

How to use INSTAGRAM for Business



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What is Instagram?

Instagram was first known as an online photo-sharing application in 2010 and it was only in 2012 that it connected with the Facebook platform, acquiring 200 million active users. With its growing popularity, businesses of all types and sizes have been lured to this application and started adding the Instagram app as part of their marketing strategy.

In today's digital age, Instagram has become a recognized leading visual platform if you are talking about effective sharing of photos



and videos. The Instagram's system uses hash tags, giving all its users the chance to connect with any topic or content that may interest them.

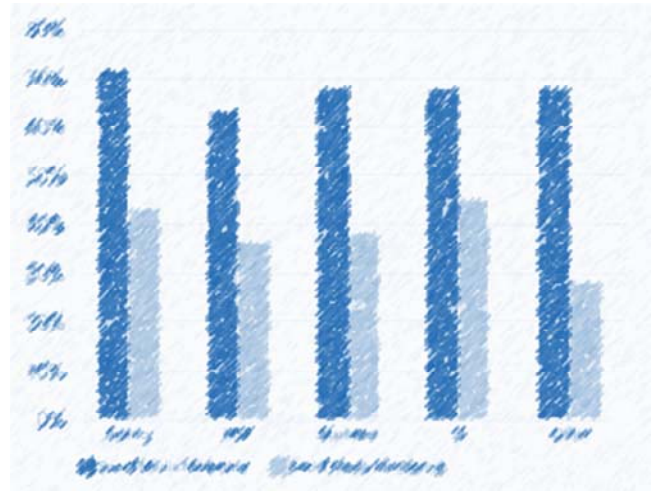
Instagram is also widely favoured due to its feed speed feature, wherein it allows any post to reach the peak of its coverage and ensuring it stay longer in the feed than with other social networking sites.

In fact, recent surveys have shown that marketers who took a shift in their marketing approach and started using Instagram have

performed better in terms of higher return of investment as compared to those marketers who are only using Facebook. This book is not intended for use as a source of legal, business, accounting or financial advice. All readers are advised to seek services of competent professionals in legal, business, accounting, and finance field.

WHO IS USING INSTAGRAM?

Seeing the marketing potential of Instagram, a lot of online users particularly business owners are taking greater advantage of this application. According to sources gathered, Facebook remains the leading platform having acquired around 65–70% of the population of online users regardless of their age or income bracket, while Instagram on the other hand is favoured by adults accumulating a range of 12–15%. Out of the registered members of Instagram, most of them are from the 18–29 age group and approximately 37% of online adults would fairly say they have Instagram accounts where 50% have confirmed that they visit the site on a daily basis. Lastly, another fact that we may find amusing is that nearly 70% of the users of Instagram are women in general.



THE BENEFITS OF INSTAGRAM FOR BUSINESS

With the growing population of Instagram users, businesses have found another powerful venue to market their products or services, increase their connections or build a brand awareness campaign program. Whatever personal motives that entrepreneurs and marketers have for themselves, Instagram has indeed established its roots in the social media community and proven to be essential as it plays its integral part in any internet marketing plan.

Instagram uses the visual approach and this is regarded very influential because any business owner can actually share and post interesting picture or videos on what goes behind their businesses, giving their followers and potential customers the chance to view a different aspect of their company like a product launch in the making or connecting personally with their targeted audience through a video.

If you want to level up your business' overall image or brand name and improve your current marketing strategy, creating an Instagram account



could be the best move you can do for now. Then, with a combination of hard work, dedication and appropriate marketing tools, plus Instagram on your side you can see a brighter future for your business.

WHO IS DOING INSTAGRAM RIGHT?

Among the famous celebrities, nation leaders and big company brands that use Instagram are Justin Bieber with an estimated 12 Million Instagram followers, US President Barack Obama has acquired a good number of loyal followers on his photo stream amounting to 2.65 Million.

Why are they using Instagram? Just like the basic marketing principle of promoting, they resort to this social media platform not only to increase their number of followers, but at the same time use this channel as a way to build a stronger image in the market or audience they wish to become famous. Same theory applies to any business, whether you are just starting a new business or have been in the industry for decades, Instagram when done right could help you realize your dreams or goals, both on the marketing and personal growth aspects.



Do you want to know how major retail brands are making enormous success at Instagram? The answer lies within their unique marketing plan and how they do it via Instagram like holding contents or announcing upcoming promotions that will motivate brand loyalty and increase number of followers.

