

# **The 5-Minute Guide to Marketing Your Business On Instagram**

**- SPECIAL REPORT -**

With over one billion active users, and an extremely quick and easy interface, Instagram is a platform that offers potentially massive ROI for marketers. This is a brilliant way to engage with an audience, sell a vision, and build a massive and loyal following. In this post, you'll learn the basics in just five minutes and find out how to get started!

## **Building and Optimizing Your Account**

To get started on Instagram, you'll need to create an account. Luckily this is extremely easy – simply download the app, create a username and password, and you're ready to go!

Good news: your account is set up! It really is that easy.

What's next is to fill in some of those other details in order to optimize it for your goals. That's going to mean creating a profile picture, a bio, and the other finishing touches. This is how you're going to optimize your account to play well to your target audience.

### **Profile Picture**

Your profile picture can be anything you want it to be, but keep in mind that the image will appear small and inside a circle. This will be the first impression that many users have of your account – when they see you add a comment to an image for instance, or if they search for your account/a hashtag you often use.

Therefore, there are two strong options when it comes to picking an image. One is to use your own logo. This will help you to improve brand visibility, and it will work particularly well if your logo is able to communicate the concept of your business visually immediately. Think about your value proposition. Think about emotions. Will someone who has never encountered your brand before, be able to tell from your name and your logo that you focus on a particular subject? More importantly, will they be able to tell

instantly whether your brand is something they might be interested in?

If the answer is no, then the alternative is to choose a profile picture that shows you doing something specific, or that shows a product or activity. In other words, choose one image that will convey the same emotion and tone that you want to achieve with your broader account.

As for your biography, you only have a short number of words here to work with: 150 maximum. In that short space, you need to encapsulate what your page and your brand is all about and again, *convey that emotion*.

Moreover though, you should also think about how you are going to produce more engagement from this. That means thinking about how you can get people to click through to your website or YouTube channel. You can use a tool like Bitly (<https://bitly.com/>) or Goo.gl (<https://goo.gl/>) in order to make shorter links that you can place here. That will save you word count, while allowing you to convert some of your Instagram fans into visitors and hopefully paying customers.

## **Settings**

There are a few settings to consider when setting up your account. First, think about your Story Settings, which will define who can see and reply to your Instagram stories. You should make sure this is set to *everyone* if you have an account for business purposes.

Of course you also need to make sure that your account is *not* private.

It's not a bad idea to turn on 'hide inappropriate comments' to avoid abusive or spammy posts.

Finally, note that if you scroll down to the bottom of the settings, you'll find the option to add additional accounts. This is great news for those who want to maintain a personal Instagram account in addition to their business one, and it also means that you can create accounts for imprints and sub-brands. Even individual products!

Fortunately, it's extremely easy to juggle accounts on Instagram which makes it very easy to swap from one to the other.

## **Making Your Instagram Feed Perform**

Once you have your account, you're ready to start posting images and video. While there are lots of tips and tricks to help you get more from this, the most important one is simply to hone in on your niche, to hone in on your target demographic, and then to post frequently with a consistent tone and style.

So if you have a fitness brand, then that means lots of photos of people training – no images of your dog!

Having a consistent look for all your images is a slightly more complex and controversial decision. But know that 60% of businesses use the same filter on all their images! Of course, this will hamstring you somewhat in terms of your creativity. You'll find that by picking a consistent look – especially if you are a photographer or artist – that you won't be able to branch out and get creative whenever you wish. That said though, it also means that

people can quickly decide if they like your content or not, and there's a high chance that this won't change as they spend time with your brand.

What's more, is that by picking a consistent visual style, you can make sure that your page as a *whole* looks great: not just the individual pictures. This is something to consider, as it will help your visitors to make the decision as to whether they would like to follow your content or not when they visit your profile.

Take a look at the pages of some of your favourite creators in your niche and decide what they've done that you like, versus what hasn't worked.

Likewise, using consistent hashtags, and even following predominantly creators within your niche, will all help you to send strong signals to both Instagram *and* your followers as to what you're all about and who should and shouldn't follow you.

## Defining Your Account

If you're going to be using consistent filters, a consistent theme and more, then you need to think about what that theme is and what you will want to say. This is what will help you to really make a mark on Instagram and it's what will allow the whole strategy to 'click into place'.

