

#HONEST & AUTHENTIC *Instagram Growth*



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Each month, more than 1 billion people log into Instagram, interact with content, and post content to the platform.

By far, one of the most frequently visited & utilized platforms (more than Facebook) Instagram has become the “go to” platform for business owners & marketers looking to build their business online.

Even though it only takes 5 minutes to set up an account. The truth of the matter is most of business owners and marketers out there aren’t using Instagram the right way to build their audience, business, and exposure. And, if you are going to knock your Instagram marketing out of the park, you must know exactly what you’re doing.

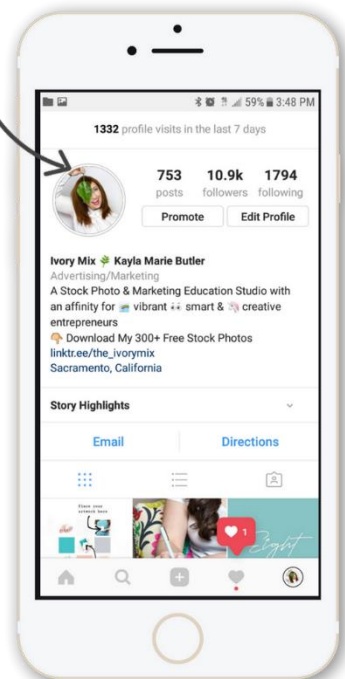
Hi, I’m Kayla Marie Butler, the founder of Ivorymix.com. Ivory Mix is a stock photography and marketing education studio where I personally support busy entrepreneurs with smart content marketing assets and strategies.

What is “smart content”? I define smart as: “it saves you a bunch of time and let’s you skip all the unnecessary headache! ”

Which is what I want to do for you today. I want to help you skip to the point of Instagram. Before I even started my business, I knew nothing about Instagram. I wasn’t even on the platform. Fast-forward to today, and I now have nearly 11 thousand and can tell you that a plan with some honest authenticity is the only marketing plan you need.

There is no reason to utilize bot software or an auto-liker. You simply need to know your audience and how to engage authentically. There are some additional ways to get your content seen by the most people. ***But, first thing’s first!*** Here are some critical tips and tricks in this quick guide that will help you do exactly that. Let’s dive in!

That’s
me






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START AT THE START – GET YOUR INSTAGRAM STRATEGY DOWN FIRST

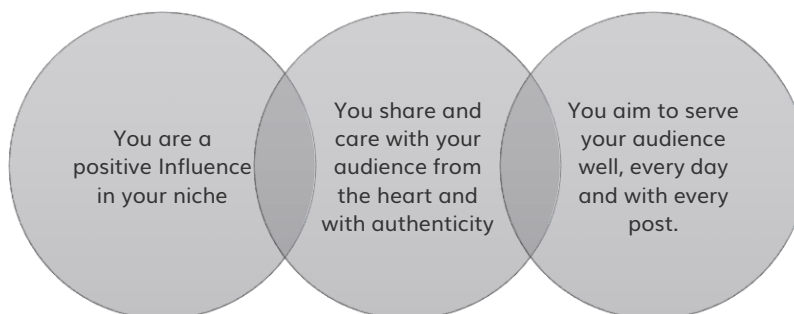
Most who are just starting with Instagram end up running their marketing right off the rails at the start, never even realizing that their marketing plan was built on a foundation of sand and not concrete.


Don't make the mistake of throwing different marketing approaches at the wall of Instagram and hoping that something sticks. Instead, we're going to take a real systematic and focused approach to creating marketing that actually has an opportunity of working.

Since you are reading this quick guide and following along with all the tips and tricks we are able to share, you are going to have an almost unfair advantage over the competition to create truly effective marketing that actually works.

You're going to be able to start at the start (where you need to create that solid foundation) and build from there.