We can learn from these big names like Starbucks who is famous on Instagram. They all have one thing in common—they are open for creativity and willing to incorporate these ideas in their Instagram accounts, either through the sharing or posting of inspiring stories, photos and videos that in the end will attract more followers to actively participate or initiate a conversation.



BEST 5 TIPS FOR YOUR INSTAGRAM STRATEGY

If you have decided to undertake this online marketing approach through the use of Instagram, better take these 5 tips seriously. You may not have that enormous followers like the famous celebrities who have Instagram accounts, but I guarantee with the implementation of these tips you are on your way to reaching your targeted goal and that is gaining a good number of followers who are really interested on what you have to say or offer them.



1. Create an impressive Instagram Profile

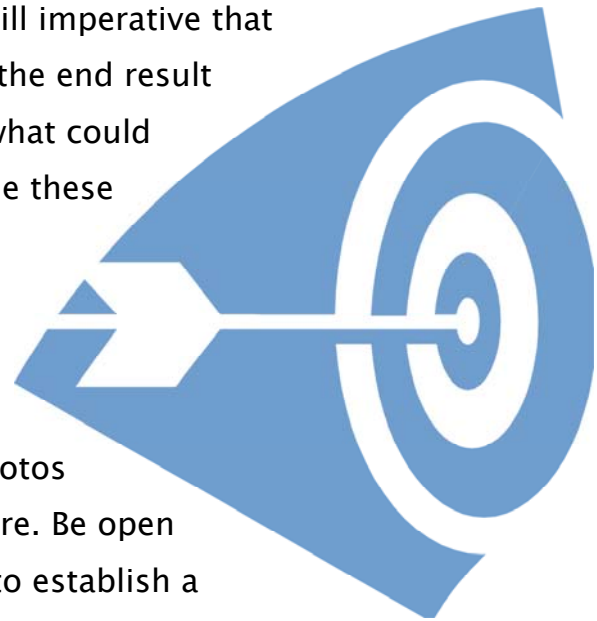
If you already have other social media accounts like Facebook or Twitter, creating an impressive profile on Instagram would not be difficult. Be sure you provide a complete, relevant and updated profile. Don't forget to use appropriate keywords, so that your targeted followers can easily locate you when they perform online searches. Lastly, connect your Instagram account with your other social media accounts for wider coverage.

2. Draft a strategic plan

Be sure to draft a strategic plan of what type of posts or images your target audience will most likely want to see on your Instagram account. Although, posting or sharing a post, photo or video at Instagram should come out naturally, it is still imperative that whatever you wish to share to the audience the end result will always act in favour of you. Determine what could be appealing to your target followers and use these ideas as you organize and plan your posts.

3. Focus on your Posting

Now, let's proceed to the actual posting via Instagram. Choose captivating images or photos that will keep your followers wanting for more. Be open to try new things. For example, if you want to establish a credible image, find a relevant picture that will best represent your business or personality. Any image that you wish to share on Instagram is ideal for any of your motives or purposes, whether you wish to promote a certain lifestyle, give the best feature of a product or use it to crowd source. One important reminder when posting at Instagram, the feed speed here is a bit slower if you will



compare it with Facebook and Twitter, so it would be advisable not to post frequently to allow your followers to get a good read of what you have to share. As for the photos, if you captured them personally you can freely share and post them, but if they belong to someone's photo gallery or collection, always give credit to the owner.

4. Increase your follower's engagement

Do you want to see more positive feedback, results or satisfying engagement from your followers? You need to generate your follower list first and spice up your follower's interest by:

- *Holding contests*
- *Offering them exclusive Instagram benefits*

How can you do these offers effectively? You can embed images from followers, either on a website or blog, or you can connect your Instagram contests via your Facebook fan page. Remember, any social media community requires a two-way process, so better get hold of many channels as you can to establish your presence. You can like other member's images or follow someone who has a good number of followers because you have bigger chances of

having a fair share of his/her loyal followers who might be interested with you or your offers.

5. Track your results

To measure your Instagram results or engagement, use online tools or tracking application like iconosquare.com. This application will provide you snapshots of your

Instagram account's statistics, account management and can even assist you with your overall performance, so that you can evaluate if all your goals are met effectively or not.

WHAT TO AVOID WHEN USING INSTAGRAM?

Are you already using Instagram? If not, then, this section of this eBook will surely provide enlightenment before you even start making your Instagram profile. Remember, whatever purpose you have in mind for using this social media platform, the bottom line is to get to know it personally, so that in the end you can really use it as an effective marketing tool for your business or personal growth. Here are a few common mistakes that you need to avoid when using Instagram.