This may be easy if you are a fitness account – you will likely want to promote a fitness lifestyle and that will mean posting images of training. Not in good shape yourself? Don't worry, we'll come to that (although it is always better if you *can* act as your own model). Likewise, if you are making an account about travel, then all you need to do is to visit some amazing locations and

take stunning photos (or find them elsewhere – again, we'll get to that). Pick a certain style and a certain schedule for posting, and you'll gradually gain more and more momentum.

These images should each tell a story and should each evoke the feelings you want to produce in your followers. The travel pictures should make your audience yearn to visit a beautiful country, or marvel at nature (perfect if you have a travel blog, or you sell travel supplies).

But what if you sell life insurance? How can you make this aspirational?

What about online business? How can this be visual?

The key is again to focus not on the nitty gritty, but on the emotion. In the case of life insurance, think about what this is really about: family and loved ones. Did you know that #love is the number one most popular tag on Instagram? And family/relationships is one of the most popular niches on the platform. So you can post images of families doing fun things together, and looking cute. Maybe happy babies, or beautiful family homes.

As for online business, you can take one of several angles. You could focus on the way that working online makes you feel: like a trendy entrepreneur! That could mean taking photos of desktop set-ups, of people in suits going to meetings, of laptops in coffee shops. If you live this lifestyle yourself... even better! Alternatively though, you could think about what that kind of business helps you to achieve – post pictures of business men and women in hot tubs, on private jets, or relaxing on the beach.

Whatever your niche, you should hone in on the feelings that help you to sell in it, and then convey them through this visual medium.

# Buyer Persona and Owning Your Niche

But once you've chosen your 'angle', you should also aim to stick to that angle. That will also mean defining and sticking to a specific 'buyer persona'.

'Buyer persona' simply means the archetypal kind of person who will appreciate your business. Write a fictional bio for that person, and ask yourself their age, interests, hobbies, income, beliefs, personality, and more they might have. Use this to *directly* target them through your Instagram marketing.

For example: is your fitness brand aimed at people who want to get a little healthier? Are you going to show happy people on the beach, or young couples working out at the gym together? Or is the fitness angle you're looking for going to be more 'hard core'? Maybe you'll target strength culture and post images of gigantic guys with chalked-up hands, grimacing under a barbell. This attracts an entirely different kind of audience, but it's by owning your specific message and knowing your direct audience, that you will be able to stand out against the competition.

Choosing your audience and buyer persona might be easy if you are inheriting this from an existing business: who are you trying to sell to? That is who you will target with these images.

Failing that, think about how you can stand out against the competition. Think about the kind of content that you *want* to produce and are honestly passionate about (this is absolutely fundamental to your long-term success), and think about the demographics particularly well represented on Instagram and where there is overlap.

With all this decided, all that is left to do is to post frequently (1-3 times a day), to use smart relevant hashtags that include a range of extremely popular and less popular terms, and to promote your Instagram account from other platforms.

People will find you through search thanks to the hashtags and through your other channels, and the high quality and consistent tone of images will mean they subscribe and share.

## **The Last Piece of the Puzzle – The Social Aspect**

Posting great quality images and having a well optimized profile is the first step to Instagram success. But it is far from the only one. In fact, Instagram is a *social network* and this is crucial to remember if you want to be successful. Primarily, this is a communication tool, and the way you communicate will greatly impact on your success.

By posting on other accounts, by talking to your followers, and by motivating your audience, you can greatly increase your growth and your engagement.

Here are a few tips to consider:

- Answer your audience – If someone comments on your photo and you ignore the comment, they won't comment again in future. If you answer though, they'll get a kick out of interacting with their favorite brand and will likely comment again (not to mention becoming even bigger fans!).
- Like and comment on others – If you like or comment on a video or picture in your niche, you'll potentially gain a new follower in that person (they'll enjoy the attention and check out your profile, especially if it looks like a business profile). Moreover, you might gain followers from other people who



read the comments, and it further helps Instagram's algorithm. It's also a good idea to follow other people.

- Run contents and use hashtags – Reposting photos from users who use your hashtag, running competitions, or asking for help all represent methods you can use to galvanise your following and turn them into a force for growth!
- Collaborate – Collaborating with other users is a brilliant way to expand both your audiences. Just send them a direct message and ask if they would like to work together on something. Pick a creator with a following that's a similar size to yours and that way, you will both stand to gain a similar amount from the interaction. There are lots of ways you can do this – post each other's' photos, provide a shout-out in a story, or even make something cool together to share (like a short video or cool image).

Use these strategies in combination with frequently posting to your account, and your feed will go from strength to strength. Good luck!