FIRST, LET'S DEFINE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE GREAT ON INSTAGRAM:





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GETTING TO KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Now that we know what it takes to be “great” on Instagram, it’s time to start the planning process. Many parts of the planning process start with the reason you’re in business to being with. *So, let’s start there.*

WHAT IS YOUR “WHY” AND REASON FOR BEING IN BUSINESS:

Phew! That part can be the hardest (and we’re only a few pages in!).

NEXT: IDENTIFY YOUR PERFECT INSTAGRAM AUDIENCE. HERE’S WHY:

Get Clear	What you should know	Draft the plan	Avoid the mistake
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•The very first thing you have to do (preferably even before you create a new Instagram account) is come up with a crystal clear image of who your perfect prospect is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•You have to know what they are most interested in getting out of you, what they are most interested in seeing and interacting with on Instagram, and the “hot buttons” that compel them to go from engaged Instagram follower to paying customer as quickly as humanly possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Once you have this crystal clear image of who this perfect customer is you’re going to want to craft each and every single piece of Instagram content you create (as well as every other piece of marketing you manufacture) for them and them alone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•A lot of people make the mistake of trying to be everything to everyone with their Instagram marketing, missing the mark completely and getting zero followers instead of laser targeting in on their specific niche while ignoring the overwhelming majority of people that wouldn’t have become customers anyway.

DESCRIBE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE:



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AUDIENCE AGE:

0-24

25-34

35-50+

GENDER:

LOCATION:

ETHNICITY:

MARITAL STATUS:

INDUSTRY/JOB:



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INCOME:

EDUCATION LEVEL:

RELIGION:

POLITICAL STANCE:

PERSONALITY (FUNNY, QUIRKY, SERIOUS? DESCRIBE TRAITS ABOUT THEM):

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS WHAT DO THEY DO ON THEIR OFF TIME? WHAT GETS THEM EXCITED):



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HABITS (DO THEY HAVE ROUTINES? WHAT DO THEY DO EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT?):
VALUES (WHAT DO THEY FEEL IS MOST IMPORTANT IN LIFE?):

PREFERENCES (WHAT THINGS DO THEY PREFER? TO BE IN CONTROL OF, LIKE ARE THEY MAC USERS):

WHAT INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS DO THEY LIKE MOST?

WHO ARE THEIR MENTORS AND IDOLS?

WHAT DO THEY REGULARLY RE AND FOLLOW? (MAGAZINES, TV, ETC)



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WHAT TYPE OF CONENT DO THEY SHARE? (FAMILY PHOTOS, SELFIES, QUOTES?)
ARE THEY BUSINESS FRIENDLY? (DO THEY FOLLOW AND ENGAGE WITH BRANDS
AND BUSINESSES?)

HOW DO THEY MAKE DECISIONS TO BUY? (FEAR OF MISSING OUT?
RECOMMENDATIONS? IMPULSE?)

WHERE DO THEY SHOP?

WHERE DO THEY MAKE MOST PURCHASES? (ONLINE, IN THE STORE?)

WHAT HASHTAGS BEST DESCRIBE THEM (CHOOSE UP TO 6)?



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WHAT ARE THEIR GOALS IN LIFE?

WHAT ARE THEIR CAREER GOALS?

WHAT STRUGGLES DO THEY HAVE?



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BORROW GREAT IDEAS FROM OTHER INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS IN YOUR NICHE (OR IN A RELATED NICHE)

After firmly establishing the image of your perfect audience, it's time to go and look at the top 15 or 20 Instagram accounts in your industry, really trying to come up with an idea of what they are doing so effectively in your market to already.

There is absolutely no reason whatsoever to try and waste a lot of time for no reason when it comes to online marketing, especially when your competitors (your successful competitors, anyway) will not have only blazed that trail for you to follow but will have left very easy to understand and copy clues for you as well.

Some people get a little bit squeamish that borrowing is "stealing" content ideas from competitors.

But, you are going to want to get past that!