- **Overload the feed**

No matter how excited you are in wanting to share every milestone event happening to your life or business don't overload the feed or you end up spamming. This is a big "NO" at Instagram, not to overload your photos and eventually over flood other people's feed. Keep your posts at least to 2-3 photos a day, so that your followers will remain interested on what you have to share and look forward to your next post.

- **Abuse the use of hash tags**

Again, another important reminder that you must not forget when using Instagram is the use of hash tags. Don't put non-related hash tags to your photos. Be sure the hash tags you used on your pictures are relevant and appropriate to the photo itself. Just imagine someone who is conducting search and only to find in frustration irrelevant or wrong images because you didn't use the relevant hash tags. The use of three to five hash tags is already acceptable.



- **Ignore your followers**

If you want to maintain a good number of loyal followers, be ready to reciprocate by following those individuals who follow you. Why? This is an effective way to build a closer relationship between you and your followers. Although, you can't expect everyone to follow you back like the big companies or famous brands, it is still a strategic effort to get to use to this routine of following others, especially those industries, groups or businesses who might later be useful for your niche.

- **Not utilizing your video properly**

If you are a newbie user of Instagram, this might be your first time to hear that Instagram's another special feature is the video upload. In fact, you can upload a short video lasting up to 15 seconds on your Instagram account. This is the main reason why more and more business owners favour Instagram because they could get higher turnout of interested individuals through their uploaded videos. If you want to make your brand or business name make a sure hit in the online community, upload an interesting video via Instagram, but keep in mind to utilize your videos properly. Remember, a well-crafted video will surely catch more audience and increase your followers.

I do hope the above mistakes will serve their main purpose on your part and that is to be aware of your actions, regardless whatever social media platform you are using. If you haven't tried Instagram, this could be a perfect timing to get started and use it for your business. Instagram could be your marketing tool to acquire more sales, connections or build relationships, so be ready to arm yourself with enough ideas and creativity as you maintain a daily posting of your photos, posts or videos.

Lastly, don't put all your marketing efforts on this venue because what may work to someone else business, may not pose the same favourable results. Always be ready to face any challenges, because through them you become a better entrepreneur and marketer online.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE ON HOW TO START YOUR MARKETING VIA INSTAGRAM

On this section we will cover the vital steps needed to make your Instagram work alongside your marketing goals. Are you ready now to explore? But, before we start on the basics, I just need to confirm one important element if you will use Instagram, do you have a smartphone? Why? The Instagram application is only downloadable on iPhones and other Android devices, so be sure you already have one. Now, let's get to the main steps.

Step 1 – Download the Instagram App

As I've mentioned earlier, Instagram only works on mobile devices by downloading it. Your PC can't be used for this motive. Where to go next? Just visit the App Store or Google Play and simply download the Instagram application. This is a free download, so no need to worry about fees or getting charged.

Step 2 – Register Your Account

Now, once your Instagram is up and running on your mobile device, your next concern is register for an account assuming this is your first time to use Instagram, you need to register. Go to the register option and fill the required details like username and your password. Take note while typing your desired username. If the icon turns green, it means you can proceed with this username. But if it turns red, this means somebody is using that username and you must choose again another username.

Step 3 – Click the “Photo” box

The moment you have successfully register, go to the portion “Photo” box and click it to upload your photo. You can always import a photo from your existing Facebook account or use a new picture instead. Personally, I do suggest that you use the same photo you



are using on your other social networking sites, so that your followers can easily find and recognize you instantly. Being consistent with your photo will show your followers that you are a genuine person.

Step 4 – Complete your Profile Information

Don't forget to fill in the necessary details on your Profile. Be sure to input correctly your complete information like name, email address and phone number (your phone contact is only optional). You can fill all these details manually or if you want to choose the auto-fill, it will automatically import all your information from your Facebook Profile. In case you wish to use your Instagram account for business purposes only, better fill the required information manually because if you choose the auto-fill option, the details that will be taken from your Facebook account would be your personal information and this might lead to confusion on the part of your targeted audience if they know you by your business name.

Step 5 – Connect with Friends

I'm sure by this time you already tried signing using your username and password. If you have successfully managed to log-in without any hassle, get moving and navigate your Instagram application. Connect with your friends. Don't forget to link your Instagram account with your other social networking sites accounts like Facebook or Twitter and start following the people you know personally. How to do this action? Simply, click the bottom left icon on your screen and select 'Find friends'. After that, choose friends that are already at your Facebook or Twitter accounts.

