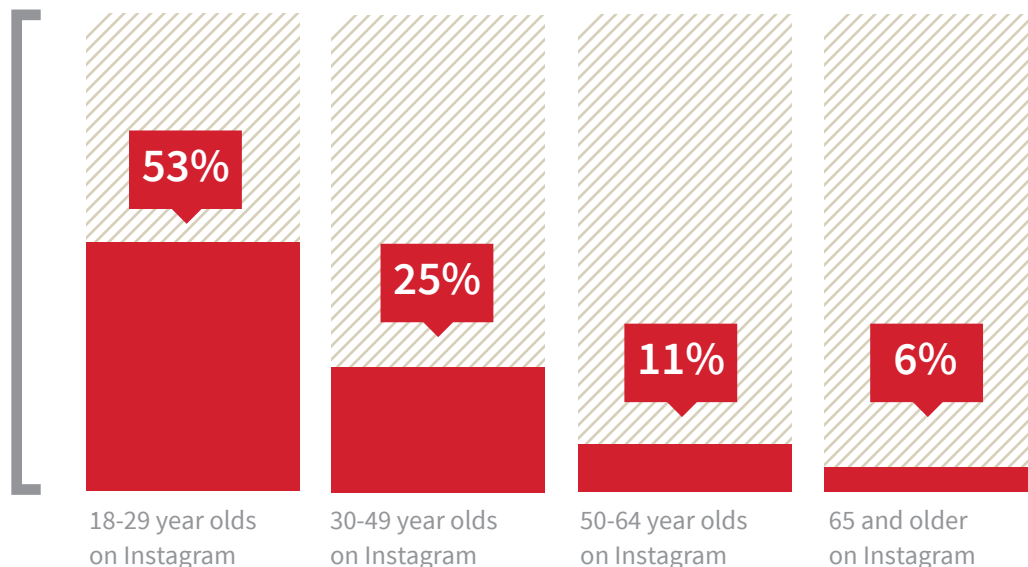


Why your business should be marketing on Instagram.

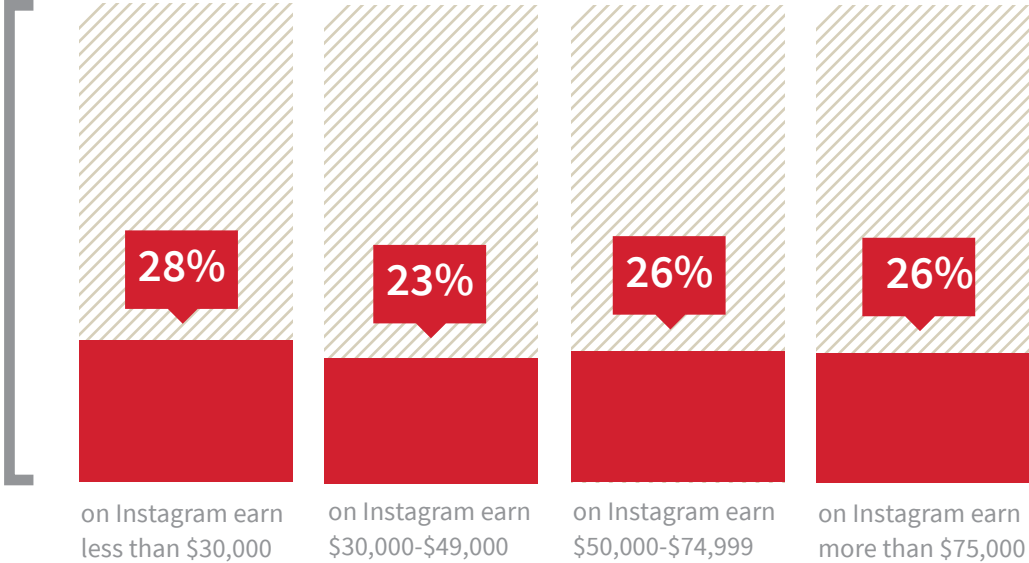
At last count, Instagram had **400 million** active users who daily share more than 80 million photos and like some five billion posts. Formidable.

In short, it's where brands find consumers—lots and lots of potential buyers who are enthusiastically sharing images of food, clothing, entertainment and all kinds of adventures. Not just any consumers, but Millennial and Gen Xers mostly. According to **CEB Iconoculture**, 73 percent of Instagram's audience is between the ages of 15 and 35.

Pew Research Center found that 26 percent of online adults use Instagram. Of the adult internet users surveyed, Pew breaks the demographic down further:



Instagram skews slightly more toward a female demographic (29 percent women who are online use the channel compared to 22 percent of men who are online). Location, education and income are among the other factors measured. Of the online adults surveyed, 28 percent live in urban areas, 26 percent reside in suburban areas and 19 percent live in rural areas. Income levels on Instagram are similar to other social networks:



If your brand is interested in attracting male and female Millennials and Gen Xers who live just about everywhere and earn a healthy living, lean in to Instagram. According to [Social Times](#), Instagram is poised to be the “most powerful social media network of 2015,” with increased anticipated power in 2016.