We aren't in any way suggesting that you rip off physical pieces of content and pass them off as your own. What we're suggesting is to take notice of things that work and repeat them (like the hashtags, time of day that they post, and so on) so you can see what works for you too.

This will help you speed up your content marketing on Instagram significantly, but it will also help you slip right into the top tier of Instagram accounts in your industry when you're publishing at a similar pace with similar or related content.



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Right now, would be a good time to pause for a few minutes and scroll through Instagram looking for similar brands in your niche. You can usually find the Instagram accounts of similar businesses in your niche through 1) an Instagram link on their website or 2) doing a search in Instagram

Take notice of these things before moving on to the next section of this eBook.

- What does their Bio look like?
- Are they using a brand logo or a headshot?
- How often do they post?
- Are they utilizing hashtags? Which ones?
- Are they posting to Instagram stories?

NOTES:



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PERFECTING YOUR INSTAGRAM PROFILE:

Many very successful bloggers-turned-business-owners have leveraged and used Instagram to connect with new customers and grow their businesses.

Let's do a quick review of how someone might go about other ways of gaining traffic and business from Instagram. So, to help create another brand experience on social media, I've outlined the 10 things that successful blogs do on Instagram, for business.

#1 USE A BRAND NAME & HEADLINE

(instead of your personal name – unless that is your brand)

One of the first interactions people have with you and your business on Instagram is with your name and headline. That's why many savvy small business owners utilize these spaces for unique ways to let new followers know exactly what they do and what their all about.

There's a tendency for small and growing business owners to use their first and last names, but if your business isn't named after yourself, you most likely should include the name of your business in your headline instead. This will help with your brand recognition.

It would be great if people associated your name with your businesses name, but, this takes time to establish. So, it's a safer approach to just go head and put your business name in your headline (shown here).

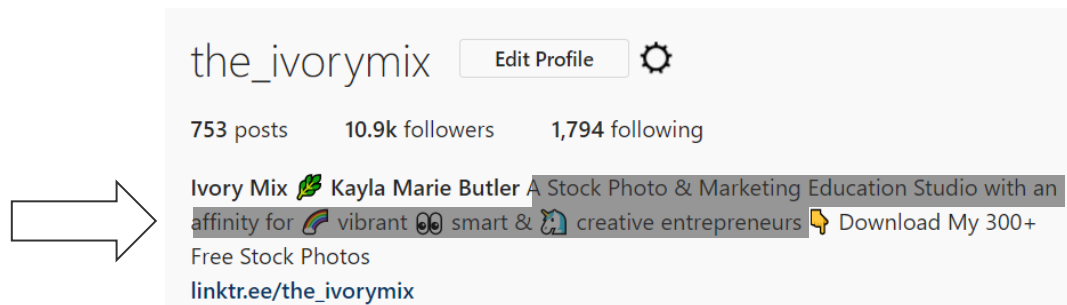


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#2 YOUR PROFILE SHOULD CLEARLY EXPLAIN WHAT YOU DO

Utilize this space in your bio to clearly explaining why your Instagram account exists is key. Savvy small business owners want to reach their ideal clients on Instagram and if your audience does get to your profile and can't figure out what you do, how can you make that connection and potential sale with them in the future? So – be clear!



Don't worry – your bio is not all meant for business though. It's okay to add some fun stuff in their too though (like emoji's or even a quick quip about how you're a coffee addict. Consider this just an added bonus and helps people get to know the person behind the scenes.

#3 USE A CALL TO ACTION

What if you did the above two steps and skipped sharing a link to your website or your product? *You'd be wasting your time!*

It's important to provide a call to action to your followers. In the examples below, you'll see that this could be as simple as a link to your latest blog post or a link to a product or challenge you are currently offering.



A hand with light blue nail polish holds a silver smartphone. In the background, there is a small potted succulent and a wooden container.

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Maybe your link is a link to your newsletter subscription.

An interesting idea is to create a custom landing page specifically curated for your Instagram followers. Imagine how awesome that would be?