Step 6 – Start taking Photos

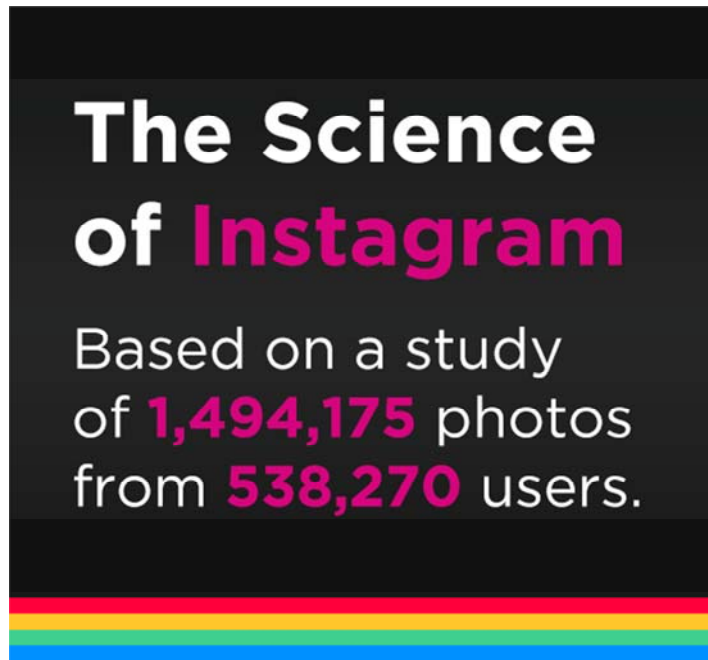
This is the most exciting and fun part of Instagram, the chance to be creative when taking your photos. Go to the blue camera icon found in the centre of the bottom row of icons and do your first snapshot. If you want to produce cool, interesting and artistic pictures be sure to apply filters, either before taking a photo or after. Try to experiment and use different filters. Select the green check mark after you have decided which filter to use.

Step 7 – Share your photos on various Social Media Sites

Last step after taking those nice photos, it's time to share them to the public. Always caption or label your pictures properly before sharing them and use relevant hash tags for better chances of being searched appropriately by your followers.

I do hope you have learned new things from these guidelines. Start taking pictures and maximize the marketing benefits of your Instagram account for your business growth and success. Keep in mind Instagram has a lot of marketing potentials and this is a perfect opportunity to discover what's really in store for you with this awesome platform.





How to Get More Likes and Followers on Instagram (according to Science)

by Aaron Lee

Is there a science to getting more Likes on Instagram?

According to Dan Zarrella there is!

(Dan is a social media scientist at HubSpot)

He analysed 1.5 million photos from half a million Instagram users to determine why some images were more popular than others.

The results might just blow your mind. :)

Here's what he discovered about how to get more Likes and followers on Instagram.

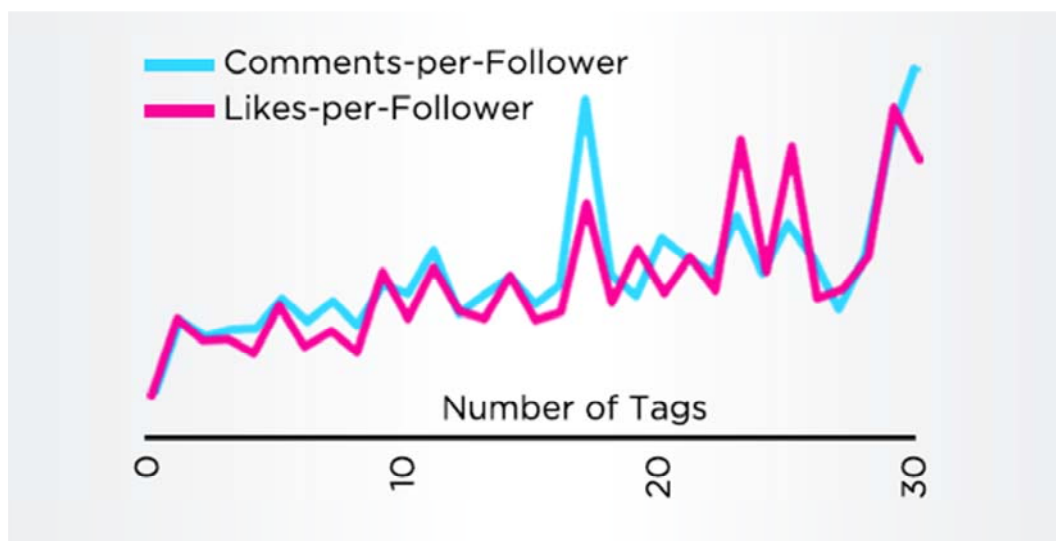
Scroll down to see the amazing result...