Need more reasons to put your business on Instagram? Here are six:

1. **Enhance visual marketing** – Studies show that visuals are processed **60,000 times faster** in the brain than text. Instagram is a visual social platform, so it can be used to share your story more efficiently, more memorably and increase brand recall.
2. **Increase engagement** – According to Social Times, of the participating young adults around the world who regularly use Instagram, 52 percent said it provides users with a sense of community and **68 percent said they interact with brands** on a regular basis. This means they are following brands, viewing and liking content, and frequenting brand websites.
3. **Repurpose content** – Users are constantly posting their interaction with brands on Instagram. Brands can utilize this content by scrolling through photos they are tagged in as well as through branded hashtags. If this content positively reflects your brand’s message, it can be repurposed on your branded channel.
4. **Monitor competitors** – Wonder what your competitors are up to? Follow them on Instagram. Their posting behavior—frequency of content, focus and engagement—can provide insights into what your consumers like or ignore.
5. **Promote** – Instagram has rolled out many visual formats. Brands not only can utilize the standard photographic post, but they can experiment with cinemagraphs, video, and paid promotion with carousel ads and sponsored posts.
6. **Generate leads** – Want to drive more traffic to your website? Instagram is a proven path to lead generation. Simply put your URL in the bio section of your profile. Each time you post, reference the link in the bio to constantly encourage users to visit your website.

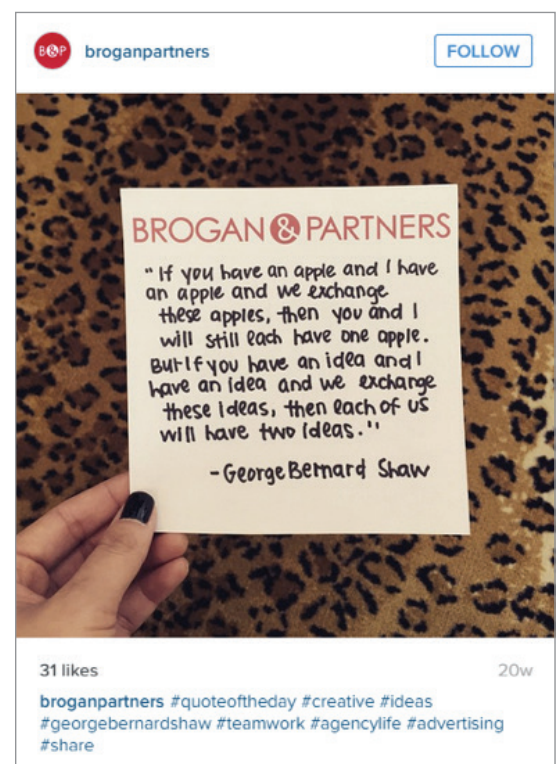
Getting started: How to tell your brand story.

From cave paintings in Lascaux, frescos in the Sistine Chapel and Campbell's soup cans with a dash of Warhol to billboards, commercials and now Instagram, visual storytelling has always been popular and powerful.

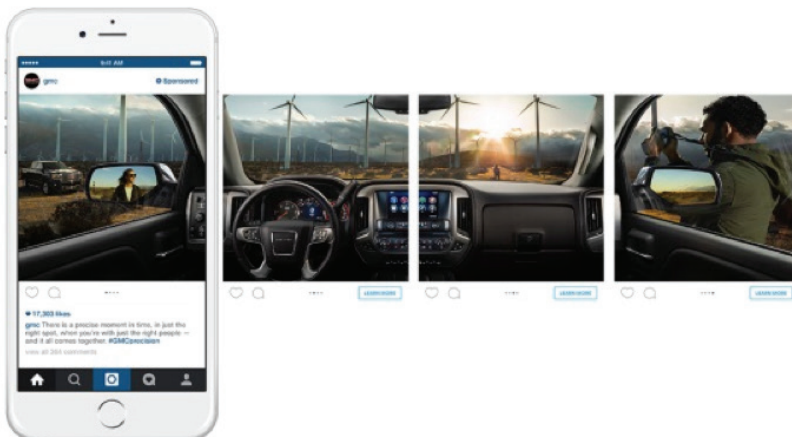
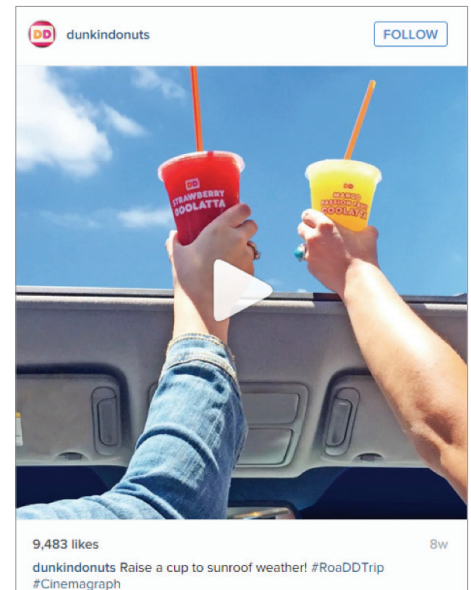
According to Hubspot, **90 percent of information transmitted to the brain is visual**. We process visuals 60,000 times faster in our brains compared to text. NewsCred notes that **44 percent of users are more likely to engage with brands if they post pictures**. Being the visual-only social platform that it is, Instagram is a powerful and strategic medium for any brand or business looking to build a community and share their story visually.