Either way you tackle this area of your profile, be sure to send your followers somewhere.

#4 POST AT LEAST ONCE A DAY

(No more than 3 times a day)

It's true that most businesses and blogs that do really well stick to one post or as many as three posts a day. That's it. It's not like twitter or Pinterest where you get to post 20 – 100 times a day without any issues. Instagram is a more intimate social media and if you're posting more than 3 times, people can get turned off quickly.

That said, staying current in your follower's feeds is important so that they get used to seeing you around, recognizing you and what you're all about. Once they start seeing a post from you each day, they'll begin to recognize you and hopefully start loving your posts. When that happens, they'll begin to warm up to other ideas like purchasing your products and services. However, posting any more than 3 times a day is just offensive on Instagram.

If you do plan to post as much as 3 times a day, you shouldn't be posting them back to back either. It would be ideal and less offensive to your followers if you staggered them throughout the day. Morning, noon, and night would suffice.

Even still, just posting once a day seems to be a perfect number for most savvy business owners and they manage to get great results from just one!



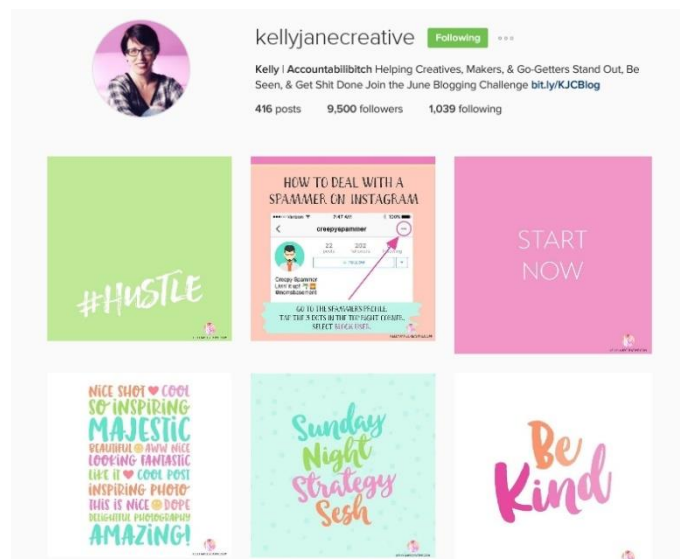
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#5 COHESIVE STYLE & COLORS

When you see coordinating colors anywhere, you instantly feel better and the world suddenly seems at peace (ok, a bit of drama never killed anyone!). So, having a cohesive style & colors on your Instagram feed (including the same profile picture you use on all social media) is a good idea and will help your audience see that you must really know your stuff and care about your blog.

Really though, these feelings of happiness and calm are why having a color coordinated and aesthetically pleasing Instagram feed is common among small businesses that do well on Instagram. It-in-itself has value and here's why.

- ♥ Followers and outsiders instantly associate your brand with those colors.
- ♥ Your brand and business will have an elevated experience on social media.
- ♥ Your words and actions are instantly validated by the professional appearance of your Instagram (people notice when things are well thought out and cared for – and they like you more for it) Check out Kelly Jane Creative's Instagram to see what I mean!



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#6 VARY YOUR IMAGES & CONTENT

This allows for a new experience for followers every day. It would be rather boring if someone posted the same image or quote every day, and for some brands, that might work well, but most successful brands on Instagram have varied content and images for their unique and changing marketing needs

#7 USE PLENTY OF SPECIFIC HASHTAGS

I'm sure you're familiar with hashtags, but the most successful brands on Instagram don't just use any hashtags. They usually pull from a list of hashtags that are specific to their type of business.

So, if you want to find like-minded people and new followers, the best advice I can give you is find and use hashtags that are specific to the image you're posting AND your brand.

For instance, business coach Cyndie has this super adorable headshot of hers where she is wearing a denim shirt. She's posted many popular lifestyle hashtags AND hashtags for things that relate to her business (coaching).