1. Use Hashtags

Dan found strong correlation between the level of engagement & the number of hashtags used on Instagram images.

The more hashtags... the more engagement!

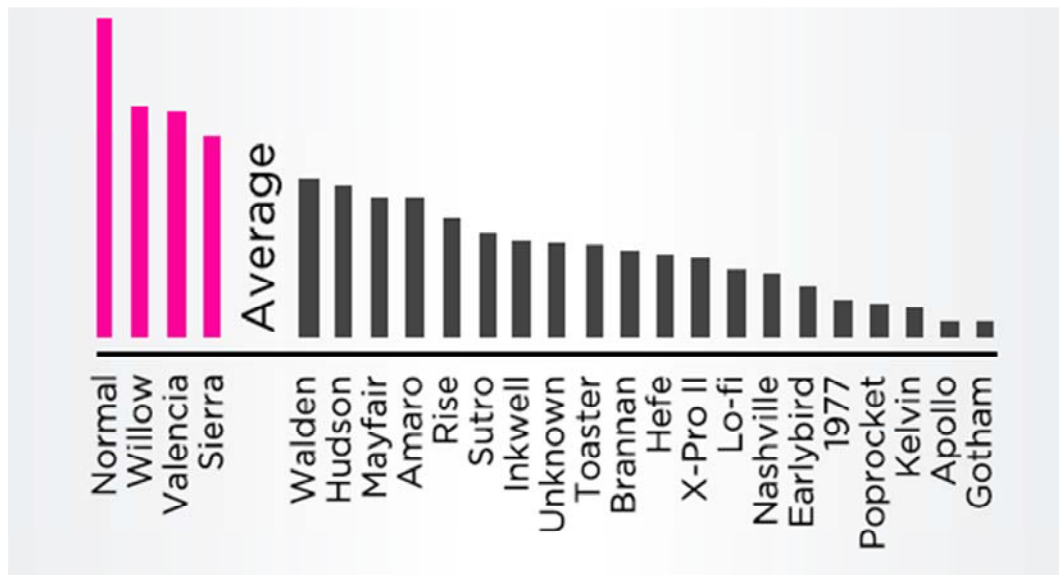
Since Instagram allows for up to 30 hashtags per image, why not use them all?



2. Don't Use Filters

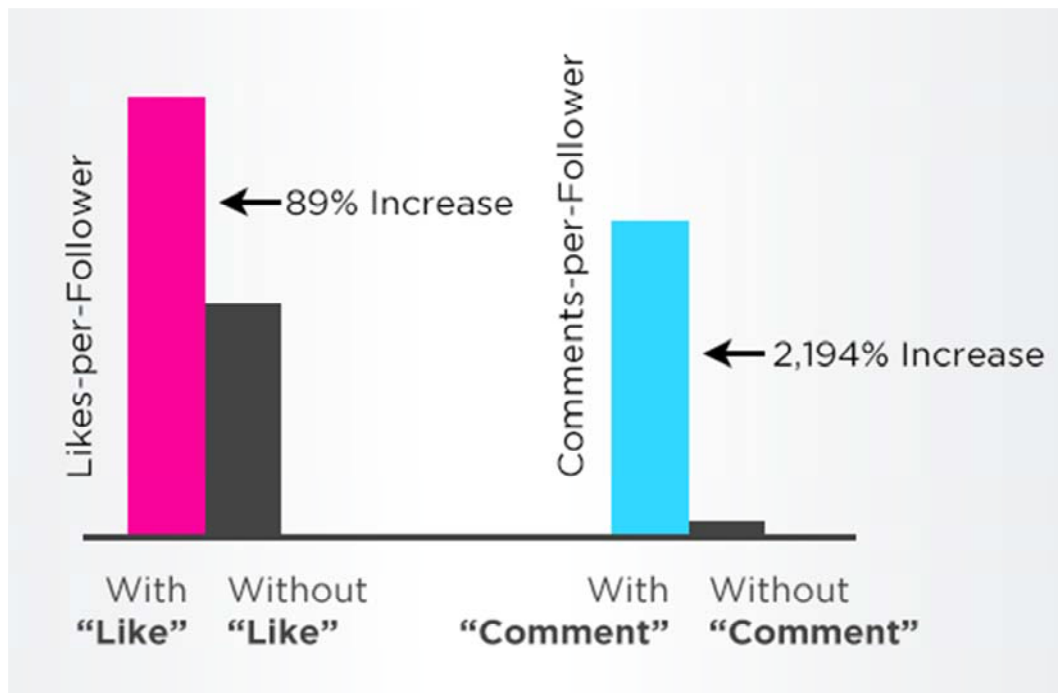
Do you plan to filter your next Instagram photo? Don't do it!!