Start with these four popular formats:

- 1. Standard photograph** – The standard photograph on Instagram is a perfect square. However, in addition to square posts, Instagram now supports portrait and landscape styled images. This allows brands and users the opportunity to share their visual story as they wish. Instagram notes that nearly one in five posts is not in square format. To accommodate user behavior and trends, full-size posting is readily available. Instagram has also updated their own photo editing services with the Layout App that, upon downloading, will take you from Instagram to the application. **Layout From Instagram** allows users to experiment with mirror, flip and other formatting options.



- 2. Video** – Instagram currently allows for 15 seconds of video. What brands do with those 15 seconds is completely up to their imagination. Brands are using **slide show-like** capabilities, **time-lapses**, **slow motion**, **stop animation**, as well as videos with text and visuals. The choice is yours. Just make sure it's compelling and on-brand.
- 3. Cinemagraph** – Probably one of the most captivating ways to advertise on Instagram is with cinemagraphs. A cinemagraph incorporates still images and video. Brands like **Budweiser**, Dunkin Donuts and **Oreo** are venturing into this latest trend.
- 4. Carousel Ad** – If you have the budget, put some media muscle behind your Instagram account through paid promotion. Instagram has opened up paid advertising to select brands. Some are using the carousel format that allows viewers to swipe through multiple branded images in one post, like GMC executed below.



So maybe you're thinking, "but my brand isn't visual." Sure, Instagram was initially popular with foodies and fashionistas. But it only takes a little imagination to think visually about all brands—retail, nonprofit, healthcare and more. In fact, we've captured some of the very best practices employed by assorted industries in this paper. You'll read about hospitals, retailers, nonprofits, small businesses and food brands. Once you've been properly inspired, we'll equip you with a tick list on how to start telling your brand story on Instagram.

Inspiration Across Industries...

HOSPITALS ON INSTAGRAM

When you think of industries that are obvious candidates for Instagram, food, fashion, and travel make the short list. The delicious. The beautiful. The adventurous. These were the early adopters of the visual storytelling platform that helped build a community of more than 400 million.

Meanwhile, the healthcare industry has been a little slow to innovate around Instagram. The sick. The wounded. The infirmed. It's not pretty. But what it lacks in beauty, it more than compensates with drama. People love to talk about healthcare. And those people have Instagram accounts.

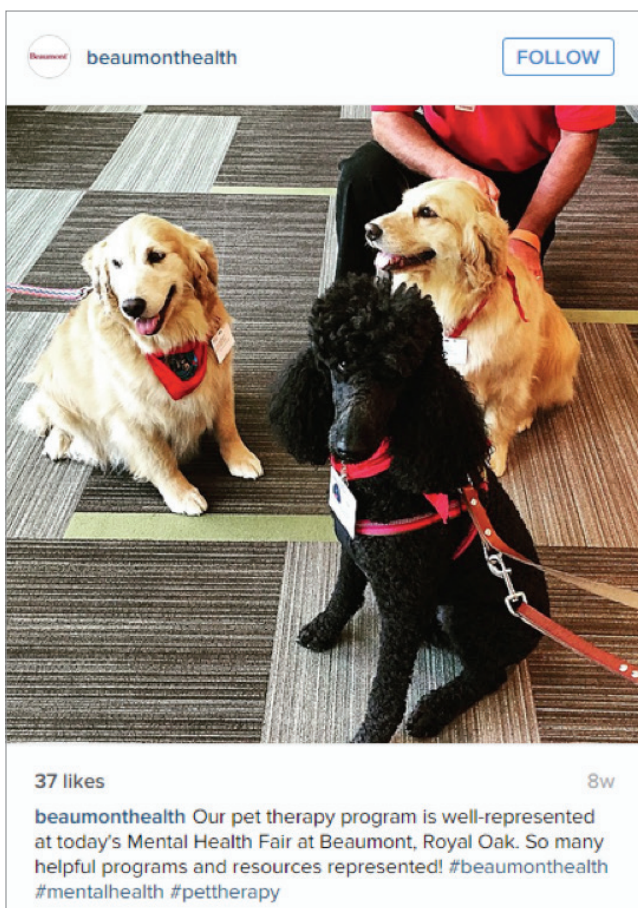
So how can healthcare marketers capture photos on Instagram to amplify their brand story? Here are five examples:

- 1. Events and special visitors** – Is a special guest expected to drop by the hospital or are you hosting a special event? Snap a photo. Patients and hospital staff not only get to meet their favorite coach, sports player, Santa or actor, but Instagram followers are able to join in the excitement through likes, comments and reposts. For example, Dancing With the Stars winner Rumor Willis paid a visit to the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, and [@childrensla](#) captured the moment:



2. Educational procedures and tools – People enjoy learning new things, so teach them via Instagram. Taking the time to educate the public is a great way to demonstrate and establish your expertise, as well as differentiate your hospital, cause or program from the rest. From Occupational Therapy equipment and MRI machines, to home remedies and **preventative measures** etc. – educate your followers on healthcare procedures.

