Instagram is a mobile, desktop,   and Internet-based photo-sharing application that allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly, or privately to pre-approved followers.

After its launch in 2010, Instagram rapidly gained popularity, with one million registered users in two months, 10 million in a year, and ultimately 800 million as of September 2017. Its users have uploaded over 80 billion+ photos to the service as of October 2015. As of April 2017, Instagram Direct has 375 million active users, while, as of June 2017, the Instagram Stories functionality has over 250 million active users.

Instagram is used by most world celebrities that made it possible to display your content to them by tagging or hashtags

Instagram is great for growing brand awareness and introducing products. 70% of Instagram users have spent time looking up a brand on the platform. Instagram allows you to promote your brand and product in a friendly, authentic way without directly selling to your customers.

INSTAGRAM DATA

800 million+ monthly active users.

80 million+ photos and videos are shared on Instagram every day.

How to Create an Instagram Business Account

it's important to note that Instagram is meant to be the place to share visual content the moment it happens. To stay top of mind, you'll need to invest time in regularly posting photos and videos to the platform. If you fail to keep your profile up-to-date, you'll start to lose followers and your engagement

will drop. Be sure to follow along to learn the best tips for maintaining a successful profile.

- **Download the Instagram App**
  You need to download the app. Instagram does not have a desktop version that includes all the functions of the app. For example, you can view content on Instagram's website, but you can't upload it via your desktop. Instagram is available for free in both the Apple App Store and Google Play.

- **Create an Instagram Account**
  Once you've downloaded the app, it's time to create your account. When you open the app, you'll have two choices -- Log In With Facebook or Sign Up With Phone or Email. **Don't** be tempted by the Facebook login! Sign up with a business email to ensure your profile isn't linked with your personal Facebook account.
  Next, enter your details. Your Full Name is the name that will be displayed on your profile; it isn't your account username -- or handle. Enter your actual business name so your profile is recognizable to visitors.

- **Pick a Username**
  Your username is unique to your profile and allows other accounts to engage with your brand. Pick a username that is recognizable and easy to find. If your business name is taken, try to keep the first part of your business name in your username.
  Note: You can update your username later in your account settings, so don't worry if you want to change it in the future.

- **Choosing the Right Profile Photo**
  Now it's time to choose a profile picture. Your profile picture will be one of the first things people see when searching for and visiting your profile so keep your image consistent with your branding and visual markers. Consider using your logo or another familiar image. Notice that your profile image is circular. Instagram will

automatically crop your photo to fit inside the circle so leave room around the corners of your image.

- **Optimizing Your Instagram Bio**
  Your profile is coming together, but don't start posting yet! You need to optimize your Instagram bio. Instagram bios have a 150-character maximum so you'll need to be direct and concise. Tell your audience who you are and what you do using a hint of personality.

  You can also encourage users to take a specific action like using a certain hashtag or visiting your website. Your bio is the only place where you can feature a clickable URL and drive traffic to an external site. It's common for businesses to update their featured URL to align with their most recent post.
  Click on the "Edit Profile" button on your profile to make revisions to your profile photo, profile name, username, bio, or URL.

Managing Your Settings

There you'll be able to do things like change your password, check out posts you've liked, enable notifications, and much more.

Here are a few things you should check out right away:

Story Settings: You can manage who can see and reply to your Instagram Stories in your "Story Settings." We recommend allowing all your followers to see and reply to your Stories to increase brand engagement.

Switch to Business Profile: Last year, Instagram unveiled its new business tools feature. The tool allows users to identify themselves as a business, making it easy for their audience to contact them. Business profiles also provide more in-depth insights and make it easier for you to promote content.

Note: Your business must have a Facebook business page to switch to an Instagram business profile.

To switch to a business profile,

- On your profile, click on the gear icon in the upper right-hand corner to view your settings.
- Scroll down and click on "Switch to Business Profile."
- Log in with Facebook, and allow Instagram to manage your Pages.
- Select a Facebook Page to connect with your Instagram profile.

Note: You must be a Facebook page admin to connect the two platforms.

Instagram will automatically import relevant information from your Facebook page for you to edit.

You now have an Instagram business profile. Be sure to check out your profile insights and account settings!

Images

The most common type of post on Instagram is an image post. When creating image posts, it's important to post a variety of photos. Try to capture the culture of your brand with lifestyle shots and behind-the-scenes looks. Avoid posting too many photos of your product.

Instagram users are looking for genuine posts from brands, not always advertisements. Example

- ***Behind The Scenes Posts***

    These posts are designed to offer a glimpse into a part of your business or brand that people don't normally see. It's important that they do not look staged as authenticity is key. Aeronaut Brewing Company provided an inside look at its company culture by showcasing its employees at work.

- ***Repost From Employees***

  Sometimes you don't need to look any further for great content than your own employees. Reposting great photos from your employees is an easy way to curate authentic content and help humanize your business. Not only will your audience engage with your brand, they'll start to "bond" with your employees. For example, Fenway Park often reposts images from its grounds crew preparing the stadium for a game. Just be sure to tag or credit the individual who posted the media first.

- ***Influencer Posts***

  Influencer posts piggyback on the fame of a celebrity or well-known public figure to draw attention to your brand. These posts often include a visual of the influencer using or interacting with your product. One of the benefits of influencer posts is that you gain the attention of another audience.

- ***Motivational Posts***

  A motivational post usually combines a simple visual with some kind of uplifting text or quote overlaid on top. They can be a great way to encourage your audience and amplify your brand values.

