



ARTSY

Social Media Toolkit for Galleries

ARTSY'S GUIDE TO GROWING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Connect With Your Audience

What is the benefit of social media for a gallery? What makes it worth the investment? Social platforms are digital extensions of your gallery that both affect brand awareness and directly connect you with curators, collectors, and art-world influencers. The why is clear, but the how is often the biggest roadblock. This toolkit is designed to help anyone who manages social media for a gallery to:

- Determine what social media success looks like for you
- Develop strategy for post formatting, frequency, and timing
- Understand best practices for tracking your performance
- Get inspired to create more content

Generally speaking, there are four rules of thumb to keep in mind when approaching social media:

Be intentional. No social media strategy is complete without a concept of what success looks like for you. Anything is possible, but only if you prioritize getting to know your followers, what they respond to, and what they don't. Learning to mold your idea of the gallery's brand to what performs well will ultimately determine your success.

Be involved. The best way to get in the mind of the consumer is to consume social media yourself. Follow [other galleries](#) to see what they're up to, and influencers to see what they like. Being aware of trends on social media will keep you relevant. Think beyond your

own feeds and actively seek opportunities for additional amplification. Have your artists, staff, friends, etc. collaborate with you and/or promote your content to get your gallery in front of new audiences.

Be inclusive. Content posted for a limited audience will get limited engagement. When formatting content that targets a broad audience, don't pander. Conversely, when formatting more specialized content, be approachable so it will also appeal to a broader audience. Social is about creative storytelling. Present not only what your gallery is, but what you want it to be.

Be iterative. There is no strict formula for social media. Rather, the process is experimental and involves a great deal of trial and error. Try something for two weeks then reflect on what worked and what didn't. Try hard not to give up if you don't see immediate results and know that consistency is key both in post quality and frequency. Invest in developing your skillset and an intuition for social media, as statistics will only tell you something performed well, not how to replicate its success.

In this guide, we've chosen to cover Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, as they have the greatest possibility for return on investment. Here's how to make the most of each platform for your gallery.

What's Covered

INSTAGRAM

- 9 Ideas for Captivating Images
- Anatomy of an Instagram Post + Additional Formatting Tips



FACEBOOK

- 5 Ways to Make Your Posts More Visible on Facebook
- Anatomy of a Facebook Post + Additional Formatting Tips



TWITTER

- 9 Ways to Speak Tweet
- Anatomy of a Tweet + Additional Formatting Tips



SCHEDULING + MEASURING SUCCESS

- 4 Free Tools You Should Use
- 5 Metrics You Wouldn't Think to Pull



Instagram



As a hypervisual platform with over 300 million monthly users, Instagram has quickly proven powerful for building community and developing brand in the art world.

The greatest difficulty for galleries on Instagram seems to be simultaneously engaging broad and specialized audiences (e.g. the general public and art-world insiders). Ideally, your strategy should be to post high-quality imagery tied to captions that include information that might be useful to a variety of audiences. The image will satisfy followers looking to engage with beautiful pictures but also hook those who might be interested in a little more, which you can provide via the caption. Always aim to give your followers the most opportunities for quality discovery possible.

Another technique for playing to different audiences involves using your director/owner/sales staff accounts in tandem with the gallery's. As Artsy found recently, art-world insiders (especially collectors) are [more likely to buy into content](#) coming directly from another insider. The public is also more likely to respond to an insider's feed producing specialized content than the main feed. Work with your staff to create posts that speak directly to insiders and make their accounts findable by tagging them in the main account's posts. Sales are certainly possible via Instagram, but keep in mind that developing a diverse and dedicated community of followers should be your top priority.

