

# How to Market on Instagram - The Ultimate Guide

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## Checklist - Online Marketing

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## □ 1. Basics of Instagram:

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A lot of the content from this guide comes from the course *Insta Results*, if you're interested in the full video course, check it out [here](#).

## □ 2. Learn the basics of Instagram

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If you have never used Instagram before, take a look at the below video for an introduction into the basic workings of Instagram.

If you use Instagram fairly frequently, personally or for business, you can probably skip over this step and go down for the real juicy stuff.



Mashable also has a great beginners guide to instagram which you can check out here:

<http://mashable.com/2012/05/29/instagram-for-beginners/>

Below is their intro paragraph to Instagram.

"Instagram's calling card is the photo filter, a digital layer that, when added to a standard photo, gives it the appearance of professional editing. Some filters enhance the colors in a photo, while other dull the light to a soft glow for an aged, vintage appearance.

But while Instagram's filters revolutionized mobile photo editing, they're only a portion of the appeal. The mobile app boasts over [50 million users](#), despite only living in iOS and Android devices. Instagram [launched on Android](#) just this year — it quickly earned [5 million downloads in six days](#).

Its success caught the eye of the most valuable social network in the world. [Facebook acquired Instagram](#) in April for \$1 billion. Although we've only just begun to witness Facebook's plans for the photo sharing app, the social giant recently launched its own filter-friendly photo app, dubbed [Facebook Camera](#)."

## □ 3. Value of Instagram:

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## □ 4. 7 Industries who Use Instagram and How

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### 1. Companies that sell a service.

Strategy: Post how-to videos and helpful tips. An example could be 10 things you need to prepare before tax season.

### 2. Real Estate agents and companies.

Strategy: Of course, photos of the houses you are selling inside and out, (make sure they are pretty), but also photos of the surrounding areas. Local streets, parks, cafes and malls all help sell properties and their neighborhoods.

### 3. Nonprofit organizations.

Strategy: Post image quotes, pictures of campaigns and results your nonprofit has generated.

### 4. Companies that sell a physical product.

Strategy: Post pretty pictures of your product line, people using the product, models modelling the product, events you sponsor etc.

### 5. Retail companies.

Strategy: Showcase employees and customers in and around your store or using products you sell.

### 6. Anyone that sells food!

Strategy: Post pictures of food. Food is the most popular topic on Instagram.

### 7. Creative workers (graphics designers, artists, web designers, photographers and filmmakers).

Strategy: Showcase your work, do behind the scenes videos and photos.

## □ 5. Mistakes to Avoid

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1. Make sure your images are relevant to your company, your brand and the message you are trying to send. Don't mix up your account with all sorts of random photos.
2. Make sure your images are in focus and high quality. This means good lighting and no blurring.
3. Crop and scale your images correctly. Maintain aspect ratios and crop out interference in the image.

## □ 6. Get the Most Reach with Hashtags!

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- Groups your photos with others in similar content.
- Research what hashtags will be most relevant so people can find your product or service.
- Complete your bio then customers can view you and connect with you on website if they like what you're posting on Instagram.

### How to Use Hashtags:

1. Select words that are searchable.
2. Check 'explore' tab to see what hashtags are popular in your industry.
3. Place a # in front of word to make it a hyperlink that becomes searchable.

**Create a Custom Hashtag:** This is a great way to create a community within your network. Remember to create one that uses your business name!

**Example of Sue's Hashtags:** *Descriptions:* #preppy, #wristparty, #seersucker *Location:* #capecod, #mashpee, #newsabury, #popponeset *Competition:* #vineyardvines, #blackdog, #inthepink

Check out these tools if you are looking to get a boost to your hashtags:

<http://www.socialable.co.uk/21-best-hashtag-tools/>

## □ 7. Why is @mention important? Activity and engagement!

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- Gives a notification to user that they are included.
- Allows your users to connect.
- Start communications and interact with your post.
- Place a # in front of a username with no space to make it a hyperlink - that becomes linked to that users' account.

## □ 8. What to write and use as a description in your post

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- Use a call to action with a question or phrase.
- Include a site or a way to continue to communicate.
- Descriptions done strategically can create interactions with your posts.
- Tag users in your post, just like Facebook.
- If you want a lot of people to see your Instagram, tag them!