Changing up the hashtags you use will help you reach new people all the time. If you consistently use the same hashtags and never change them, you'll probably hit a wall and not gain a ton of new followers for long stretches of time.



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#8 ENGAGE AND COMMENT EVERY DAY

Besides putting hashtags on your posts to attract new followers, you should also be actively searching out people to interact with and engage and comment on profiles of potential customers and clients (or like-minded people). Many businesses and brands tend to like my photos and occasionally leave me a comment. If I've never heard of them before, I will probably click through to read more about who they are (I'm curious and I bet you and the rest of the people on Instagram are too!)

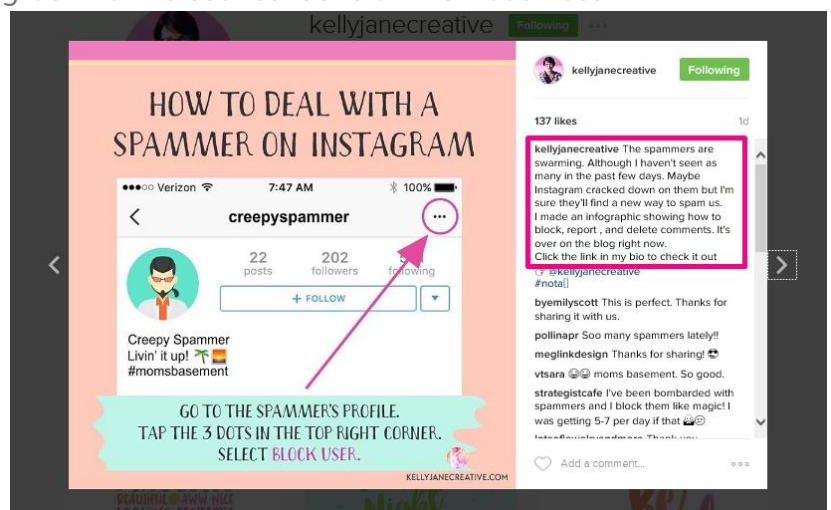
What's the lesson here? If you search out people who use the same hashtags you're using, you should like their photos and leave them friendly and helpful comments.

People want to be noticed and liked. If you're genuine about your interactions, then you just may gain yourself a new follower.

#9 HELPFUL & USEFUL CAPTIONS FOR CONVERSATION

Let's go back to that reason you're on Instagram to begin with. If you're a business and a brand looking for more clients, then you should probably include quality content within your captions. Surprisingly, you have a lot of room to write quite a bit, so make it count. Many businesses, brands, and bloggers aim to help others and inform their followers. Other times, they are giving behind the scenes looks at their business.

Whatever the image is, make sure your caption ALSO adds value. This will ensure your followers are getting some incentive to keep you around on their Instagram feed and possibly encourage them to click around your profile (all with the hopes that they become a paying client or customer – right?)





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#10 TELL YOUR BRAND'S STORY

There are few things that tell stories better than photos. So, use it! Share behind the scenes of your brand and keep people engaged in the making of your products. Selling your products is easy when you PULL your ideal clients in to your brand's story. As soon as they feel connected to your story, they'll be more compelled to engage with and support you.


So, use that marketing story (like this one from Sugar and Cloth) and use your behind the scene images and creative process to grow your Instagram and business closer to your customers.



The more you pay attention to your branding, hashtags, and making sure to engage with followers – the more you are likely to make a huge impact on your business using Instagram.

Don't be afraid to experiment with ideas, but always remember the end goal with every single image upload and caption written. If the end goal is to sell more products, you should second guess uploading bad images

Ready to start setting up your profile? Let's go!



