

Refresh**Fresh**



HOW TO GET NEW FOLLOWERS & CUSTOMERS THROUGH INSTAGRAM



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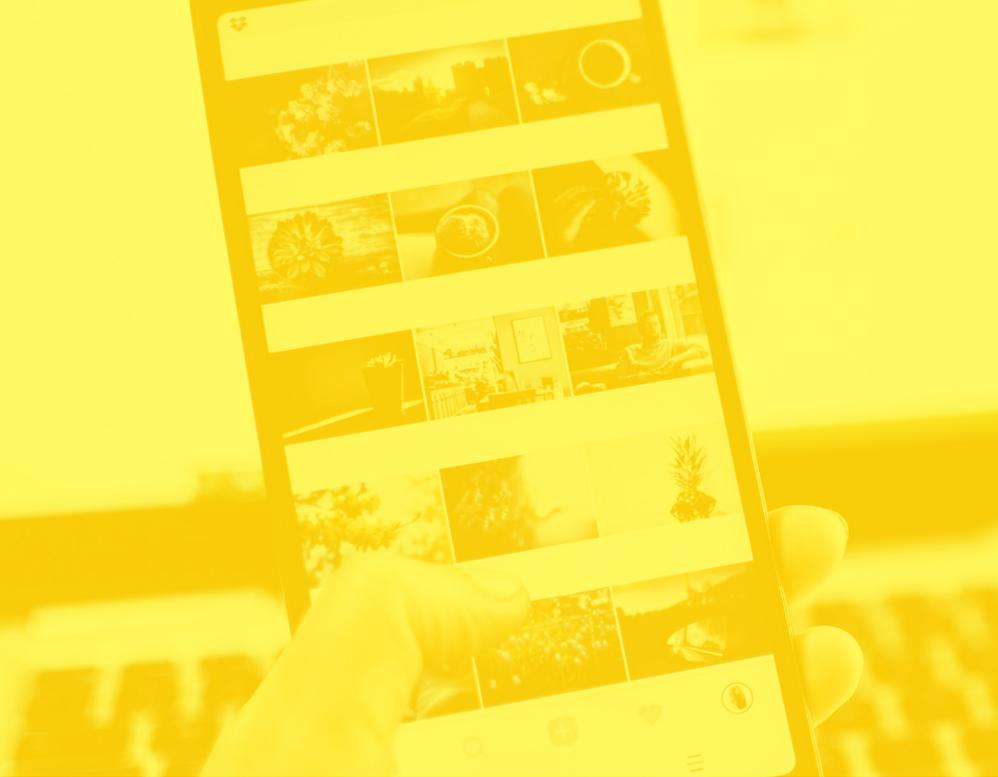
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YOUR BUSINESS IS NOW ON INSTAGRAM

How to get New Followers (and Customers) Through Instagram as a Small Business

Your business has made its way to Instagram. Now you're wondering how the people will make their way to you!

You can build an authentic following on Instagram by forming relationships through consistent and wise posting and engagement.

You will maximize the traffic on your Instagram by knowing how to: post, use hashtags, engage with your following, and reach out to get new followers. We are going to look at the ins and outs of Instagram and you will be a pro in no time! Let's do this:

WHAT TO POST

When you are planning your Instagram posts it is important to keep this in mind, how am I helping people? If you are only creating posts that talk about yourself and your business then you will not build relationships and you will not see your following grow.

You need to focus on what you can give your target audience so you can reach them. Ask yourself, does my post entertain or educate? Does it bring an emotional connection that people crave? People scroll Instagram looking for helpful information, social connection, and entertainment.

Eye-catching photos is how you get people to stop scrolling. Engaging captions is how you get them to comment. You need both of these gears working together to get quality followers who will engage and help you build up your brand and community.



WHEN TO POST

The best strategy is to post once a day. At a minimum, post four times a week. This keeps you relevant, your audience engaged, and works best with the algorithm.

Depending on your target audience, engagement will be higher at different times of the day. The best way to figure this out is by testing your posts on different days of the week and at different times. Then, using the metrics, you can analyze which posts were most seen and plan your future posts around that. Take two weeks to try out different times and then evaluate.

Keep in mind your target audience. Which time zone are they in? Are they in the office all day? What does a weekend look like for them? Get to know your audience to help take some of the guesswork out of it.

Plan your posts. Sit down for a couple of hours once a week and plan it all out. This is an excellent strategy for keeping you on the ball with your daily posts. Buffer, Hootsuite, Planoly, and Later are all good tools to use for scheduling posts.

This way you don't have to feel like you are scrambling every day to come up with your posts. It also gives you a better look at what you are posting weekly so that you can have some creative variety among your posts.





HASHTAGS

Hashtags make your content more discoverable. You don't want to do all the work of getting the perfect picture and caption and have nobody see it. Users discover content by searching hashtags on their own or from scrolling related posts under a particular tag.