3. Behind the scenes – Take followers behind the scenes, demystifying tests, surgical procedures and facilities.



4. Promoting programs – Introducing a pet therapy program? Opening a new Maternity wing? Post a photo of your latest program to introduce it to the public and spread awareness.

5. Fundraising efforts – Hospitals and Healthcare Organizations involved in fundraising efforts can utilize Instagram as a way to spread the word. Posting a photo or video of your cause, as well as providing a link to the fundraising page in your bio section, will increase awareness and encourage donations.

FOOD INDUSTRY BRANDS ON INSTAGRAM

Let's be honest. We've all snapped a photo of our meals at some point. Maybe it was the creative latte art, the mouthwatering Italian style pizza or the chocolate lava cake dessert that we never want to forget. We've all been there, and some of us even post these photos on our social channels.

Why? According to [CEB](#), it is because "food has become a visual medium. We're eating with our eyes first," said writer David Sax, author of *The Tastemakers*. Food is one of the most popular hashtags on Instagram, followed by #recipe, #instafood, #nomnom, #foodpic and #yum. This comes as no surprise, and brands are taking note. From [Chipotle](#) to [Whole Foods](#), brands are utilizing Instagram to build their brand communities and share their story visually.

Here are six tactics to develop your food industry brand on Instagram:

- 1. Be relatable** – Lifestyle stock images have their place on branded outdoor boards and print ads, but not on Instagram. Users want to see real people interacting with the product. Whether your products are on a [bike ride](#), on your [desk at lunch](#), or just [sitting outside](#) etc.—presenting your product in real-life, relatable settings are crucial for brands to become accepted.
- 2. Repost** – To find out how to showcase real people using your product, turn to your followers. Instagram users are quick to post their Dairy Queen ice cream runs, lunches at Panera and even that recipe from Bon Appétit magazine. Track how your users engage with your brand and repost those that positively reflect your brand messaging.



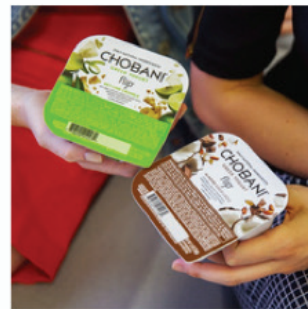
3. Promote news – New store? New flavor? Post it! Ben and Jerry’s took to Instagram to announce their new ice cream flavor. While utilizing paid media, Ben and Jerry’s was able to reach **9.8 million people** with 17% more users becoming aware of the new flavor.

4. Host contests – From like-to-win, comment-to-win, repost-to-win, a photo challenge or a combination of a few, contests are a strategic way to increase engagement. The prize could be anything from a repost, gift card, free products or even **large sweepstakes**. Oreo recently hosted a contest asking users to post playful photos with the Oreo cookie. Users were to also include the hashtag #PlayWithOreo for a chance to be regrammed.



5. Be relevant – The Dress, new emoji release or Throwback Thursday. Whatever the trend may be, brands need to be ready for **real time responses**. Taco Bell responded to the release of the **taco emoji**, Pepsi posted their own version of the trending **#ThrowbackThursday**, and several brands responded to the Marriage Equality ruling. Bottom line—relevancy is key.

6. **Be consistent** – Successful brands on Instagram are those with consistent visual marketing. Finding the balance between lifestyle photos, product images, reposts, contests, etc. is crucial to maintaining a cohesive branded theme. Take Chobani for example. Chobani showcases their product in real, relatable situations (i.e. for breakfast, as an afternoon snack, or as a **tasty new topping** on tacos, etc.). Chobani uses paid media for **specific campaigns** and repurposes user generated content. They're ready for real time responses, and they have fun with creative visual pairings, all while keeping to their brand image.