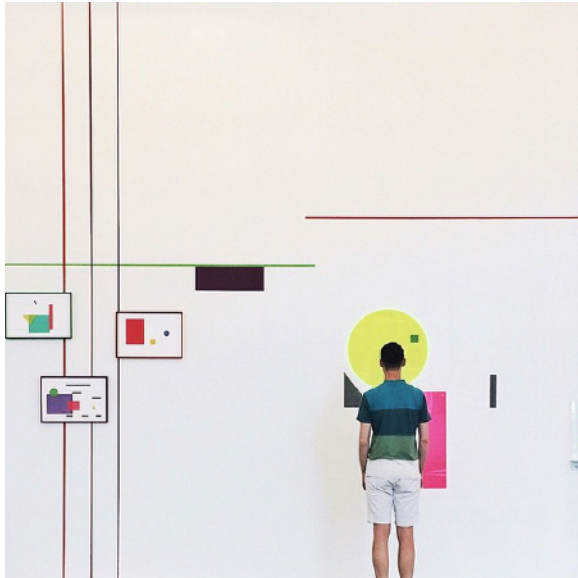
The first impression your feed makes greatly affects how frequently it is followed, so pay close attention to the quality and formatting of your posts. Be sure to shoot your photos with the best camera you can find (latest iPhone or even a DSLR) and intersperse those posts with install/artwork images taken by a professional photographer if you must. In our experience, the best times to post are 8–10am, 5–7pm, and 10pm–midnight in the timezone that best suits your followers, but experiment thoughtfully with different times to find out what works best for you. Avoid posting more than twice daily and space your posts out. Instagram posts can have a lifespan of up to 6+ hours and followers may unfollow you if they see too much content coming from your account.

Managing a successful Instagram presence absolutely requires that the platform become part of your daily routine. Replying to comments, liking/commenting on photos tagging your gallery, and following new accounts are all part of the game. Especially when building up a new account, you can expect to receive love only if you show it.

9 Ideas for Captivating Images



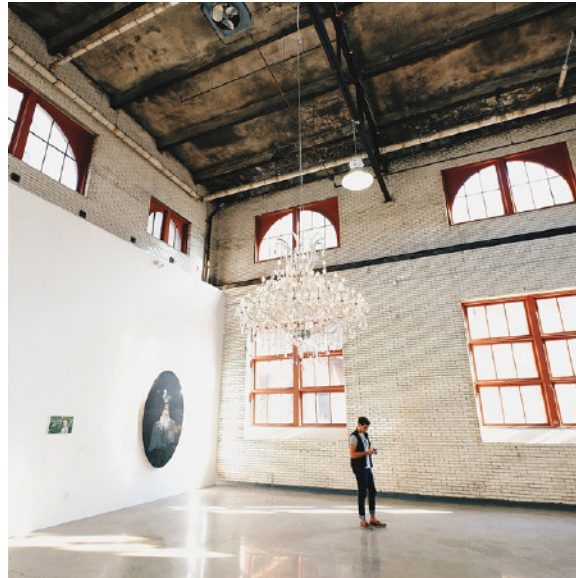
1: INCLUDE A PERSON



VIA [@SUEALEXLEO](#)

Include a person in the image to give your followers a better sense of scale. This is especially helpful when photographing two-dimensional work.

2: GO WIDE



VIA [@BROOKLYNARCHITECT](#)

Showcase large installations and/or the gallery space; sometimes it doesn't have to be about an individual work.

3: FIND YOUR LIGHT



VIA [@URBANXKOI](#)

All cameras love bright and natural light. Think carefully about the lighting conditions in your shots and experiment with slightly overexposing or underexposing.

9 Ideas for Captivating Images



4: SHOOT THROUGH SOMETHING



VIA [@DIRTYYYDAN](#)

Give your photos depth by using artwork, architecture, or even props to frame your shot.

5: FOCUS ON THE DETAILS



VIA [@VAJIAJIA](#)

Break up your feed with interesting details or all-over patterns. Avoid a feed that consists solely of install shots or artwork crops.

6: WORK WITH YOUR ARTISTS



VIA [@PUBLICARTFUND](#)

Consider engaging your artists by regramming their posts or engaging them in an account takeover or influencer events. Takeovers are most successful when the person producing the content is able to produce high quality content, and when they are able to cross-promote the takeover to their following.

9 Ideas for Captivating Images



7: MAKE A VIGNETTE



VIA [@MARKATTHEMUSEUM](#)

Have beautiful printed materials or a new monograph on one of your artists? Vignettes can be a beautiful way to showcase your gallery without posting an installation or artwork shot.