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USING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED AND OBSERVED
ON YOUR PROFILE:

DRAFT YOUR PERFECT INSTAGRAM BIO:

WHAT HASHTAG'S DO YOU NEED TO RESEARCH:

NAME A FEW REASONS WHY YOUR NEW INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS SHOULD CLICK
ON THE LINK IN YOUR BIO:



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BRAINSTORM SOME CALL TO ACTIONS FOR CAPTIONS AND YOUR BIO:

HOW MANY TIMES A DAY CAN YOU COMMIT TO POSTING? (ONE, TWO OR THREE)

HOW OFTEN CAN YOU COMMIT TO INTERACTING WITH YOUR INSTAGRAM AUDIENCE?

WHAT IS YOUR BRAND'S COLOR PALETTE?

Primary color 1 _____

Primary color 2. _____

Accent Color 1. _____

Neutral Color 1. _____

Other. _____

Other. _____



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WHAT IS YOUR BRAND'S TYPOGRAPHY PALETTE?

Primary Typeface _____

Secondary Typeface _____

Body Typeface _____

WHICH INSTAGRAM AESTHETIC WILL YOU GO FOR?

- ☐ A strict pattern of colors and image types
- ☐ An effortless mix of images and colors
- ☐ A cohesive color palette without a distinct pattern

NOTES:



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When it comes to deciding on idea's of what to post each and every day, I like to use what we call "content buckets". These are content ideas that I shuffle through so that I'm not posting customer testimonials 7 days in a row! Content bucket's can be anything from customer testimonials to a thing you do every Friday. For instance, some brands do "Friday Introductions". That's where they introduce themselves to new Instagram followers with a selfie or introduce different members of their team.

HERE'S A SAMPLE INSTAGRAM SCHEDULE OF CONTENT BUCKET IDEAS:

- Day 1 = Behind the scenes
- Day 2 = White background, black text Inspirational Quote
- Day 3 = Repost a photo from my community
- Day 4 = Latest Blog Post
- Day 5 = Behind the Scenes
- Day 6 = White background, black text Inspirational Quote
- Day 7 = Repost a photo from my community

NOW BRAINSTORM A CONTENT BUCKET SCHEDULE:

(a good place to start is the categories of blog posts on your website):

day 1/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 2/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 3/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 4/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 5/ POST 1 content bucket_____

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You can also use the same idea of “content buckets” for Instagram Stories.

With Instagram Stories, you don’t have to worry about over posting though. Instead, you can share as much as you want throughout the day — with as much creativity as you want. You can bring your story to life in new ways with text and drawing tools.

Stories can be a great addition to your Instagram Marketing plan to show more behind the scenes, feature products, ask questions of your audience, or even blog posts.

It’s a good idea to set up some sort of a plan ahead of time so your audience get used to seeing similar content from you in your stories.

Here’s an example of how Tony Robbins showed his audience some behind the scenes appreciation and how The House that Lars built announced a new product. Seriously, the options for stories are endless.





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Remember this though! The best thing you can do for your audience with Instagram stories is be a bit consistent visually and with your content. Why not create some on brand templates you can use repeatedly (I suggest using the Canva – they also have a phone APP!).

NOW BRAINSTORM A CONTENT BUCKET SCHEDULE FOR INSTAGRAM STORIES:
(a good place to start is with the content on your Instagram profile or any activity on your website):

day 1/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 2/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 3/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 4/ POST 1 content bucket_____

day 5/ POST 1 content bucket_____

NOTES ABOUT YOUR CONTENT PLAN:



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Before you head off to implement everything we've talked about so far. Make sure to take note of where you are today and track your progress.

ESTABLISH WHERE YOU ARE TODAY AND WHERE YOU WANT TO BE IN 30 DAYS:

1. How many Instagram followers do you have today: _____
 - a. How many do you want in 30 days? _____
 - b. Your 30 day results are: _____

2. How many email subscribers do you have today: _____
 - a. How many do you want in 30 days: _____
 - b. 30 day results are: _____

3. Get a bit.ly link, a link.tree account, or create an Instagram landing page and start tracking your analytics: _____
 - a. How many visits do you have from Instagram today?

