Instagram Content

Guide

HOW TO FIND #CONTENTIDEAS

KEEP IN MIND

DOS & DON'TS
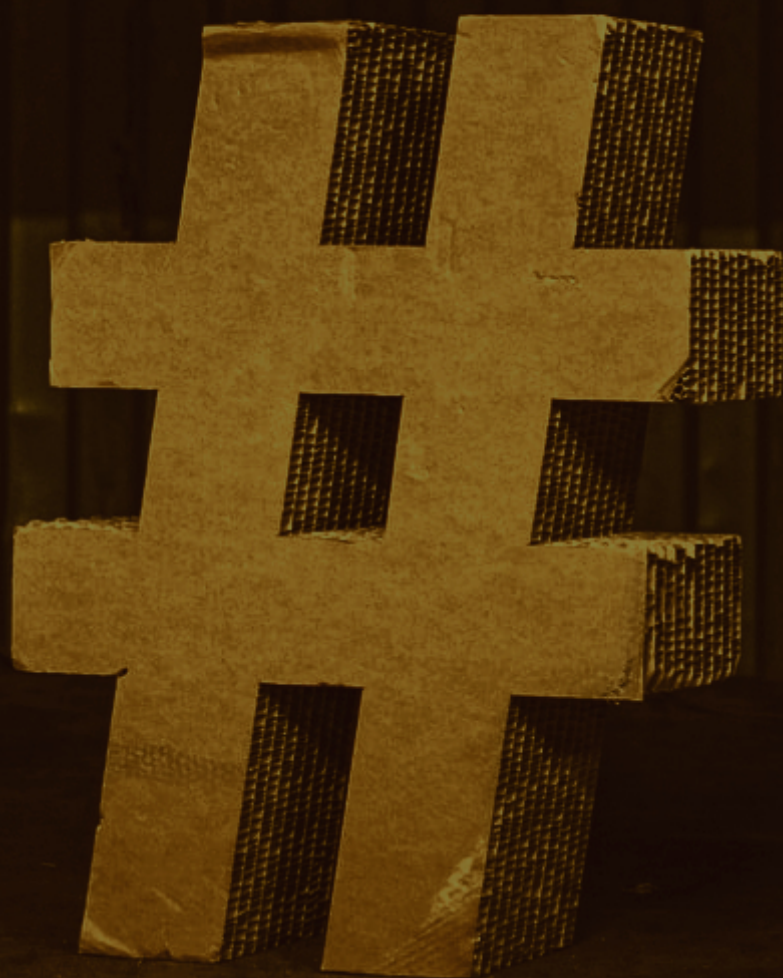
Even though Instagram is primarily a visual platform, it allows you to cater to the different ways that people consume information (video, audio, reading).

You can post:
• Pictures
• Carousels
• Stories
• Reels
• Short feed videos
• Long feed videos

You also have:
• IG Feed
• Stories
• Highlights
• IGTV

Pictures can be real photos, drawings, illustrations, graphics, or infographics.
Videos could be animated, slideshows / series of pictures or real storylines, perhaps with few artistic effects.

All these features are made available because different audiences will prefer different kinds of content. So do make use of them. You don't have to use them all if they don't fit in with your brand. You also don't have to use them in the same manner that everyone else does. However, you should attempt to use more than two (2) of them and be creative about it.

Do
• Have a (few) specific purpose(s) for your Instagram account
• Post valuable and relevant information
• Post about yourself here and there (more if you are the main point of sale, e.g. public speaker, model, etc.)
• Use as many of the 30 feed hashtags or 10 story hashtags allowed as possible (contrary to popular belief, it doesn't look spammy)
• Allow for user-generated content (having your audience share content by using a personalized hashtag)

Don't
• Talk about every interest you have in one account (keep it focused)
• Post about topics outside of your main area of business (e.g. inspirational quotes that talk about life when your business is not life coaching are not useful)
• Post a lot of other people's content
• Use too much "I" ("we" or "you" are best)
• Post irregularly

Further details and explanations below

EXPLAINING
DOS & DON'TS

A general purpose would be "I want people to learn more about my services" while a specific purpose may be "I want to teach people how to use content strategically."

