What is Instagram?

With over 1 billion users and 59% of them being 18-29 years-old, Instagram is a mobile app for sharing and editing photos and videos. Instagram allows you to tag other people, use hashtags, and has a news feed to see posts from those you follow.

Power Tip: Instagram photos can be created and shared from the mobile app.

Why Have an Instagram Account?

Businesses are using Instagram to connect with the active Instagram community and to share their story visually. People love images and sharing information easily. Instagram is a simple way to share beautiful photos of your products or services with users and a great place to encourage your customers to share photos of your brand, as well.

Creating an Instagram Account

Because Instagram is a mobile app, an account can only be created on a smartphone. To prevent confusion, it's best your username be the same as your Twitter handle – then link to your company website. For your business Instagram account, upload your logo as the profile photo. In the bio section, briefly introduce your company and what you do.

Power Tip: Personal and business accounts are almost the smae on Instagram. They look very similar to users, except business accounts have a contact button. As an account admin, a business account allows you to see post analytics.
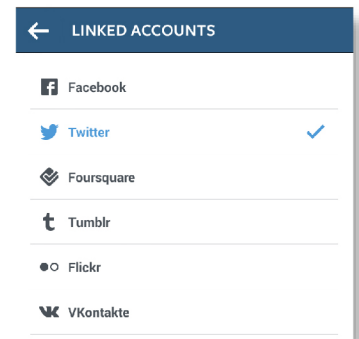
Adding Social Networks

To get the most from your photos, you can share them directly from the mobile app to other connected social networks. In your settings, you can choose to connect your social accounts and share simultaneously across all networks.

Instagram Direct

Instagram Direct is a way to share a photo privately to up to 15 friends. You can share these photos or videos to a group of people and the photo will not appear in the news feed, search, or your profile.
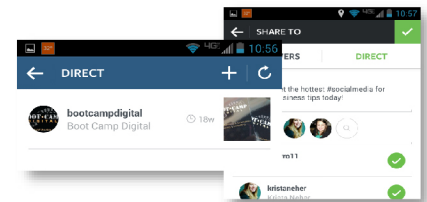
Using Filters and Editing Photos

The filters and editing capabilities are what make Instagram unique. After uploading a photo, adding a filter that overlays the image will change the way it looks. With over 20 filters and editing options such as borders, sharpen, brightness, and more, you can make any photo appealing.

Developing a Strategy

Before you start posting, it's best to have a good idea of what you want to offer your followers and how you want to represent your brand. This is your chance to do something different by giving your brand a personality and bring it to life visually. Use Instagram to share cool content with fans, like new products, behind-the-scenes shots, event pictures, quotes, and more.

Look at other businesses or brands in your industry and try to establish what your general audience would respond to. You can also search on Instagram for keywords to see the types of images that users are already sharing, related to your business.
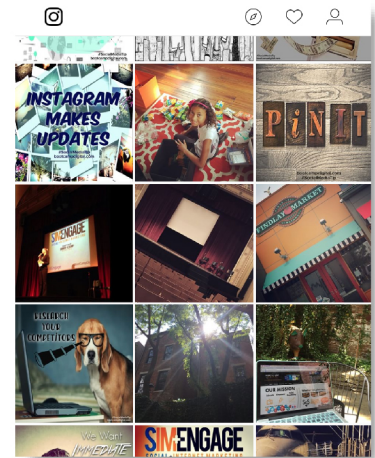
While there isn't a magic number of how many times to upload a new photo, realize your audience scrolls through all of the photos on their feed. We recommend at most, posting twice a day spread throughout the day.

Use Hashtags Effectively

Like Twitter, hashtags are used to tag a specific topic or part of an event. Using them effectively with your photos will help the likelihood of your content being found. This will overall increase your reach and get a lot more attention for your brand.

Choose hashtags that are relevant and don't overuse them. You can either put hashtags in the photo description or in a comment.

Power Tip: You can only search by hashtag so they are critical if you want to be found.

Connect & Pay Attention

Identify friends to follow by connecting to your other social networks and finding who you may already know. Instagram is a social network – participate by following others, liking their photos, and commenting to grow brand awareness. To increase traffic and brand awareness, encourage followers to post their own photos of your brand and tag your Instagram handle when posting.

Many companies hold contests for who can take the best photo and reward them with photo credit. Look at other companies on Instagram and see what they are doing well to get started in the right direction.

Instagram on Desktop

There are two separate sites you can visit to access your Instagram on a computer:
- **Instagram.com** allows you to view your profile and those you follow.
- **Iconosquare.com** gives you the ability to view your profile, view others', search for users and hashtags, and get stats on new followers and engagement.