

DON'T PUT A FILTER ON YOUR BUSINESS

MAKING YOUR BUSINESS PICTURE PERFECT - HOW INSTAGRAM CAN BENEFIT YOUR BUSINESS

In 2010 the smartphone in everyone's pocket became a camera with the introduction of Instagram. A smartphone's primary function became taking pictures to document your life, rather than making quick or emergency phone calls. What started out as the introduction to selfies and the duck face has become a crucial way for consumers to find products, and for businesses to promote goods.

Instagram is a mobile photo and video-sharing social network that allows its users to communicate through visuals. Users can apply editing filters to their images and videos, create Instagram Live videos for real-time updates, and upload Instagram Stories for their followers to view, with each story expiring within 24 hours.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING WRONG

- You don't have consistent or related images
- You're posting the same content over and over again
- You're not responding to comments
- You're not using hashtags
- You're posting poor quality images
- You're not thinking about posting times
- You're not engaging with other accounts

HOW TO USE INSTAGRAM (CORRECTLY)

Instagram users have different motives; it can be utilized for personal use, professional use, shopping, promotion, blogging, etc. The main difference between a personal and professional Instagram account is how you would create and share content. It is important to remember that a professional/business Instagram account is meant for your target audience, while your personal account is more for you. Similar to other business profiles,

your business Instagram account is a way to promote your products and engage with your audience. When you sign up for a business account or convert your existing personal account to one, you are granted real-time metrics, insights on your followers, and you can add information about your business to your profile. As a business, you should be posting frequently and consistently to maintain your online presence. Instagram audiences are more likely to engage with a post on Mondays and Thursdays between 8:00am-9:00 am and at 5:00 pm, so keep that in mind when sending out your posts. Customer service is always crucial for business; this means that response time must be quick and answers must be helpful. In fact, 42% of consumers voicing complaints on social media expect a response within 1 hour!

As an extension of your professional account, Instagram can also be seen as a blogging platform. Captions have become a public diary or a lifestyle blog. This idea has forced the new era of #influencers to emerge. It is a simple, easy-to-use platform for blogging that allows people to read a public post that feels private and personal.

INSTA-ESTHETICS

We are an extremely visual culture, and Instagram is an app that provides visual stimulation and satisfaction. It is a way of storytelling through images and occasional videos. Knowing how to make good creative is crucial. A brief intro to insta-esthetics is having high-quality images and knowing what your audience considers visually appealing and stimulating. Your images should be recognizable to your brand; therefore, you want to be consistent with the appearance of your images, so your profile has a distinct theme and your images stand out in your audience's timeline.

HOW TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

Professionally, social media is used to drive engagement in hopes of customer sales and visits. For your social media profile to be beneficial to your company you need to drive engagement. Driving engagement can be done through hashtags (#). Hashtags on Instagram are similar to those on Twitter; you use hashtags in your caption that relate to the image and the interests of your audience, and then when users search that hashtag your image will appear in the public hashtag page. Captions have become an integral part of Instagram. A clever caption can win you followers and post engagement, so be creative! Like other social media platforms, it is important for your page to engage! The more you

engage with other businesses, users, etc. the more your brand will be recognizable and reputable.