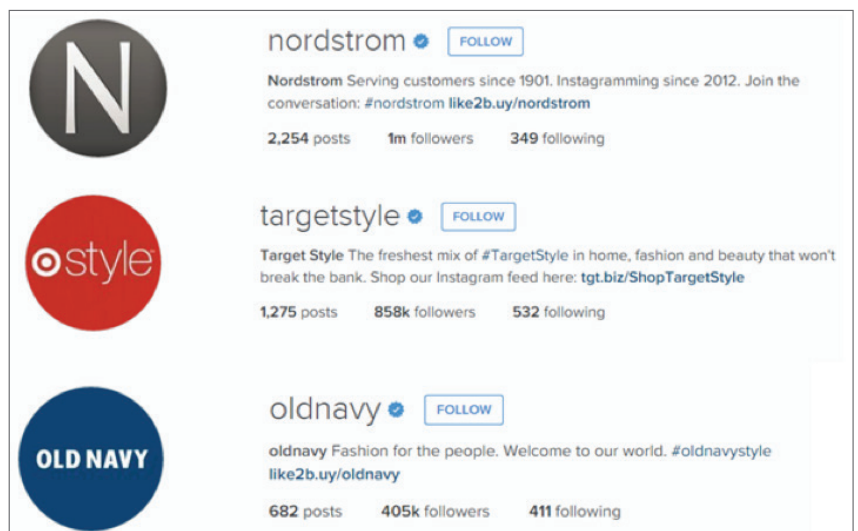
RETAILERS ON INSTAGRAM

Initially a friends-and-family photo sharing platform, Instagram has recently morphed into a commerce catalyst. With the advent of the new sponsored post format, brands are experimenting with paid promotion and infiltrating consumer feeds.

According to [CEB](#), users are turning to Instagram for product inspiration. From user-generated content to branded posts, Instagram is the forum for retailers to illustrate brands in action. It's where fashion bloggers are posting their involvement with brands. It's where celebrities are posting brand endorsements. And it's where retailers are posting product photos—all of which influence consumers spending behavior.

It can be overwhelming to plant a flag in a new social channel. Given its rising influence, retailers need to make the effort nonetheless. Here are six ways for retailers to use Instagram to market brands successfully:

- 1. Optimize your profile** – The bio section of the account profile is prime real estate for branded hashtags and website URLs. However, according to [Chute](#), the URL should be more than just the homepage; it should be updated every few weeks, complementing campaigns and promotions. The same goes for your branded hashtag. Some retailers have even partnered with [Like2Buy](#), a platform that links photos to products and caches the posts users “like.”



2. **Don't be afraid to have a little fun** – Lashes on fleek? **Celebrating Pi Day**? Or just toying around? Brands like Nordstrom, Whole Foods and Target are not afraid to have a little fun with their products. From clever “it” phrases and quirky holidays, to trending hashtags – brands are creating emotionally engaging, social shopping experiences.



nordstrom
Link in profile

FOLLOW

13.3k likes 8w

nordstrom Lashes #onfleek. Buy any 3 #mascara, get 1 of them FREE. Today only. #makeup #nordstrom



target

FOLLOW

15.1k likes 9w

target We took a famous painting and toyed around with it a bit. Can you name the original?



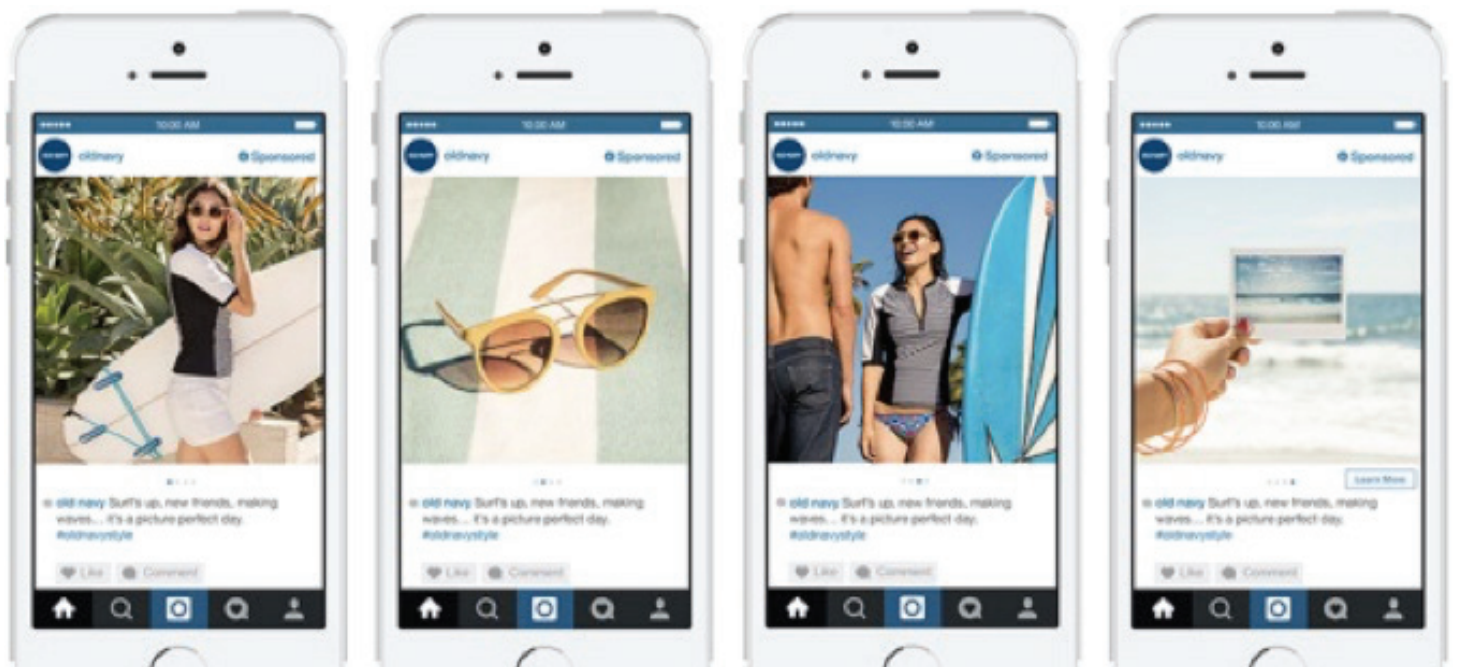
3. Repost user-generated content – Users are consistently posting their engagement with products. Retailers like **Banana Republic** and **Old Navy** are taking note, re-gramming content and sharing the love. Reposting user generated content is a great way to show appreciation and engage with the brand community.