Dan found that images with no filters got the most engagement.



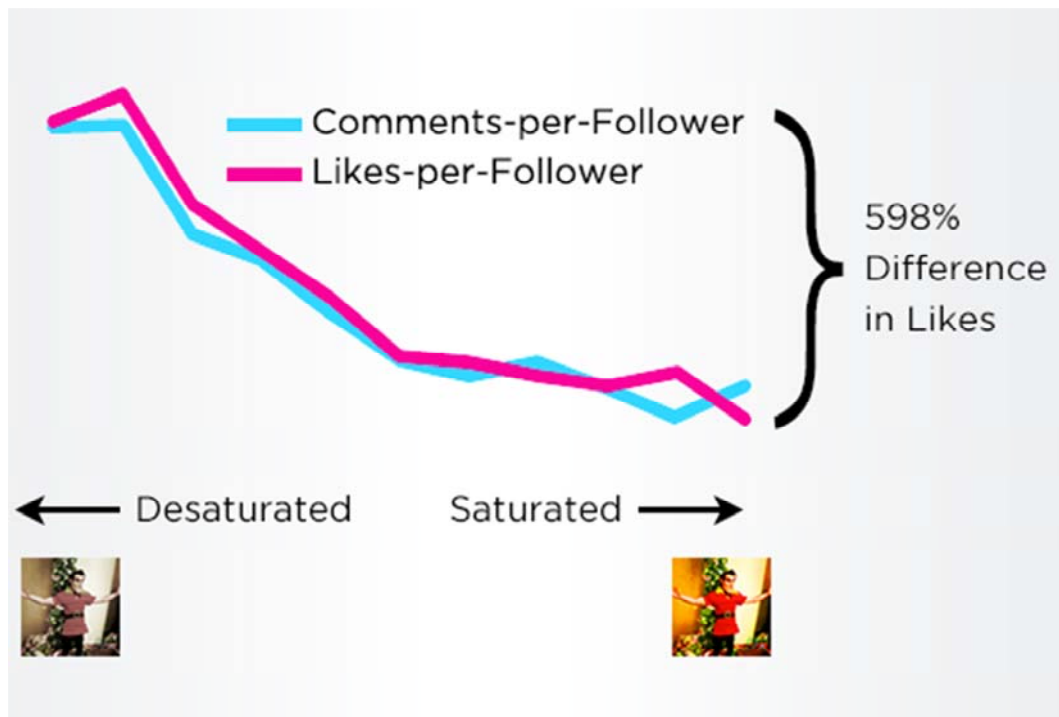
3. Use a Strong Call-to-Action

Photos with the word “like” in the caption received 89% more Likes, and photos with “comment” got 2,194% more comments. Wow!