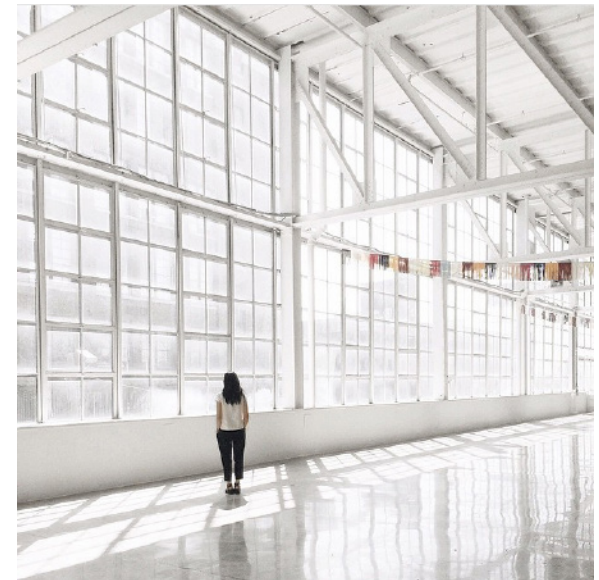
8: PLAY WITH SCALE



VIA [@PARIDUST](#)

If you really want to get creative, think about how you can create interesting images by playing with scale. This works best by creating distance between the artwork and subject, or when the artwork's scale is extreme.

9: GO MINIMAL



VIA [@LAGRACIEUSE](#)

All great feeds include variety. Embrace minimalism with shots of empty spaces or of singular elements.

Anatomy of an Instagram Post



GEOTAG

Make sure you consistently use the right geotag (a tag indicating the geographical location the image is referencing).

PRO TIP: Your gallery's Instagram geotag is connected to your Facebook page. If you are having issues with your geotag showing up, update the address linked to the gallery's Facebook page and wait a few days for the geotag to fix itself.

WHITEN YOUR WALLS

Make sure walls are white by brightening and desaturating them while processing.

PRO TIP: The selective adjust tool in the [Snapseed app](#) is your best friend. Use it to selectively adjust the brightness, contrast, and saturation of a specific area of any image. You can then use apps like [VSCO Cam](#) and [Faded](#) to give images a slightly filtered look.

HASHTAGS

Include relevant hashtags in your caption, and not all at the end.

PRO TIP: If you want to experiment with more than just a few hashtags, add them in a comment immediately after you post. This will keep your caption more succinct but still make your image discoverable. Also experiment with upstyling your hashtags to make them more legible (e.g. [#DeWainValentine](#) vs. [#dewainvalentine](#)).



ADD A FIGURE

A person in the image both gives the work dimension and keeps the shot from looking too sterile.

PRO TIP: Experiment with posing figures in your photos. You might be able to capture a visitor as we did, but also consider using your team to “play visitor” and help stage your shot.

TAG STAKEHOLDERS

Be sure to tag all relevant stakeholders excluding yourself in your caption to give your followers more opportunities to explore.

PRO TIP: Tag artists in the caption and also hashtag their name at the end of the caption. This gives your followers an opportunity to both follow your artists and explore more of their work hashtagged on Instagram.



ADDITIONAL FORMATTING TIPS FOR INSTAGRAM

How should I format my bio?

The best bios include a line about the gallery, your address and/or cities, the official gallery hashtag, relevant staff handles, and your website. Format your bio in the notes app on your phone and copy/paste it into Instagram if you want to include line breaks.

What are best practices for regramming?

Avoid using third-party apps that include a watermark or banner in your regrams. Screenshot the post you want to regram, crop it down to the image, and credit the source account in the caption and by tagging it in the image.

What are best practices for using a hashtag?

Prioritize the usefulness of hashtags. Include the most relevant hashtags in the caption (e.g. artist names, campaign hashtags, etc.) and save less relevant hashtags for the first comment (e.g. #contemporaryart). If your post receives more than 5-6 comments, the first comment will disappear, leaving your caption cleaner and your post still discoverable.

What are best practices for tagging other accounts?

Try to only tag accounts in the caption if it is relevant to the copy, and only tag accounts in the image if the image depicts them. If you want to call attention to a certain account otherwise, call them out in a comment. Also avoid tagging accounts too frequently, as anything that seems overeager can turn off influencers.

How can I get someone to notice me on Instagram?

The classic way to get an account to notice you on Instagram is to follow the account and like/comment on a handful of their posts (avoid engaging with more than 5 or 6). If you really want to get in touch, look for contact information in their bio or send them a direct message. However, keep in mind that if they don't follow you, they are unlikely to see the direct message. Comment on an old post to let them know you have messaged them (they can always delete the comment later).

How should I format video?

Instagram videos must be shorter than 30 seconds. Try not to rely on audio as they autoplay without it, and make the clip as visually exciting as possible. As social media relies on capturing an audience within an extremely short window of time, frontload your clip with imagery that will hook your viewer to continue watching. If the post is a clip of a longer film, consider linking to the full film in your bio and including a line in your caption letting your followers know where to find the link.