4. Generate in-store hashtags – Utilizing an in-store or location specific hashtag could increase user generated content. Ann Taylor utilized the hashtag **#LittleBlackDressed** encouraging store visitors to take selfies in their garments. Whereas, Sur La Table asks their cooking class students to post photos of their creations with their store name and location as the hashtag.

5. Utilize influential users – Lord & Taylor recently teamed up with **50 top Instagrammers** to debut their latest Design Lab collection. The chosen Instagrammers photographed themselves wearing a **Lord & Taylor dress** to increase awareness of the new collection. This tactic proved to be a huge success—leading to the dress photographed below to sell out.



6. **Sponsor your ads** – Leading up to the holiday season, Levi's promoted four posts on Instagram, which ultimately led to a 7.4 million reach and a 24 percent lift in ad recall. This type of sponsored advertising has proved to be a successful tactic to increase brand awareness. Other brands to experiment with paid promotion are Maybelline, Target and Old Navy.



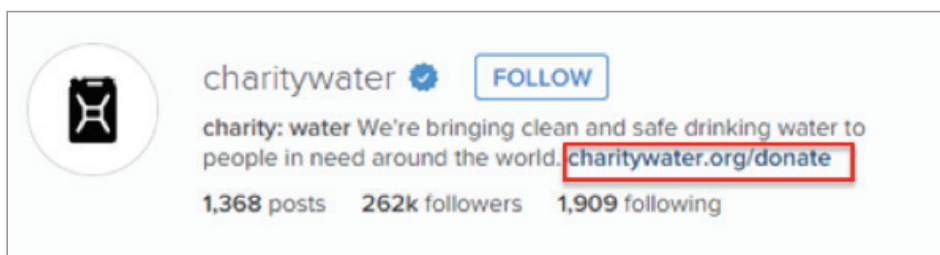
NONPROFITS ON INSTAGRAM

They say a photo is worth a thousand words. This adage has helped make Instagram popular among retail brands. But what about nonprofits? Can a picture capture the power of a cause? Oh yeah.

From **museums** to charities, **organizations** to projects, Instagram is an impactful, strategic medium to market your nonprofit and bring awareness to your cause.

Here are six ways your nonprofit organization can be successful on Instagram:

- 1. URL linking** – Want to drive more traffic to your website? Linking your homepage URL, donation page and or YouTube campaign video within the bio section of the account profile will generate leads and share your message. Organizations like **Charity Water**, **Unicef** and the **Trevor Project** are just a few nonprofits doing just that.



- 2. Pop culture references** – Pop culture is constantly steering the direction of conversation—especially on social media. After the release and success of the film Jurassic World, **#PrattKeeping** quickly became a trending topic. **The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History** quickly joined in the conversation by posting this clever photo, recreating a key scene from the film. Not only did it spark engagement, but it demonstrated their relevancy within the social space.

3. Inspirational quotes – #MondayMotivation anyone?

Post inspiring quotes related to your cause like @ted, @unicef and @red do:



4. Celebrity involvement – Is a celebrity expected to participate at one of your events? Snap a quick photo.





5. Educational facts – People take pleasure in learning new information, especially facts and statistics. Taking the time to provide factual information to the public is a great way to express the need of your efforts and cause. Over the past eight years, Charity Water has been able to fund more than **16,138 water projects** around the world—and were sure to post about it.

6. Faraway places – From **Ethiopia** to **Yemen**, sharing where your organization has been is a great way to encourage support. Followers can see where their donations are going, who they are helping, and they get to travel via their Instagram feed along the way. One of the many leading nonprofits in the space is National Geographic. From humanist portraits to environmental landscapes, **@natgeo** posts remarkable images, inspiring the public to care about the planet and all its inhabitants.