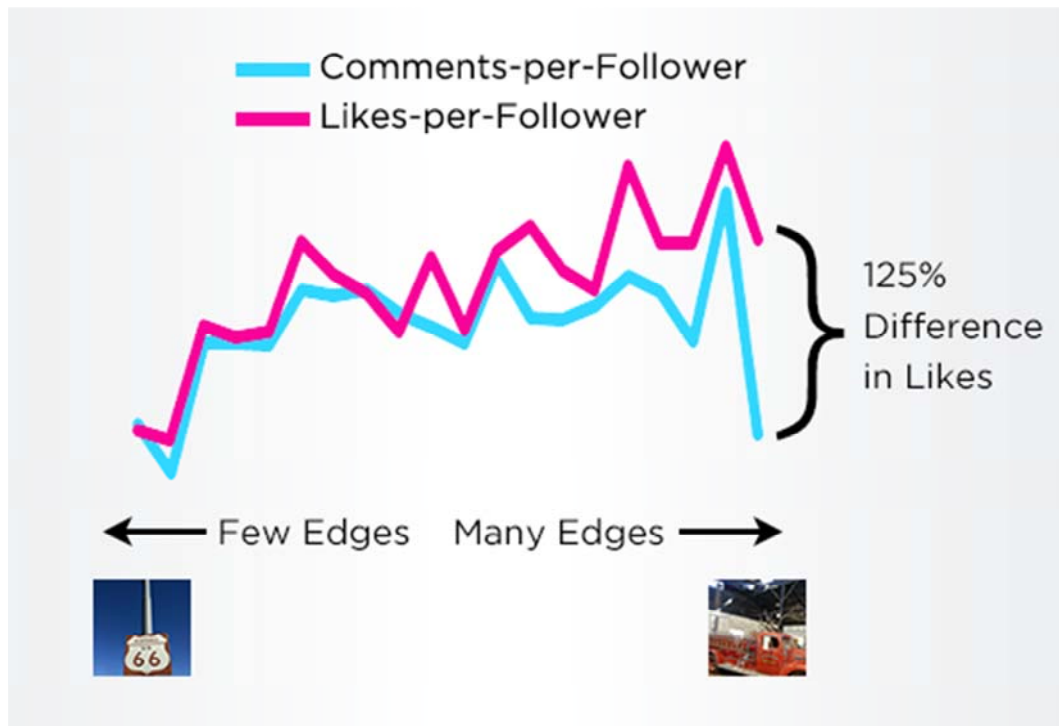
4. Don't Over-Edit

Don't over-edit your Instagram photos! Dan found that photos with lower levels of colour saturation got more Likes... about 598% more! :)



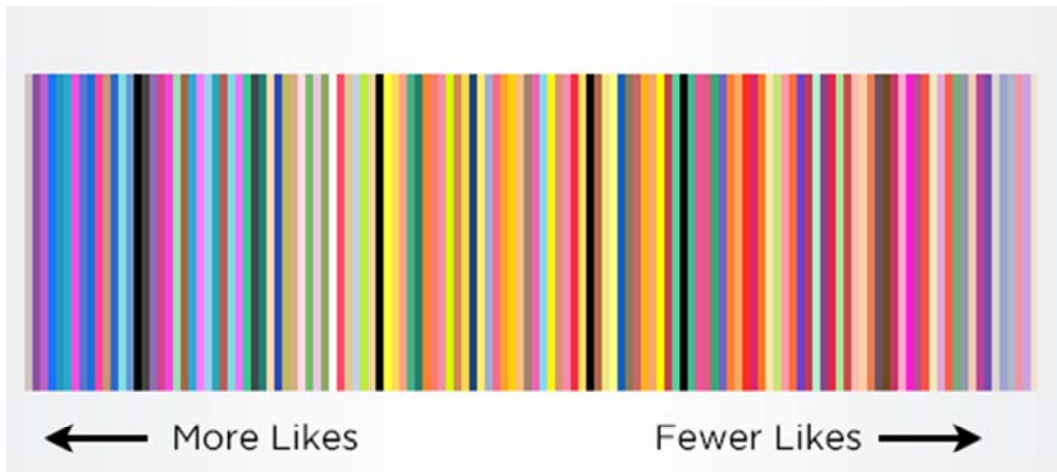
5. Share “Edgy” Photos

The more edges & structures you have in your photos... the better.