### **Bonus!**

**Share Settings:** (Found in Gear button at top right)

- You can select any platform you want to share your post on.
- When a platform is "blue" that means it is linked correctly.

## □ 9. Share buttons

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**Value of Share Buttons:**

Reach networks all at one time!

Tag people that are in Instagram on Facebook as well.

## 10. Instagram Case Studies:

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## 11. Corcoran Group Real Estate

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**Corcoran Group Real Estate**

Matthew Shadbolt, Director of Interactive Product & Marketing

Follow:

Twitter: [@Corcoran\\_Group](https://twitter.com/Corcoran_Group)

Instagram: [@thecorcorangroup](https://www.instagram.com/thecorcorangroup)

Tumblr: [thecorcorangroup10amspecial](https://www.tumblr.com/thecorcorangroup10amspecial)

ouTube: [thecorcorangroup](https://www.youtube.com/thecorcorangroup)

150,000 Subscribers on Tumblr - “Home of the Day” delivered daily.

**Strategy:** Recycle, reformat and adjust content from Tumblr to Instagram with consistent branding and show-stopping pictures on every post.

**Strategy for Photos and Videos:** “Around is JUST as important as the inside.” It is important to go beyond the 4 walls and show what it “feels” like to live there. Show that emotional connection throughout a ‘day in the life’ there – eating, shopping, day time versus nighttime.

**Create unique and beautiful photos:** Corcoran partnered with a game company to take aerial photos and use on Foursquare then recycled and reformatted on Instagram.

#### Hashtag Strategies:

- Group things together within their own feed.
- Broad hashtags like location are used to cast a wide net for anyone on the web looking in that area.
- Tap into hashtags that are already popular as well.
- Put more hashtags within the comments instead of the post.
- Note when certain ones perform better than others during the day.

**Example:** Brunch will perform better in the morning! Then extrapolate that one into the neighborhood along with popular hashtags like #love, #bepopular

3 Golden Nuggets for Newbies:

1. Post 1x a day (don't over post). Post the most spectacular photo you took that day and post consistently each day at the same time.
2. Engage as much as you can – like and comment A LOT!
3. Be more interested in other people than your own account.

**Crucial Tip:** “You need to post something with ‘stopping power’ in the newsfeed. Give someone a reason to stop and look at, then if you’re lucky you’ll get engagement on top of that.”

## □ 12. Kim Garst

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### Instagram Case Study Interview: Kim Garst

CEO of Social Boom: [www.KimGarst.com](http://www.KimGarst.com)

Follow:

Instagram: [@kimgarst](https://www.instagram.com/kimgarst)

Twitter: [@kimgarst](https://twitter.com/kimgarst)

YouTube: [Instagram for your Business with Kim Garst](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Instagram+for+your+Business+with+Kim+Garst)

**Instagram Stats:** 53,000 followers and 1,000 posts

Kim Garst has owned an online business for over 20 years and believes that social media is the best way to drive traffic over any other medium.

It is important to be on every platform because a biz owner always needs new eyeballs on their biz! People prefer different platforms over the other therefore engage and connect with audiences on all of them!

**Strategy #1:** Account name is the same on all profiles on each platform. Carry your branded username throughout!

**Strategy #2:** How to gain followers on Instagram: Advertiser that you have an Instagram account on other platforms. Example: Twitter: Kim tweets an “Instagram Tweet Series” with #instagramtips as the hashtag. By doing so she can connect with her current twitter followers on Instagram as well as connect with very active people on Instagram who aren’t as active on Twitter and be exposed to their audience.

**Strategy #3:** Regularly take the time to find words related to your biz and people in your niche. Also, remember to keep that “second user” in mind – meaning someone who is indirectly related to your niche but may need your product or service as a gift to the user who would directly benefit. Example: Kim’s mom searches Instagram for gifts that she can buy for her grandkids – it is not always about the direct user.

**Hashtag Strategies:** Don’t try and “push” your product Those days are over. Instead, build out a “care” atmosphere around your brand.

This is now the longevity of the business model. People are looking for brands that care and showcase that care. People gravitate to the ones that showcase that community.