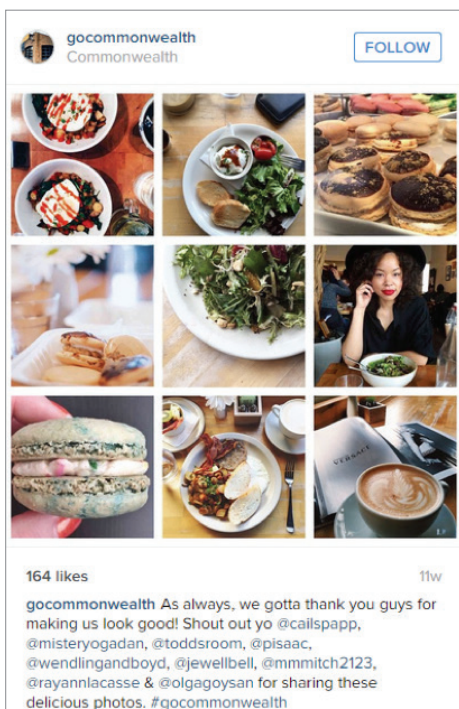


SMALL BUSINESSES ON INSTAGRAM

Owning a business can be hard. Growing a business can be even harder. Large businesses may have significant media budgets. But what small businesses lack in size, they can more than make up with customer loyalty, which can be nurtured with a social media presence.

Here are 7 ways your small business can make a big impression on Instagram:

- 1. Engage with the community** – Businesses that acknowledge their followers build trust and authenticity within the social space. Be sure to answer your customer’s questions, “like” the photos they tag your business in, repost user-generated content and follow your customers back.



- 2. Highlight customer appreciation** – There’s no better way to acknowledge your followers than to feature frequent visitors. After all your followers have influence too. Give them a shout out and highlight your frequent visitors.

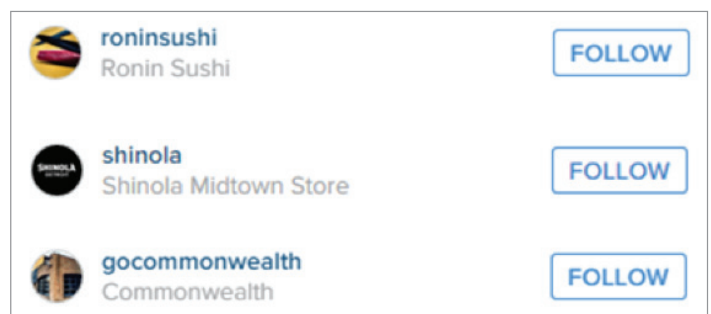


6. Tag your location – Instagram has recently updated their search functionality, allowing users to search by location, hashtags and people all at once. Users can also see photos tagged at your location, so be sure to tag your branded content.

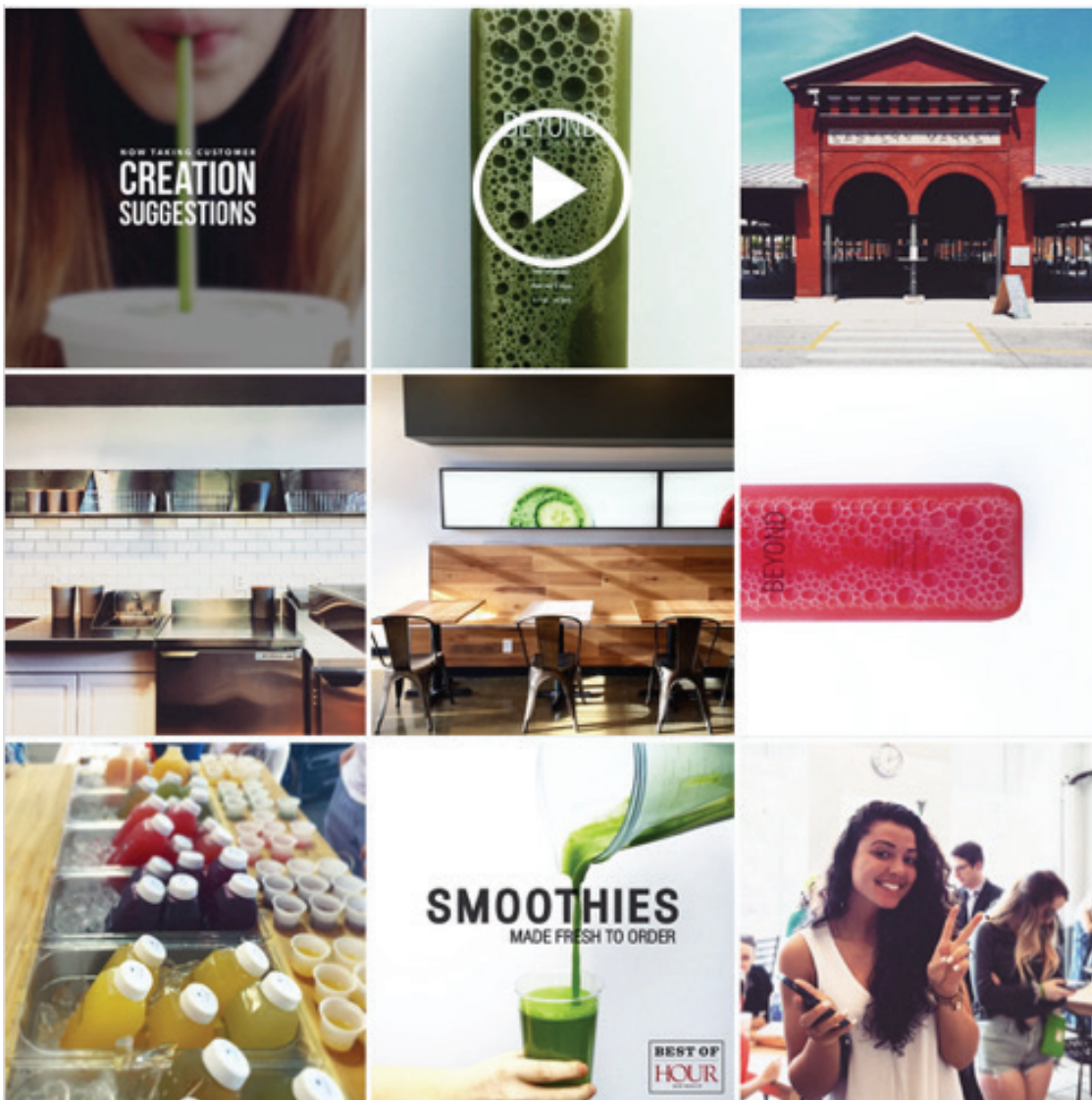
3. Honor your team – Your team is the drive behind your work. Without them, your brand would suffer. Honoring your team in a post gives a face to your business and humanizes your brand.