Instagram Photo Size

Unlike other social media platforms, Instagram's simple profile layout forces you to focus on the content. As a result, it's important to use high resolution images on your Instagram feed. For the most part, images should be 1080 px X 1080 px -- a square.

Adding Filters and Editing Photos
Why do some photos just look so good? Chances are it has a lot to do with the edit. Editing photos only takes a few minutes and can have a huge impact on the quality of your photos. Thanks to Instagram's built-in tools and filters, editing photos is simple. Be sure to follow these tips to make your homemade

lunch look like a culinary masterpiece. Fortunately, you can also start editing like a pro in a few simple steps.

First, start with a great photo. No amount of editing can fix photos if they have poor composition or lighting. Next, try editing in apps other than Instagram. Snapseed is a great free editing app that allows you to apply effects like HDR and tonal contrast as well as pinpoint specific areas of a photo to adjust brightness, contrast, and saturation. VSCO is also a popular editing app with numerous free filters designed to emulate popular film stocks.

When you upload your edited photo to Instagram, the platform will automatically crop your photo to a square. To change it back to the original width, press the "Expand" icon (the two outward facing arrows).

Videos

In addition to photos, Instagram also lets you upload videos up to 60 seconds in length. You can download videos from your computer that were edited using professional editing software or edit together videos yourself using mobile apps.

Instagram Stories

Instagram Stories allow users to post at a higher frequency without overposting and clogging up your main feed. Stories are great for behind-the-scenes content and usually feature less polished images and videos. Like Snapchat Stories, your Instagram Story disappears after 24 hours.

Instagram Live

Instagram also has a live video option to share content with your audience in real time. To start a live video stream, open up the camera within the app, select the "Live" option from the menu at the bottom of your screen, and click the button to "Start Live Video." Once you start the live video, any of your followers who are currently on the app will receive a notification so they can watch. Live viewers can also comment on the live video using the built-in chat feature.

How to Create an Instagram Marketing Strategy

Many businesses feel pressured to be on every social media platform without thinking through their strategy. Since Instagram is very different from other popular social sites, it requires a different marketing strategy.

Determine Your Instagram Audience

Just like on any other platform, it's important to determine the audience you want to reach before you begin marketing on Instagram. If you already have other marketing strategies in place, you can draw from those to help. Some helpful factors to consider when narrowing down your target Instagram audience are age, location, gender, income, interests, motivations, and pain points.

Don't know where to start? Monitor popular event and interest hashtags that are related to your business. Find out who's using and engaging with the hashtags and check out their profiles. You can also take a look at your competitor's followers. Sometimes determining your audience is easier than you think.

Competitive Analysis for Instagram

After you determine your Instagram audience, do a competitive analysis to see what other marketers in your field are posting. If you already know your top competitors, start with searching for their Instagram profiles. If not, try searching for terms related to your business or industry to find similar accounts. Conduct a quick audit of related accounts to see what types of posts are getting the highest amount of engagement, what popular hashtags they are using, what kinds of captions they are writing, how often they are publishing, and how quickly they are growing.

How to Convert Instagram Followers Into Customers

Once you establish a dedicated follower base you can start to convert those followers into paying customers.

There are several ways to do this including:

- **Promotions:** Deals, discounts, and other promotional offerings are a great way to drive first-time sales with your Instagram audience. Be sure to mention exactly what is needed to receive the promotional offer and include when the offer expires to create a sense of urgency.

- **Launch a Product Live:** For certain launches, it may even make sense to showcase a new product or service using Instagram Live. You can quickly drive users to purchase by including a purchase link in your bio.

How to come up with Post ideas
- 1. Brainstorm with your team/staff
- 2. Look at your competitors
- 3. What type of questions/comments do you normally get?
- 4. Look at your target audience's accounts
- 5. Search on Instagram
- Ideas post examples include how it's made, Before and after, Testimonial etc.

How Name/Headline can help?

- 1. Use Strong Keywords
- 2. It says "What is your account about"
- 3. What would people search to find you
- 4. What do you offer on Instagram?
-      Fashion, Designer, Artist
- 5. shows up in search (with the username)
-

How to Get More Followers on Instagram

You've created all the right content and used all the right hashtags -- now you're probably wondering how to get more followers on Instagram. Whether you're an established business with thousands of followers or you're just starting out, growing your following takes serious time and energy. You may be tempted to take the easy way out and buy followers -- **don't** do this. Purchasing followers won't get you any future engagement, which is exactly what you need to make sure your posts are seen in a user's feed. Luckily, there are a few things you can focus on to start gaining more followers the right way.

Let's get started!

1. **make sure your username is recognizable and searchable**. If people can't find you, they can't follow you! Next, fill out your bio. It's the last thing someone sees before they make the decision to follow you so be sure to include who you are and what you do.
Once your profile is optimized, start posting! It's a good idea to get a solid number of posts up (15 or so) before you really start engaging people and working hard to get followers. If users visit your profile and find it empty, they likely won't follow. Since you'll only have a few posts up, be sure they're all high quality.

2. **Remember to appreciate your followers by responding to their comments and engaging with their content.**

Next, encourage others to share your content. Invite brand ambassadors to share your account or collaborate with similar accounts. For example, a local store could partner with a well-known stylist to highlight the season's latest styles.

3. **Include an Instagram social share button on your website** or encourage your followers on another platform to follow you on Instagram. Sometimes the fastest way to gain more followers is to simply ask for them!

Common Instagram Mistakes To Avoid

1. Don't delete comment
2. Engaging outside your niche
3. Don't skip days of posting