**How Instagram helps with SEO:** When your Instagram post is shared to Facebook and Twitter it is linkable, driving traffic simultaneously. Usage of hashtag and careful keyword strategy is an easy way to build out a brand across multiple platforms.

**Tip for Link within Bio:** You are able to have a live link to a website in your Instagram bio – change it out every now and then to drive traffic to different places. Example: change your website link out to your Facebook page and drive business there with a strategy.

**Main Tips to Remember:**

1. Be true to your brand - there is only one you and people will do biz with those who they like and who are true to who they are.
2. Grab your username on each social media platform – even if you aren’t using one of the current platforms.
3. Have consistent branding online and offline.
4. Share great content.
5. Leverage traffic to drive traffic to each place.

## 13. Simple Green Smoothies

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### Instagram Case Study Interview: Jadah Sellner

[www.simplegreensmoothies.com](http://www.simplegreensmoothies.com)

Follow:

Instagram: [@simplegreensmoothies](https://www.instagram.com/simplegreensmoothies)

Facebook: [SimpleGreenSmoothies](https://www.facebook.com/SimpleGreenSmoothies)

Twitter: [@SGSRawkstar](https://twitter.com/SGSRawkstar)

Within 6 months of opening business: 30,000 followers. Now: 262 photos and 178,000 followers and 137,000 email list in just one year of opening biz. Plus within first week of launching their eBook, it sold a total of \$8,000!!!

Strategy for conversion rate: Unlike other Instagram accounts, Jadah's is unique because of her photo-to-follower ratio. Her strategy:

1. Be very consistent in the value that you post each time.

2. Make your Instagram look like a canvas – adopt “canvas branding.”
3. Provide consistent value to your audience by giving them what they want with beautiful representative photos each and every time. (Throw in a personal photo infrequently)

How many times to upload a photo?

Jadah currently uploads 1-2 times a day during a challenge but usually twice a week throughout the year. She suggest that if time constraint was not an issue, an optimal amount would be 2-4 times a day.

#### **How to reach other platforms:**

Instashare on facebook – this makes the link live on facebook. There is definitely a different network on facebook than on Instagram, so definitely share!

**Crucial Tip:** It’s not about the posting, it is more about the engagement! It is important to really engage with your community on both platforms and maintain that.

#### **3 Strategies for Newbies:**

1. Micro “Guest Post”: Have people with a larger following feature your photos (they tag you when they post it with attribution). This will get their followers to come to your page. Or they can use the repost app to endorse and share. Within the repost your username and icon shows up.
2. Make Instagram a Canvas: Don’t ever use random, inconsistent images. Every photo should be beautiful.
3. Increase engagement with audience using a call to action to make them connect.  
Example: “What green smoothing are you sipping on today?” - This call to action let’s Jadah’s Instagram community easily share out loud.

## □ 14. Redditor: 1000 Followers in 30 Days

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Originally from this Reddit post:

[http://www.reddit.com/r/startups/comments/2mim5h/i\\_got\\_over\\_1000\\_followers\\_in\\_a\\_little\\_over\\_a/](http://www.reddit.com/r/startups/comments/2mim5h/i_got_over_1000_followers_in_a_little_over_a/)

Follow:

Instagram: [thedrunkegoatsoap](https://www.instagram.com/thedrunkegoatsoap)

Twitter: [drunkengoatsoap](https://twitter.com/drunkengoatsoap)

I followed a pretty strict plan and it worked pretty well. I haven't paid for any shout outs and all of my followers are real people that I gained organically. For the first few weeks, I only posted pictures of the product I was selling and really got no traction at all and very few followers resulted from the pictures I posted. About a month ago I started researching and read a lot of post here, [/r/socialmedia](https://www.reddit.com/r/socialmedia) and [/r/marketing](https://www.reddit.com/r/marketing) and came up with a pretty solid Instagram strategy. Here it is:

#### **Posts Content:**

1. On average, only 1 out of 5 pictures posted is of my product

2. Post pictures that allow followers to see who I am and my personality
3. Post behind the scenes type pictures
4. At least 1 out of 5 posts is something silly/funny that is completely unrelated to the company.
5. Giveaways at milestones: 250 followers, 500 followers, 1000 followers, ect...

