaging with your images through their thought processes and they will be more effective as a result.

Related to this concept is trying to create more dynamic compositions. Placing objects and subjects flat in the middle of a frame can look boring and flat. Instead, get them to look off into the distance at an angel, or use an upshot to make them look bigger and more dramatic. Think as well about creating depth: is there something of interest in the foreground, middle ground, and background? Where is the central focus point, and how does the rest of the image lead the eye there?

Are there other objects are helping to provide a sense of scale?

What is in the background, and what does it tell people about the scene?

All these things have an impact whether you are taking a photo of a pet dog, a computer, or an incredible vista from atop a mountain.

Lighting is extremely important too. The best lighting should ensure your subject is well lit, but also provide a little extra dynamism by creating shadows and highlights. For people, 'Rembrandt Lighting' means taking photos where light is coming from an angle from one side. This helps to create a more flattering profile.

Don’t shoot directly into the light, and don’t let your photos be over or under exposed.

This is where it can be useful to learn just a little about the basics of photography, and the exposure triangle. You don’t need to be an expert, but knowing your shutter speed from your aperture will help you to create dramatic bokeh effects (a wide aperture and shallow depth of field will let you focus on an item in the foreground with the background blurred out nicely), to capture things moving quickly without too much blur (using a faster shutter speed), and to avoid a picture looking too dark when you shrink the aperture for landscape photography (which means tweaking the ISO thus making the sensor more sensitive to light).

A camera’s ‘Auto Mode’ will do all this for you, but as you advance, learning these basics will help a great deal. As will experimenting with your camera.

Owning a good camera is of course a smart move. This doesn’t need to be extremely expensive, but if you *can* find a high quality DSLR, then that will serve you well. That said, the quality of phone cameras has increased these days to the point that you can take some incredible photos that are perfect for Instagram.

As you develop, you may wish to invest in other tools as well: such as RGB lighting sticks (which can create some amazing possibilities), a white balance card, light boxes, back drops (particularly for product shoots) etc.

Shooting Great Video

For the most part, all the same things apply when creating the best videos. Video cameras likewise have options like ISO, shutter speed, and aperture. At the same time, you'll need to keep your subject focussed in the shot as they move around, try to minimize shakes by using optical or digital stabilization, etc.

You should also consider whether you need your videos to be in 4K (which are more effort to work with and will only have a benefit for a small subset of your audience), 25-60fps etc. Sound and lighting also help to make your content more compelling.

Once more though, great video is more about the composition, the lighting, the story telling etc. Even more so than with photos, this is about what you film rather than how you film it. Editing will play a big role here though too…

Smart Use of Filters

Filters are one of the key features of Instagram that set it apart from other platforms and that helped it to grow in popularity in the first place. These are effects that can be applied to photos *or* videos and quickly make them appear more artistic.



The key to successfully using filters, is not to go overboard. If you tap one of the filters and then hit it again, you can then tone it down slightly by dragging to the left. This is generally advisable as it means the photo won't look artificial, but can still benefit from a little extra style and punch.

Keep in mind that it is commonly advised that profiles should aim to create content with a consistent look and that translates to over 60% of businesses using just a single filter consistently across all photos. This not only results in a more impactful profile page when viewed as a whole, but also ensures that followers know precisely what to expect.

How to Succeed on Instagram Without Taking a Single Photo or Video

At this point, some marketers might be feeling stressed.

If you are a good looking, trendy young person, who is in amazing shape and has a natural charisma, then you might consider yourself perfectly suited to creating fitness photos. You can take your high quality camera to the gym with you, grab some shots, and be done with it.

But what if you aren't so confident in your looks? What if you're not in good shape? Or if you aren't confident with your camera? In those cases, there are still ways you can generate content for your account. Here are some examples:

Use Stock Footage

Head to a site like Envato Elements (https://elements.envato.com) and you can download stock photos, video, and music – even Photoshop Plugins and Actions.