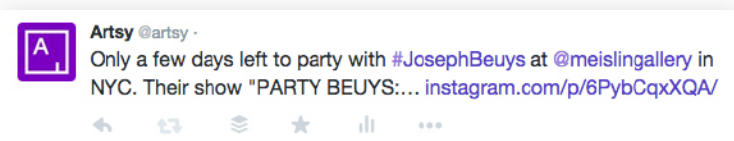
ADDITIONAL FORMATTING TIPS FOR INSTAGRAM



How should I share to other platforms from Instagram?

While it might be easiest to share from Instagram, the post rarely appears on other platforms with formatting that optimizes it for high engagement. Sharing to Twitter from Instagram, for example, produces a tweet that includes the first part of the caption and a link to Instagram without an image. Tweeting the image manually ensures that you can attach an image and format the tweet copy to make more sense. Consider doing this for all platforms.

SHARED FROM INSTAGRAM:



TWEETED MANUALLY:



“Collecting art is an addiction and Instagram is the dealer and pusher that enables it.”

—Karen Rabinovitz, Digital Brand Architects

Facebook



With over 1 billion monthly users, Facebook continues to be the dominant social media platform for most of the world. Facebook's ever-changing algorithm can make organic visibility challenging, but the platform rewards content that performs well by serving it to more and more people. If you find a post has particularly low reach, try formatting the next one with a different style of caption (e.g. pull quote, short teaser, longer paragraph). Facebook is a platform on which you can also pay to play, so set aside a small budget to experiment with ads that can help you specifically target audiences you want to reach.

Consider that most traffic to your site coming from Facebook is likely coming from other people sharing your content or talking about your gallery. For this reason, your website needs to be optimized for social sharing, so that anything shared from it is formatted correctly. Post links from your site to social platforms regularly to test their formatting. Also ensure social icons are linking to the right profiles.

Facebook is an effective way to promote a wide variety of content types. You can certainly post links to your site and others, but try posting images without any links as well. Facebook gives preference to posts that keep users within the platform so you may see higher engagement by not linking out. You can also experiment with creating Facebook events for your openings or programs, especially if you hope to attract a larger and more

diverse audience. Aim to post frequently (1-3 times daily) and experiment to find the ideal time of day to post, which varies from account to account. As with other platforms, consider any international following you may have and post at times that have the potential to reach all relevant timezones at peak hours. Your followers' engagement with your content largely determines its visibility, so find a balance between promoting the content you want to drive engagement to and playing to your followers' interests.

5 Ways to Make Your Posts More Visible on Facebook



1: BUILD AN AD

Avoid “boosting” posts on Facebook. It will serve the post to more people, but for the exact same price, you can create an ad that more carefully controls the exact audience you wish to reach. To build an ad, go to [Facebook.com/ads](https://facebook.com/ads) and explore their resources explaining [ad types and formatting](#). Start by building ads for as low as \$5-10 to get a feel for it, then build more of the kinds of ads you find yield the highest return. Monitor ads closely while they are running, as you are able to edit the ad if you notice certain aspects are affecting its performance. Also be mindful of the image you choose to attach to your ad, as Facebook has a strict 20% text ratio rule for ad images. Use [this tool](#) to determine if your image will be problematic.

2: HAVE YOUR TEAM SHARE IT

Facebook wants you to be able to keep up with your friends so it gives preference to their posts over brand posts. Take advantage of your team’s circles and have them either share your post to their walls or create a personal version of your post. Just make sure their share settings are set to public so it has the greatest potential visibility.

3: ENGAGE MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Be sure to tag the most relevant stakeholders in your post and experiment with tagging other stakeholders in comments to ensure they see the post and potentially share it.

4: FORMAT CLOSE TO FACEBOOK’S NATIVE FORMAT

Facebook gives greater visibility to posts that are formatted in the style that you would format them within the platform. Either schedule your posts within Facebook or ensure that anything you schedule using an external tool is as close to Facebook’s native format as possible.

5: PIN SUCCESSFUL POSTS TO THE TOP OF YOUR FEED

Click the arrow at the top right of your post and select “pin to top” if you want that post to always be the first visitors see when visiting your Facebook page. You can unpin that post and pin another at any time.