#### **Interactions:**

1. 200 likes per day from hashtags related to your products target demographic. I sell grooming products marketed towards men. So I would search images with hashtags like: #grooming #menshair #beard #menstyle #beardporn... Some of my products also include craft beer so I would also target the hashtags: #craftbeer #homebrew #craftbeerporn... I follow this strictly and actually count out my likes to make sure I hit at least 200 a day.
2. For every ten likes I comment on a picture, so this means 20 comments a day.
3. To keep followers, I like at least 50 current followers new photos a day.
4. For every 5 posts I like of current followers, I comment, so 10 comments a day.

#### **Responding:**

1. I respond to EVERY single comment/question... I find that it is important that your followers feel like they are communicating with an individual rather than a company and the best way to do this is to give thoughtful responses to questions/comments.
2. Whenever someone from IG buys one of my products I send them a private message telling them that I would be super grateful if they would post my product on their IG when it arrives.

#### **Trading:**

1. Twice I have traded one of my products with another merchants products and we posted each others products once received. This has gotten me about 150-200 followers alone.

## 15. Optimizing Different Instagram Post Types:

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## 16. Photo Posts

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Camera button - middle button with 2 options: snap a photo, or pick photos from your phone. When taking a pic, consider:

- The alignment grid: Turn on or off by clicking square with grid; Camera with arrow image: Can turn lens around to face you, Flash button: Turns the flash on and off.
- Next Screen: Scale and Crop the image; Next screen: Editing options: Turns drab photos into very high quality.
- 4 options below your photo: Rotate, Frame, Dew Drop, Exposure
  - \* 20 different filters that are available to put on your photos. Each gives the photo a different effect.

### **Share: What to Put In a Description**

**Hashtag Strategy:** Place a # in front of word/phrase to make clickable and searchable.

**Tag strategy:** Click the 3 dots to the right bottom of a post and tag the person – they will receive a notification.

**Geo-tag Strategy:** Location where the post is uploaded from - it is posted below username.

**Share Strategy:** (most powerful): Use Share buttons to cross promote! Upload to Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Foursquare, Flickr and share via email.

Most popular hashtags on Instagram at <http://www.tagsforlikes.com> or <http://web.stagram.com/hot/>

**Best Biz Practice:** Use call to action or ask a question to entice viewers to comment and like and engage on your post.

## 17. Geo-Tagging

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Physical location companies such as stores, restaurant, etc. should be geo-tagging posts. “Add to your Photo Map” should be switched on.

Geo-tag is a hyperlink to a map; others can click and see where your business is located.

You can view your geo-tagged Instagrams on a map to see where you've taken all your photos as well as others in that area.

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### **How to view others images by maps:**

Go to their profile page tap on photo map and tap on a stack to see all the photos in a specific location. If you want to view the photos in a grid double tap on the photos.

Made a mistake geo-tagging? Click on account tab; Click on geo-tag icon; View pics then tap edit in the right hand corner; Tap on the photos; Tap on edit again; Uncheck the white check mark in the green circle; Tap Done.

## 18. Video Posts

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Videos can be up to 15 seconds long. To create: Click camera button, click on the video camera icon button, tap to open recording feature, flip to film yourself or out. To start recording, press and hold the red record button.

**Filter Page:** There are 13 filters available for videos (above filters is Stabilizer button - use if large movement).

**Freeze Frames:** There are 8 different freeze frames to select from.

## □ 19. Hyperlapse Video Posts

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Instagram recently released a new app called [Hyperlapse](#) which allows you to make cool sped up videos.

Take a look at the below video to see how it works:



## □ 20. Mistakes to Avoid When Posting

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1. Do not clutter Instagram with irrelevant content - only post with a purpose.
2. Don't use excessive or irrelevant hashtags - don't appear desperate for likes.
3. Do not upload blurry photos - photos should be high quality.
4. Scale and crop your photos - awesome photos will attract more followers.

## □ 21. Deleting Posts

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### How to Delete an Instagram Post

Account button (far right): all posts are located below your account information. Click on the post you want to delete; click menu section (3 dots); click 'delete.'



## □ 22. How to Create Killer Instagram Content:

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## □ 23. How to find relevant hashtags

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1) Begin by brainstorming 10 words that you believe are important for your industry by using: **location-based hashtags**, **product-based hashtags** and **descriptive hashtags**.