From here, you can then make the photos unique by applying an additional filter layer for example, or by adding text. A common setup is to post images of people standing in exotic locales and then add text on top that is inspiring or thought provoking. People *love* motivating content on Instagram!

Share Other Photos

Another option is to repost the content of others. This way, they get a free shout-out and more exposure, and you gain access to a free and steady supply of constant content! If you grow large enough, people will fight to get on your page, using your hashtags copiously!

Photos that you have acquired can be used to create an account as long as you ask permission or check the legality. This way, your account becomes a kind of aggregator of the best stuff within a certain niche.

Drawings

If you are an artist or designer, then you can share your designs on Instagram. There's also a thriving market for comics on Instagram – one of the last few places where a web comic can be successful in fact.

Chapter 6. Instagram Live, Stories, and More



We've discussed in depth the best ways to go about creating high quality images for your Instagram account. But Instagram has grown a lot since its inception to now include videos, live streaming, and stories. All these things provide new ways for you to interact with your audience and *can* help you to grow even faster.

We'll tackle each of these features in turn:

Stories



Instagram stories are posts that aren’t shown on the feed, but will appear at the top of the page next to a profile picture. Stories will then be shown for up to 15 seconds before moving on to the next one. They can’t be saved unless the user uses a screen capture, and they will only last 24 hours before they stop being available. Essentially, this was a response to the success of Snapchat at the time – but has gone on to become successful in its own right.

There are a number of unique advantages to using stories. For one, they allow you to reach a larger audience. Because they aren’t shown in the feed but at the top of the page, the engagement tends to be fairly high. Moreover, if you

Another advantage of an Instagram story is that it can include images and videos that are less presentable and might not belong on your main feed. This is the perfect spot to show some of your daily life, without ruining the theme and consistency of your feed. This nature also

If you haven't posted a story in a while and you post one, then your followers will receive a notification. This is another great feature, as it means you can re-engage with followers who haven't seen any of your content in a while.

Finally, Instagram Stories give you the option to add an action for swiping up – if you have over 10,000 followers, or if you have a verified Instagram account. That will then take the visitors to a link of your choosing. This of course has huge potential for directing traffic to a website, or directly monetizing your Instagram following.

To post to your Instagram Story, tap the camera in the upper left, tap 'Your Story' above the feed, or swipe right from anywhere to access the camera. You can also share a photo from another app and choose to share it to your Instagram Story rather than your feed.

You'll be able to write on the image, to apply filters and AR elements, and more.

Instagram Live

To use Instagram Live, you can access the camera as before but then choose the Live Setting and clicking 'Start Live Video'.

Anyone using the app at that moment who follows you will then receive a notification to watch, which makes this an excellent way to get eyeballs on your channel. They'll be able to comment on your video too, or react.

Live has a ton of unique benefits, allowing you to share exciting moments with your viewers and to engage in a whole different way. It's also a great way to show your personality and to let your audience feel as though they're gaining unique insight that they wouldn't get if they weren't following you on Instagram – they ultimately will feel as though they know you a little better. Through Q&As you can answer questions about your business or products and this is a brilliant way to build trust too.

Just make sure to use this relatively sparingly when you have something genuinely interesting to share.

IGTV

IGTV is another new option from Instagram that incorporates video. This essentially allows users to record video in a more long-form format, lasting 15 seconds to 10 minutes. Verified accounts can run much longer – up to hours in some cases.

The videos are all vertical in orientation and will be viewable using the Instagram app or IGTV app. While this is a relatively untested and young marketing tool, it has potential to grow – and the lack of competition there right now makes it a great way to gain a foothold early on.

Promotions

Promotions on Instagram are another form of advertising, and will allow you to reach a larger audience and convert that audience into sales.

Promotions will appear very similar to organic posts but are different in a couple of unique ways. For one, they will have the word ‘Sponsored’ beneath your username, which will tell people that the image is paid. They also can include a call to action button, which means you can direct your visitors straight to a checkout or sales page. Of course these posts will also be given some additional ‘oomph’ to help them reach a wider audience than a regular post.