Posting about things unrelated to your goals may deceive or confuse your audience and you may end up losing more than gaining. If your business sells jewelry but your posts talk about leadership, you may attract lots of people to your channel but very few of those people would actually buy anything from you.

Talking about more than one interest you have, which doesn't relate to your channel's purpose, will confuse people and they may even eventually forget what it is that you do. Being specific will help you get those people who actually NEED your services and who are wondering if there is someone who can help them with their particular needs. Also, try not to segment your audience by any non-relevant criteria (e.g. business coach for women wouldn't help much as almost all the business advice applies to both women and men; health coach for women would be different).

The people you address on your social media should be those who can make your goals happen. Those people will then stick around your channel longer and even promote it.

Hashtags are one of the best ways to get discovered. They need to be well research though, and appropriate for both your purpose AND the size of your following. Keep in mind to mix short-form with long-form hashtags, and to not use any of the Instagram banned hashtags (check them regularly as the list keeps changing).

You don't have to post every day (though it helps if you can). You can post three (3) times per week or even less. However, you should try (as much as possible) to post at regular intervals. If you are out of the picture for too long, your audience might even forget you exist or you won't be the first person in their minds to recommend when a conversation arises about a specialist with your expertise.

Types of Content

You have multiple categories of content. So when you think about creating content, try to fit it in one or two subcategories under each category below.

 The first category is based on the content's purpose: informative, persuasive, motivational/inspirational, educational, demonstrative, entertaining, and interactive.

 The second category relates to the form in which content is presented: quotes, statistics, poems / lyrics, stories / narratives, speeches, pitches, case studies, etc.

 The third category of content has to do with your tone of voice: formal (most B2B), informal (most B2C), technical, scientific, creative, etc.

 The fourth and last category of content is the simplest one: personal (mostly subjective, as well as revealing of your thoughts and/or emotions) vs impersonal (mostly objective, not related to yourself).

Examples of different content types next

Informative Content

o Best practices + examples

o Bad practices + examples

o Tricks and tips

o Pros and cons

o Definitions

o How to

o Did you know ?

o Resources and tools including people, organizations/associations, products and technology

o Promotion or shout out for related/complimentary products/services from other businesses/professionals/influencers (including affiliate marketing)

o Testimonials

o Case studies

o Opportunities

o Important reminders/things to consider when

o Basic company / project information – what, where, when, who (e.g. reminders or changes in hours of operation, contact information, location, team, services/products, timelines, deadlines, goals/plans, target customers/audience, partners/collaborators, competitive advantage/value proposition, FAQ's)

o Promotions (discounts, freebies, giveaways, contests, sales, etc.)

o Events (organized by you/team or attended by you/team) + lessons/benefits

o News (general, industry-related or insider/exclusively on your channel) and how they might affect you/your customers

o Trends

o Statistics

# Entertaining and Inspirational Content

o Fun/funny national or international holidays

o Anniversaries and other celebrations

o Random or hypothetical situations, activities, inventions, etc.

o Jokes

o Amusing stories

o Comparisons like "this vs that", "before and after", "with or without", "if and if not", etc. (e.g. English spelling vs pronunciation)

o Throwbacks

o Light ridicule/ poke fun at something (e.g. superstitions)

o Self-deprecating humor

o One day in the life of _____

o Magical, mesmerizing, unique experiences, activities, scenes

o Behind the scenes / bloopers

o Meaningful holidays and celebrations

o Rituals and traditions

o Pay It Forward

o What a great idea!

o Meaningful stories + lessons

o Challenges + encouragement/lessons

o Metaphors

o Quotes and/or proverbs

o Mission and/or values

o Success stories (regular people)

o Examples of successful people in the industry

o History + lessons

o Explanations of your company's/project's elements (e.g. name, logo, business idea etc.)

o Appreciation and/or gratitude of another individual/company/project/event

o From my list of ____ (e.g. uplifting songs, books to read, places to visit, people to meet, etc.)

o Guest(s) post(s)