Place a pound symbol (#) in front of the word, and pick HASHTAG as what you are searching for below the text box.

2) Understand what similar brands/industries are posting. Learning from your competition can be valuable in finding the more relevant hashtags, because their followers could be yours too!

## □ 24. How to create Custom hashtags

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A custom hashtag is a hashtag that is specific to your business, that you and your follows can include in your posts to curate a specific conversation.

A custom hashtag can have a theme, be for a specific event, or just a section of content that your business shares.

Example: [Kendall Covitz](#) uses #kendallclean every time she posts best practices on how to live a #kendallclean lifestyle.

## □ 25. Why use @mentions in Instagram?

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An @mention in Instagram is the same as an @mention on Facebook and Twitter. By writing an @ symbol in front of another person's Instagram username, it notifies the user of the post and that they have been mentioned in it.

Notifying other users of your post makes them more likely to come over to your account and comment, like and engage.

It is a great way to give a public shout-out to another person on Instagram and to grow your network.

## □ 26. How to build your email list using Instagram

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**Method 1:** Use a call to action on your posts - Tell the user what you want them to do to stay connected with you.

Then tell them other ways to gain more info from you: like on Facebook; follow on Twitter; visit your site.

Paste the link for call to action (not live on Instagram but live if shared on Facebook) and ALSO put that link in your bio. Be sure there is an opt-in form, and they will be all set to join your email list.

**Method 2:** Instant Text Response: On the photo, and in the description, add a phone number and keyword for the user to text. This text response software will then collect the users name and email: <http://www.smsautoresponder.net>

## □ 27. Feature Content Strategy

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1. Happy customer post: MAKE SURE to get their Instagram handle or user name and @mention them.
2. TAG them: Photo will be connected to their account and could gain new customers through their friends.
3. Write a description that includes some kind of positive result or testimonial.

## □ 28. Insta-How to Posts

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Share a step-by-step process in creating something (photo or video).

There is no limit in the number of characters to put in the description making enough space to give your full step-by-step guide, but be concise!

## □ 29. How to Run a Contest on Instagram

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Have a consistently themed post each week. Include your website so the user can visit your site. Plan ahead and make sure the user is following your account!

Example: “Double Tap Tuesday”

A few other things to note when running a contest:

- Remember to add in the description when the pre-selected time is that you will announce the winner.
- Select a winner with a random number generator if possible ([randomnumbergenerator.org](http://randomnumbergenerator.org))
- Announce the winner on the post with an @mention so they get a notification.

## □ 30. How to Grow your Instagram Followers:

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## □ 31. Basics

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Decide what type of content most aligns with your brand.

### **How often will you be posting?**

We recommend 4x a day, 1 post to FB, 1 video.

### **How often will you be checking on your interaction.**

We recommend to check the “heart” tab 2x a day.

## □ 32. Strategy: Ways to Interact

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**Communicate:** like, comment and reply o relevant conversation for your industry. \*If you are commenting on your followers’ post then their followers will see your comments and potentially start following you.

**Leverage Your Network:** Share photos to other sites so followers on Twitter and Facebook follow your Instagram account. Your followers on these platforms will see your Instagram posts. \*Great way to grow new followers.

**Strategic Commenting:** go to people who may have a following similar to your ideal follower and comment strategically to bring them back to your account.

*Example: Sue wanted to meet Kate Northrup, former B-schooler. Sue engaged with her posts to grow the relationship. She soon met her in person at her book signing where Kate recognized her and gave Sue a big hug.*

## □ 33. Themed Post

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**#repost, #ootd, #outfitoftheday #tbt, #throwbackthursday, #ff, #followfriday**

These hashtags will also make you commit to creating content on a schedule.

**#ootd:** Very popular - everyone likes checking out the outfit of the day.

**#tbt:** Give followers a background on your business and journey.

**#ff:** Give a shout out to others that you may think your followers will want to follow.

Interact with network 'heart' icon what Instagrams you've liked so you can repost People button who your followers are and who are following you.