 - b. What's your 30 day goal? : _____
 - c. How many did you get in 30 days? : _____



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4. Set a goal for daily likes and comments on other Instagram posts

5. Set a goal for the number of photos you'll post each day

6. Set a goal for using hashtags on each post

7. Set a goal for replying to all comments and direct messages

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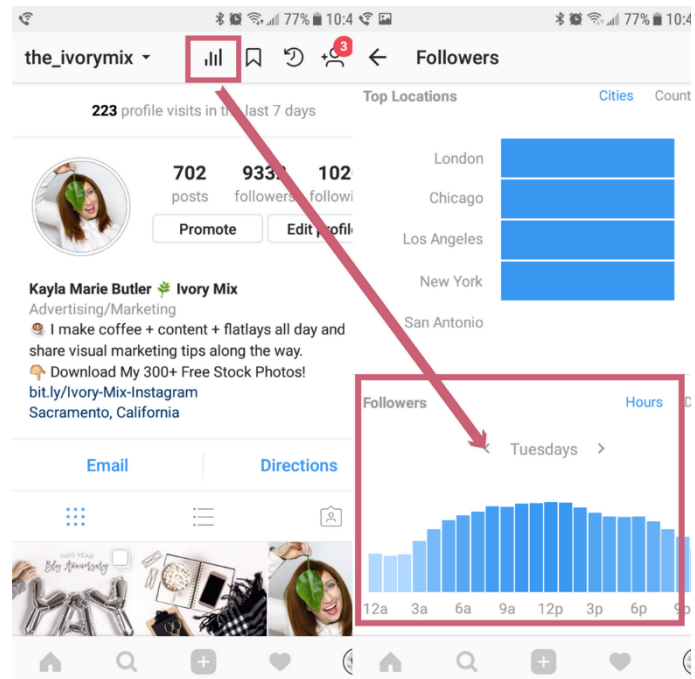
WHAT IS THE BEST TIME TO POST?

One of the best ways to decide on the best time and day to post content on Instagram is by taking a closer look at who your audience is and where they live.

When considering who your audience is, you should be looking at certain things like their daily habits if they work full-time, or part-time, or maybe they're at home most of the time?

For instance, if your ideal audience and readers are stay-at-home parents, then their habits may include some free time between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.. Compared to someone who works in an office full-time and may only have free time to check social media during lunch and after work.

Once you have an idea of your audience daily habits, you can take a closer look at where they live. The best way to do that is by researching through the native analytics shown through the Instagram app insights (only available when you change to a business account).





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Instagram insights are available to marketers who have created a business account and allows them to see things related to their audience (like where they live).

[Click here to check out this quick video tutorial](#) for finding your best times to post using the native Instagram app AND a few other tools that I enjoy using, just to give you some much needed extra benefits, features, and options to enhance your Instagram strategies ;).

Once inside your Instagram insights, you'll see that there's a lot of information for you to gather about your followers. In fact, Instagram will show you the times of day, and for each specific day, when your followers are most active.

USE THE BEST TIME TO POST SUGGESTIONS (FROM APPS LIKE PLANN, LATER, TAILWIND OR VIRAL TAG)

There are multiple apps and services that can help you find the absolute best time to post. I've tried most of them and here, I'm sharing a few of my favorites.

One of the first Instagram planning and scheduling apps that I first started using and still use to this day is the [PLANN app](#). When looking at the performance area inside the app, you'll see a lot of information available to you, but most importantly you'll be able to gather the best time to post.

Another service that comes in handy is Later. Later has a feature called the 'best time to post' which tells you the top times for your exact Instagram account and audience.

Using this feature on [Later makes it pretty easy](#) to know when to post content on Instagram for the best engagement possible.

Another service I've used is called ViralTag. Much like Later, Viraltag offers Social Services for both Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter. [Viraltag](#) has a feature

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called get 'recommended times'. These times for posting are based on data from the social sites that you share with it.