To create a promoted post, you’ll need a business account. You can then click on ‘Create Promotion’ which will take you to a page where you can select one of your previous posts – one of these will ‘become’ your promoted post. Choose a post and click the right arrow at the top of the screen. You can now choose a target audience and pay for your ad to remain promoted for a set period of time. This is a very simple way to market to a wider audience in just a few taps.

Ads

While you can use the new promoted posts option to quickly get word out about your business, another option is to go through the Facebook ads manager (www.facebook.com/adsmanager). This

will let you create an ad that will target an extremely specific audience and with a number of controls.

Create an ad as you normally would on Facebook, and then just choose Instagram as the location for it to be shown.

As with many other forms of marketing on the web, Instagram ads are charged on a CPC (Cost Per Click) and CPM (Cost Per Impressions) basis. You can set your max spend per click and in total, and you will then be entered into a 'bidding war' with other advertisers any time an appropriate slot becomes free. You can choose an even more precise target audience for a Facebook ad this way and get a lot of useful data and information back.

This is a more drawn-out process, but it gives you more control – so whatever you decide, there are pros and cons.

It's also worth noting that Instagram ads typically cost a lot more than Facebook ads (as much as $3 per click!) *but* also have much higher engagement. And keep in mind that if no one clicks the ad, then you'll be gaining exposure for your brand and not paying a cent.

Another Way to Promote

While you can pay Instagram to promote your products and your page, another option is to pay other creators. Contact Instagram influencers and request them to post a sponsored image with a shout-out, or even an Instagram story. This can be an expensive strategy: reportedly the going rate for these kinds of posts is $1,000 for every 100,000 followers. That said, by choosing the

right influencer, you have the potential to not only reach a gigantic audience, but also to gain a large amount of good will. If someone hangs off of every word their favorite content creator says, and that creator then says how much they love your products or your brand, then this can be huge for your business.

Better yet, why not approach a smaller creator and agree to work together? Collaborate on a post or do an ‘ad swap’ (it’s like it sounds) and you can each get a boost to your audience for free!

Chapter 7. Integrating Instagram With Your Larger Marketing Strategy



The key to success when it comes to Instagram marketing and indeed any social media campaign, is integration. That means that you need to think about how all the difference facets of your business are going to work together. In turn, that means thinking about your blog or website, Facebook account, Twitter and more.

Because on its own, Instagram doesn't typically make much money. We'll see some ways it can in a moment, but for the most part, building an audience alone is not enough to run a business.

The true measure of success when it comes to your Instagram account, is how many people you can direct from there to your online store in order to sell to. This requires you to have a large enough audience, but also an engaged audience filled with

people who actually like your brand and want to buy your products.

Therefore, you will at least need a website and ideally a checkout in order to sell your products if you're going to capitalize on the traction you build via Instagram. You should make sure this uses a consistent branding with the same name and logo as your social accounts. This way, you'll also be able to engage with the same audience between channels and ensure that you are on their radar. The worst thing you can do is to be forgotten for months at a time. Remember: the aim with social media marketing is to *be everywhere*.

But at the same time, you can also use your website to promote your Instagram, thereby cross-pollinating the two. One great way to do this is by installing a widget on your website which will show your Instagram feed in the sidebar on every page. This way, people who enjoy reading your website regularly will be prompted to check out your Instagram and will be able to see precisely the kind of thing you post there.

Linking your social accounts is a good idea too. You can do this automatically with Facebook, seeing as Facebook actually owns Instagram. But you can also automatically post your Instagram posts to Twitter and other platforms using tools like IFTTT (If This Then That – ifttt.com). This allows you to create relationships so that posting with a certain hashtag for example will automatically post your Instagram images and text to other accounts.