## □ 34. Contests

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- Creating contests is a great way to build a loyal following. By having a consistently themed post each week means followers know what to expect and know they will find content that is interesting. \*Sue does a "Double- Tap Tuesday" contest to win a bracelet.
- Be consistent with your branding and include your website on the contest posts.
- Create a custom hashtag that followers will use to make their enrollment in the contest known.
- Remember to ask the person to be a follower of your Instagram account.
- Pre-select a time that you will announce the winner (make sure you add in time zone)
- Select a winner with a random number generator: [numbergenerator.org](http://numbergenerator.org)
- Always have 1 month ahead of you planned out!
- Make sure you add "#contest" to the post
- Follow [lorenhope](http://lorenhope) and [puravidabracelets.com](http://puravidabracelets.com) for inspiration

## □ 35. Using Hashtags

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## □ 36. Finding a New User to Follow with Explore (hashtag searches)

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Explore section: Type in users that you admire in your industry. Keep a list of 20 people or businesses.

- Click on the followers on the top of their account to see the list of people that follow that account. Follow those that have a clear interest in your industry (based on the user's bio and the content that they post)
- Spend time creating your wish list, engage with good content on their post, then you will attract new followers.

## □ 37. What Each Sharing Platform Post Looks Like

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**Facebook:** photo says “View on Instagram” with link opening and leading directly to your Instagram account. This is a great way to gain a new follower on Instagram!

**Twitter:** There will be a link at the end of your tweet that will attach your Instagram as an image to a tweet, just as you could attach a photo to a tweet. Your Hashtags and @mentions that you put on Instagram will be live and work the same on Twitter. Other social media platforms to share: Flickr and Foursquare.

## □ 38. Repost Application

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Heart icon – what Instagrams you've liked so you can repost People button – who your followers are and who is following you.

## □ 39. Changing what Facebook account to post to

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Start at home page: Click on the gear (top right); Scroll down to preferences; Click on the top menu bar Share Settings; Click on Facebook; Click on the Share to Tab; Then choose the page you want to share to.

*\*Note: The next time you create an Instagram it will go directly to that page so you need to make sure you switch your setting when you post to Facebook.*

## □ 40. Optimizing your Instagram Account:

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## □ 41. Analyze Your Instagram with Iconosquare

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Sign in to [Iconosquare](http://Iconosquare) on your computer

### **Viewer:**

Feed Includes: my media, my likes, my followers, my following, popular (trending post), (far right button changes your view).

### **Statistics: 6 Tabs within Statistics tab**

1. **Overview:** Brief summary of account. Can share your success via Twitter here.

### **Month Analysis:** Rolling Month Details:

1. Content you've shared.
2. Most used filter on photos and most used hashtags.
3. Engagement Section: most likes and comments on your photos.
4. Details: Growth and top 10 most engaged followers.
5. Take a screenshot of top 5 and turn into an Instagram! Use @mention on each of their names.

### **Content:** Your post history starting with first post ever:

1. Distribution: when photo were uploaded.
2. Diversity: days and times you uploaded the most.
3. Filter usage: filter impact on likes.
4. Tag usage: most tags used. \*Aim for high percentage of post with #

5. Geolocation: which photos were geotagged.

**Engagement:** “Likes” received over lifespan:

1. Can see top liked posts.
2. Comments received per photo.
3. Most commented ever.

**Optimization:** Best time to post:

1. Photo average of lifespan
2. How fast community post on photo. Also shows when photo probably won't receive any more comments. \*We suggest to wait a few hours before sharing on facebook to keep it optimized.
3. Filter Impact: Filters that trigger most likes and comments.
4. Tag Impact: Compare what you use to most popular. \*The dark ones are part of the top 100 used in Instagram so keep using those!

**Community:** Typology:

1. Followers you don't follow.
2. Reciprocal.
3. Followers who don't follow back.

**Snapshots:** A cool way to get graphics of statistical snapshots on Instagram that you can share or email to yourself.

**Management:** How many comments and discussions you have on Instagram. You can use as a dashboard on your computer to interact here instead of on your mobile phone.

**Promote:** Provides a public URL to show people you are on Instagram to help get more followers. There is a feed tab for your Facebook fan page here as well as a profile pic to create from all your Instagram images. Also a widget tab to integrate Instagram on your blog or website.

## 42. Additional Tools

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**Prinstagram:** You can create fabulous art from your Instagrams.

**Postagram:** A third party app that creates and sends postcards of your Instagrams. Send personalized postcards directly from your mobile phone!