Another tool that I've tried and like is Tailwind. [Tailwind's Instagram scheduling](#) is fairly new but they do provide you with the best time to post, and they call it a 'smart schedule'. You simply insert how many times a day you would like to post on Instagram and it generates Specific times for each post based on their data gathered from your Instagram profile.

Generate New Smart Schedule

Re-create a brand new Smart Schedule from scratch! We'll generate new optimized Timeslots for you using your Instagram data to determine when your audience is most likely to be engaged.

Note: All of your existing Timeslots will be replaced.

I want to post...

times per day ?

I'm available to post between... ?

12:00 AM

8:00 AM

10:00 PM

12:00 AM 3:00 AM 6:00 AM 9:00 AM 12:00 PM 3:00 PM 6:00 PM 9:00 PM 12:00 AM

All times shown in PST

Generate New Schedule

* Note: all of your existing Timeslots will be replaced.

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WHY SHOULD YOU CARE WHAT THE BEST TIME TO POST IS?

Not too long ago, Instagram updated their algorithm, which we discussed in depth [here](#). But, what this means is, instead of showing new post to users in a chronological order, they now curate posts to users based on other data to increase and drive engagement from their users. Instagram's goal with this algorithm was to improve the user experience and there's no argument that this algorithm works to do that.

However, now that we know the algorithm chooses when our posts are shown to our audience, it makes you wonder if choosing the right time to post even matters?!

But, let me assure you, posting your Instagram content at the right time still matters because if you post when your audience is most likely to be active on their account, then chances of your post being seen and you driving as much engagement to that post as possible – is at its absolute highest.


The more engagement you have, the more your post will be shown to other users, which in turn boosts your engagement even further and the cycle goes on to grow your account. Understanding the Instagram algorithm and posting at the right time is a win-win for you and your audience.

PRO TIPS & GENERAL RULES WHEN PICKING TIMES TO POST ON INSTAGRAM

Pro Tip #1 Generally speaking, the best time to post on Instagram are during lunch and in the later evenings. Just think for a moment when you are bored and checking your Instagram the most. If it's standing in the lunch line at the deli or while sitting on the couch between commercials, then your audience is probably most active during the same time frames.

Pro Tip #2 Weekends tend to be lower on engagement, so save your best content for the weekdays and you'll drive more likes and engagement!

Pro Tip #3 Find your sweet spot and be consistent with your content and times to post.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Please note all APP links to iTunes BUT most are also available in the google playstore.

SCHEDULE APPS

- Later <https://later.com/>
- Plann App <https://www.plannthat.com/>
- Tailwind
- Preview App <https://thepreviewapp.com/>

GRAPHICS & CONTENT EDITORS

- SnapSeed – Photo Editing <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/snapseed/id439438619?mt=8>
- PicsArt – Photo & Graphics Editing <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/picsart-photo-collage-maker/id587366035?mt=8>
- VSCO - Photo editing <https://vsco.co/>
- Canva – Graphic Editing <https://www.canva.com/app/>

VIDEO EDITING

- Storeo – Create and post full length video's in your Instagram stories: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/storeo-for-instagram/id1207906248?mt=8>
- RiPl – unique videos for social media <http://ripl.com/>

ADDITIONAL BLOG POSTS

- [How to create 30 days of content for Instagram in 8 simple steps](#)
- [Why you should create an Instagram Challenge for engagement](#)
- [Why you shouldn't ignore Instagram in your social marketing](#)
- [How to style the perfect flatlay](#)

A hand with light blue nail polish holds a silver smartphone. In the background, there is a small potted succulent and a wooden container. The text 'HONEST & AUTHENTIC' is in a sans-serif font, and 'Instagram Growth' is in a cursive script font, both in white.

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Yay! You made it to the end. Let me know what you thought about this eBook and why not [connect with me right on Instagram!](#)

AUTHOR: KAYLA BUTLER FROM IVORYMIX.COM