4. Shout out to other small businesses – Affiliated with other small businesses? Give them a **shout out**. They just may reciprocate the favor, and your name may infiltrate their follower’s feeds and increase your exposure.

5. Increase the hype around promotions – **New menu? New product? New storefront?** Post your news to stir the buzz and generate hype around your promotions.



7. **Utilize mixed formats** – A mixed medium of video, graphics, products and customers will surely diversify your feed and keep followers entertained with different formats.



Best practices to put your best photo forward.

Yes, there are industry specific tactics, but when it comes to Instagram, there are a number of things to consider before joining—especially if you are a brand. From handles to filters to hashtags, we've gathered the very best practices for your business to get started on Instagram.

- 1. Choose a recognizable handle** – When asked why users follow brands on Instagram, Iconosquare found that **48 percent of users find branded content to be interesting and funny**, 62 percent are already loyal to the brand, and 54 percent like to discover new things. That being said, users should be able to find your brand easily. So make sure your handle is recognizable and easy to search.
- 2. Keep your profile up-to-date** – New campaign? New hashtag? Update the bio section of your profile, that way you are always generating new content.
- 3. Add your URL** – Add your company's URL to generate leads and drive traffic. Be sure to update your URL per your campaign. To encourage traffic to your website, mention your “link in the bio” within the captions of your recent posts.
- 4. Generate a branded hashtag** – Whether it's a company name, like **#AnnTaylor**, a department offering, like **#TargetStyle**, or a campaign, like **#endAIDs**—generate a hashtag and encourage users to post with it. Not only are you able to see what type of content users are posting, you can also track the number of posts that use the same hashtag.
- 5. Repost user-generated content** – Now that you've chosen your branded hashtags, monitor them. Your followers are your brand advocates. They post. They share. So should you. User-generated content is an endless library of photos just waiting to be reposted.

- 6. Engage with your audience** – An engaging brand makes for engaging followers. **Iconosquare notes that 65 percent of users would be flattered if a brand “liked” one of their photos**, and Social Times notes that **68 percent of users interact with brands on a regular basis**. Be sure your brand is interacting too. Answer questions, comment on photos, “like” the photos your business is tagged in, and even follow your customers back.
- 7. Choose a consistent theme** – Successful brands are those that have a consistent branding theme. This doesn’t mean you need to slap your logo onto every photo. This means there should be consistent lighting, filtering and formatting. Find what works for your brand and be consistent.
- 8. Utilize visual formatting** – Upon the development of a consistent theme, a brand must also utilize Instagram’s **diverse visual formatting**. Maybe it’s the fifteen seconds of video or perhaps a cinemagraph—if it is on brand, don’t be afraid to post.
- 9. Respond in real time** – The most successful brands are those ready to respond in real time. Whether it’s a **Super Bowl game** where the lights go out, that **eye-deceiving dress** or the announcement of the **birth of the royal baby**, brands that respond in real time to the latest trending content keep their followers entertained and engaged.
- 10. Measure your engagement** – The numbers don’t lie. Keep track of which content is performing well and which content is not. Measure your engagement, likes, followers, number of posts per week, etc. Once you have gathered your results—reevaluate and strategize.
- 11. Have fun** – Whether it’s a trending hashtag, quirky holiday or the “it” phrase of the season, don’t be afraid to have a little fun with your brand.

Instagram is a powerful platform to share your brand story. It’s where your cause, hospital, product and business can come to life and build a community. With the different visual formats and promotional advertising available, businesses can amplify their brand and share their story.

If you are a brand looking to engage on Instagram, talk to us. Contact Ellyn Davidson, managing partner, at EDavidson@brogan.com.