Interactive Content

You may want to start using these posts only after establishing a large social media presence or a tight community, as participation rates may be low at first and you may end up not bringing any value and wasting future opportunities for discussion.
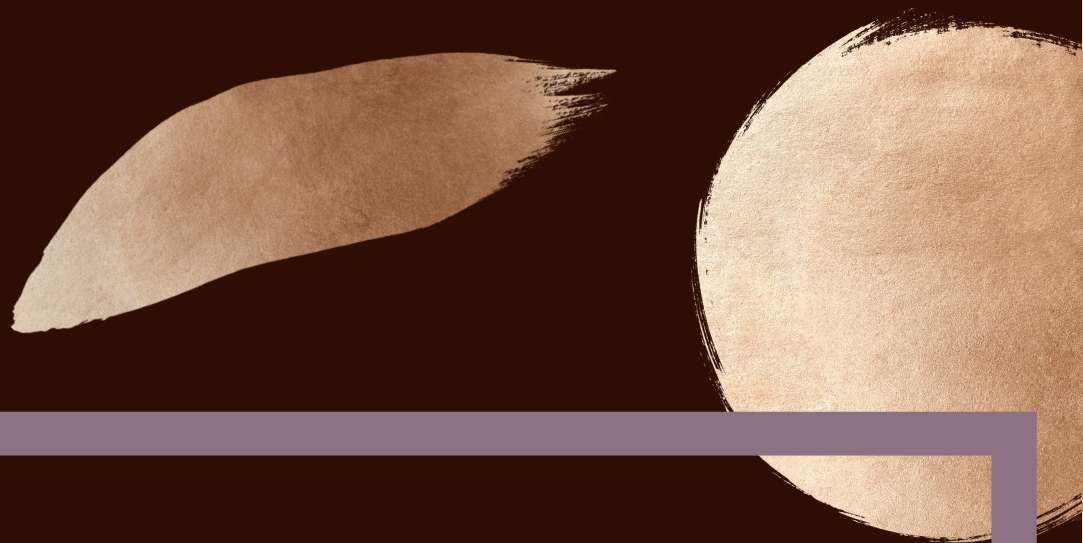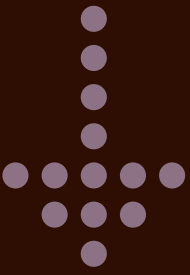
Caption this image/video

Do you agree/approve or disagree/disapprove with/of this ____? (I would stay away from highly debated topics, unless that is part of your social media goals; otherwise, you may create unnecessary conflict)

Vote/choose between two alternatives (e.g. "which one are you?" , "which one do you prefer?" , "which is the myth?")

Guess what/where/when/who/why/how ____ (e.g. "what this is", "who said this", "where this went", "why this and not this", "when this was taken", "how old this is", etc.)

Written challenges/games (e.g. "name one/all ", "think of ____; now do ____ with it", etc.)

Location-based challenge (e.g. scavenger hunt across similar/related places or within a community)

Trivia / brain teaser / puzzle

Fill in the blank(s)

Select the right answer (from multiple options)

Match ___ with ____ (generally the pictures with the correct text)

Can you recommend ____?

Send me your ____ (e.g. questions, ideas, thoughts, suggestions, guesses, feedback, etc.)

Sign up for / subscribe to ____

Interactive Content

Who-questions like:

i) Who remembers ____? (you can tell them what to answer in order to make it easier for them and also for you if you are collecting this data – e.g. "if you do type YES below")

ii) Who did it best?

iii) Who has tried ___? (this may raise participation rates more than asking "have you tried?")

When-questions like:

i) When did you start ____?

ii) When was your last ____?

iii) When did you realize ____?

What-questions like:

i) What do you think of ____?

ii) What is your most/best/worst/least ____?

iii) What does it mean to you when ____?

Where-questions like:

i) Where did you meet ____?

ii) Where should ____ go for ____?

iii) Where might I find ____?

Why-questions like:

i) Why does it have to be ____?

ii) Why have we reached the point of ____?

iii) Why so many of us ____?

*** you may also consider "why not" questions

How-questions like:

i) How is this different than ____?

ii) How can we do better about ____?

iii) How many times/often can ____ do ____?

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