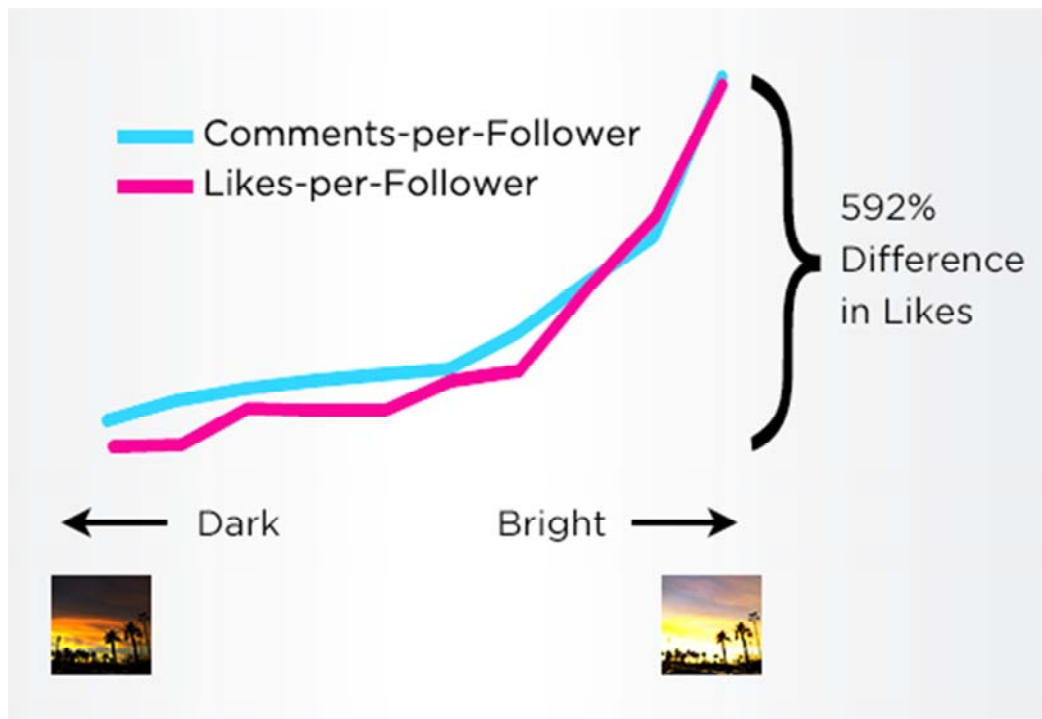
6. Use the Right Colours

Avoid yellow, orange & pink. Photos with greys, blues & greens got the most engagement on Instagram.



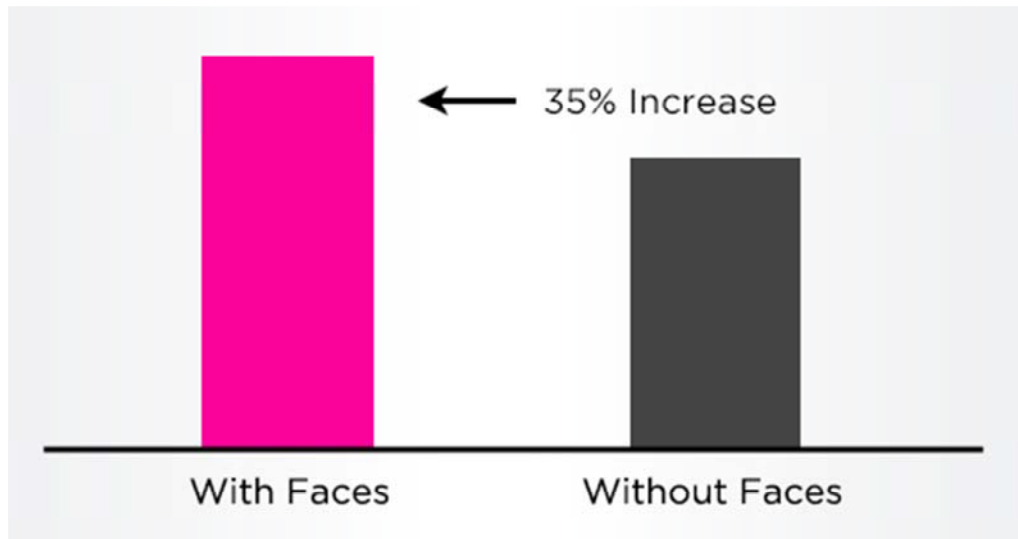
7. Keep Photos Bright

Bright photos got more engagement than darker ones. And the difference was huge!



8. Include Faces (people love faces!)

Dan used face-detection tools to find that photos with one or more faces got a lot more Likes.



Key Takeaways

Here are the major things I learned from Dan's study:

- ☑ Use hashtags
- ☑ Get rid of filters
- ☑ Add calls-to-action
- ☑ Don't over-edit
- ☑ Colours matter
- ☑ Have structures & edges
- ☑ Post more selfies
- ☑ Shoot photos during the day

About eBiz International



eBiz International is a leading full service software development and integration company offering a broad range of business, communication and e-marketing solutions for the mobile professional and small to medium size companies who are ready to advance their business over the Internet.

Our enabling solutions helps our customers accurately measure results by connecting business processes, supply chain systems, interaction and collaboration proceedings, and databases by bring total business connectivity to their Internet based operations. The widest range of services offered by eBiz International is not limited just by web site design and web development. Our web design company provides other services, such as consultancy, training, software development, web hosting, logo design, .Net development, search engine optimization and promotion, B2B services through web vertical and horizontal portals, translation services and more.

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Mahmood Bashash holds an Electronics Engineering degree. He has worked as a computer programmer in one of leading software companies in Iran for 5 years. His talent and leadership ability made him one of the top managers and team leaders in the company. Mahmood then set up his own business, dedicated to Web development, Internet marketing and social media, and run the company for 4 years. His young team, and his passion for doing the right thing, cased his company to be ranked among the top 5 companies in Iran in the Web development industry. He managed numerous clients, from small companies through to large enterprises. After moving to the United Arab Emirates in 2005, Mahmood established his own company there, and continued to work in the same field. His company, 'eBiz International', has since built up a consistent reputation for serving clients with the best quality.



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