FINDING THE RIGHT TAGS

One of the best ways to find the right hashtags are to study your competitors and top influencers in your niche. This is a good way to see the hashtags that are trending with your target audience.

It is best to use hashtags that are smaller and more niche. You don't want to look for the most popular hashtags on Instagram. This is how you attract the right people. If someone comes across your page and your content is not relevant to them, they won't be sticking around. You want to be found by people who will become long term followers.

Instagram has its own recommendation engine for finding relevant hashtags but you can also use sites with Instagram analytic tools such as Later, Sprout Social, etc.

If you type a hashtag into Instagram's search bar and select "tags" from the drop-down menu, you will see more trending tags that are related to yours.



BRANDED HASHTAGS

Branded hashtags are when you create a hashtag to accompany your brand. Something specific to you. This helps spread the word about your company and build a community around your brand. It also helps you find content created about you that other users have tagged.

You can use your brand name, an inspirational message, or a witty phrase or tagline. This could have nothing to do with your actual brand name, as long as it speaks to your brand values or identity.

You want to keep this hashtag simple, clever, and memorable. It is also important that it is unique and does not use anything that has been used before by competitors.

REACHING OUT TO POTENTIAL CLIENTS

Once you are all set up and you've got some nice posts to add to your feed. Now what? We sit and wait for the fans to arrive. Nope! Now it is time to reach out to potential followers. Sounds a little scary but the more you do it the more natural it will become.

You can find people who may be interested in your business by finding town pages and businesses in your area. Add their followers if they may be relevant to you as well. Use a 3rd party app (InstaFollow or FollowMeter) to track who doesn't follow you back so that you can unfollow them. You don't want to be following a lot more than the number of followers you have.

Search your location and start engaging with people who are in your town. Comment on their posts and respond to their stories. Build real Instagram relationships with people in the community you are trying to reach with your business.



ENGAGING WITH YOUR FOLLOWERS

When building a following it is important to keep in mind that quality is much more important than quantity. If you have a lot of followers but nobody is engaging then you don't have a community you just have a meaningless number.

Do not buy followers. Social media is about building relationships and you do that by developing trust with a community. So take the time to build a solid foundation for your business and don't try to take any shortcuts that may destroy your authenticity.

Unless you have a huge Instagram following (and if you did, you probably wouldn't be reading this article) then you should be responding to all of your comments. If you show love to your audience they will show it back.

Instagram favors posts with comments and if you are engaging with your commenters then they will be more likely to comment again on another post.

Social proof is very powerful. This is where someone sees that other people like something so they want to like it too. If people see conversation and community happening, this tells them they are in the right place and they will stay.



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PERSONAL MESSAGES FOR NEW FOLLOWERS



Reaching out to new followers lets them know that you appreciate them joining your community. Ah! So that is what direct messages are for. This is not a time to try and write a sales pitch. It is the time to authentically connect with new people and learn from them too.

You want to use very conversational language. The same tone you would use if you were messaging someone in your friend group. Use their first name and emojis to make them feel comfortable.

Make the conversation relevant to the town that they live in or about the hobby or niche your business might share with them.

If you have a little bit of time you can even mention a post from their feed that you liked. This will really make an impact and they will want to return the love.

The first four to six words of your message is what the user will see before they open it. That is your chance to make a good impression to increase your open rates. You don't want your message to appear spammy or like they are simply asking for engagement.

You can really stand out with the use of first names and mentioning their personal posts.

Keep your messages short so that they do not overwhelm the reader at first look. Also, don't sign your name at the bottom of the message. You want this to look like a personal chat and not an email.

Most importantly, always end with a question. An easy question to answer. Users are very likely to ignore a message that ends with a statement but if there is an easy question to answer it won't take much effort to engage.



BE PATIENT



Just because you are not sitting back and waiting doesn't mean you don't need to be patient. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither will your community. Make sure you're moving the ball in the right direction every day and you will see your following grow.

You will have some posts that flop in the beginning. Everybody does. Do not get discouraged. Learn from each post and get started on the next one. As long as you are learning from your mistakes then they will not hold you back.

Once you have gotten some ground behind you and some troubleshooting under your belt you will see your community grow and when it is a brand you are passionate about, the work is worth it.

One way to skip over some of those initial stumbles is by getting help with your social media marketing from a coach.

If you are interested in getting help with your social media strategy or need some one-on-one coaching, you can set up a free consultation call with me at Info@RefreshFresh.com

Investing in your community pays back tenfold. Once you have a following, you are no longer alone in promoting your business.

Let me help you get on the right track for growth now so that you will have that community that you are imagining in your head sooner rather than later.

**GROW
MY FOLLOWERS**

**GET MY DIGITAL
MARKETING STRATEGY**