Again, this cross-pollination means that anyone who adds you on *one* account is more likely to see you on others – and therefore

more likely to follow you in multiple places and increase their engagement over time. This also maximizes your output on each platform, while minimizing the amount of content you need to create.

You can even try sharing short snippets from YouTube videos on your Instagram if you have an account!

Chapter 8. Monetization



The last piece of the puzzle is to monetize Instagram directly. As mentioned in the last chapter, the true barometer of success on Instagram is profit. While that might sound a little cynical, this is the truest indicator of real engagement, reach, AND persuasion.

And after all, if you are investing time and money into your Instagram marketing, then it is only right that you get something back. Here's how.

Shopping on Instagram

Shopping on Instagram is a tool that will allow you to tag items in your post with a price that will then link *directly* to your store. If a user clicks on that tag, then they'll be taken to a listing page where they can learn more or follow another link to go ahead and

buy. This is a relatively new feature and it is game changing for Instagram marketers, as they no longer need to awkwardly direct buyers to their bio, or get them to copy and paste URLs into their address bar (the limitation being that there's no way to add a live link to an Instagram post).

The rub is that your business will need to be approved, and not all regions are viable (the US is good to go though!). To get started, you'll need an Instagram Business Account, you'll need to connect your Facebook Page with a Shop and Facebook Catalog. These can be created using the Facebook manager, or via Shopify or Big Commerce. Your Instagram account also needs to be primarily a business that sells goods in order to qualify – so lifestyle bloggers aren't quite catered to just yet.

Bio

For those not able to set up shopping yet – or who aren't selling physical goods – the other way to monetize your account or to direct your traffic is to place a link in your bio using a URL shortener as described in an earlier chapter.

Some creators will place links for their products in their bios and constantly update these. Each new post then promotes a specific item with the words 'Link in the Bio' in the text. Alternatively, this could link to an online catalogue, which means you don't need to constantly update your link.

Another option is to sell a service this way. This works extremely well for counsellors, coaches, personal trainers, website

designers and more. Show your ethos and your expertise in your posts and then let visitors follow the link in your description to get buying!

Instagram Stories

As mentioned, you can also use an Instagram story to link someone directly to a website, article, or product – as long as you have 10,000 subscribers or a verified account. This is another easy way to generate direct traffic for a product, though it does of course have its limitations.

Sponsors

Finally, you can also make money from Instagram by promoting sponsored goods. As mentioned, the going rate for this is $1,000 per 10,000 followers, meaning this has the potential to be extremely profitable.

For some, this *is* the business model. There's no need to create an additional website or to sell a product – the aim is to become a successful Instagram celebrity and then to make money by wearing nice clothes and getting paid to wear them. It's a dream for many, but it takes a long time and a lot of savvy marketing to accomplish – hopefully this book has given you all the tools you need.

For the rest of us, it's important to weigh up the pros and cons of sponsored posts. While this is a useful additional source of revenue, it also potentially means stabilizing your own sales with

competing services and products. What's more, is that it could harm the trust you've built in your audience if they think you have 'sold out'.

Conclusion



So there it is: everything you need to know to get started with Instagram marketing! There's so much to unpack here that in all likelihood, you'll probably need to do some more reading and experimenting before you find a set-up that works for you.

There are countless tools you can use to generate more clicks. There's lots more to unpack when it comes to ads and promoted posts…

But the most important thing is your value proposition and your brand. You need to be consistent with high quality images that speak to your audience and that make them feel something. Aspirational, inspirational, motivational, or moving content will speak for itself and if you can get your audience to feel something with each picture – they'll start to follow you.

It's about what your images *say* then, moreso than how they look. You don’t really need the best quality camera in the world, or even paid ads. You just need a message and a strong brand identity. Couple that with consistency and patience and the momentum will come with time.

From there, if you are consistently impressing with your imagery and inspiring those followers, it will be relatively simple to grow further, to convert your audience into paying customers, or to monetize your page directly.

And the best part? It’s actually a very rewarding and fun process! So get your camera out and ask: what inspires you?