Anatomy of a Facebook Post



CAPTIONS ARE KEY

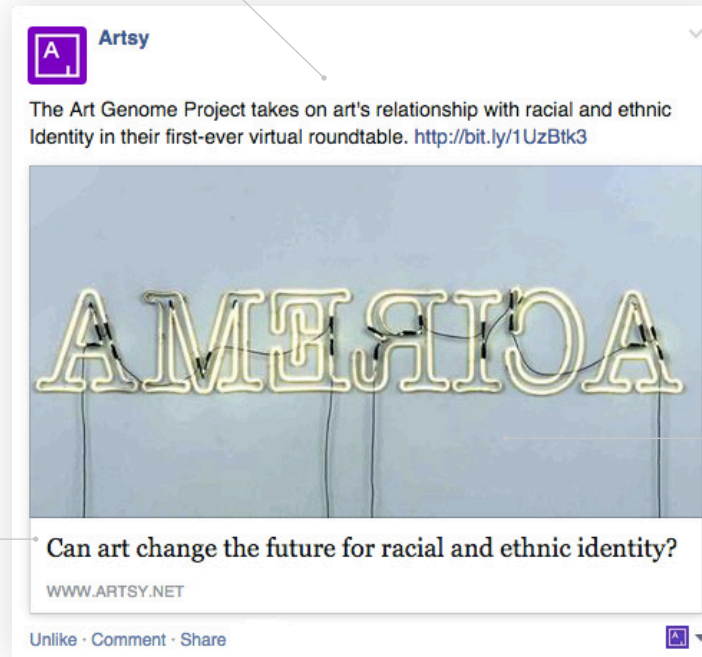
Experiment with caption length and type to find what works best for you.

PRO TIP: Try short, punchy captions (like questions) but also try using longer excerpts or pull quotes from particularly exciting pieces of content. Your caption serves as a teaser for the headline below, so work hard to keep the copy interesting.

EDIT YOUR HEADLINE

Edit headlines to make them more intriguing. Shorter is always better.

PRO TIP: Try to take a final look at how your caption and headline speak to one another before you post. You can easily edit the headline by clicking on it while you're crafting your post. You can also edit, or delete, the teaser text that often appears under the headline.



IMAGES GIVE CONTEXT

Always try to post content that includes an image. Especially in the art world, followers respond to visual content most, and it often provides useful context for your post.

PRO TIP: If you're having an issue with an image appearing, [report the bug here](#) and try again.

ADDITIONAL FORMATTING TIPS FOR FACEBOOK



What are ideal image dimensions for a cover photo, profile image, and image included in a post?

Cover photo: 851x315px

Profile image: 180x180px

Post image: 472x394px

Also [check Facebook](#) to make sure dimensions have not changed.

How should I format video?

Facebook adores video that is directly uploaded to the platform, so consider posting it frequently if you have the content. Video autoplays without audio so use your caption to entice viewers to click to turn on audio and watch the clip. Also consider Facebook ads for video content if you really want to drive views.

How should I share links on Facebook?

Avoid clicking the share button on sites and instead paste the link into Facebook or your scheduling tool. This gives you greater control over the post by allowing you to edit the headline/teaser to better complement the caption you create.

“People influence people. Nothing influences people more than a recommendation from a trusted friend. A trusted referral influences people more than the best broadcast message. A trusted referral is the Holy Grail of advertising.”

—Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook

Twitter



Twitter is best suited for sharing news content, announcements, and live coverage of events. You might consider tweeting...

- ...opening/closing/programming announcements
- ...a link to a museum exhibition in which your artist was recently featured
- ...artist birthdays and/or quotes
- ...a link to an article written about the gallery or one of your artists
- ...articles that you feel are on brand for the gallery, even if they aren't directly related to your program
- ...live coverage of an opening, talk, or other programming

As with other platforms, the difference between low engagement and high engagement is a mixture of reciprocation, formatting, and timing. Engage your followers by checking your mentions regularly, favoriting all positive mentions, and retweeting those you feel reflect on your gallery the best. Also consider engaging with popular accounts on Twitter by tweeting their content and crediting them in the copy. A large brand or influencer retweeting your tweet can dramatically boost your presence on the platform so learn to format expertly. Especially on Twitter, always try to attach an image (it will take 23 of 140 characters) as tweets are almost guaranteed to perform better with one.

Tweets have a lifespan of somewhere around 18 minutes so you should consider posting with great frequency, at least 5 or more

times daily. As with other social media platforms, the best windows for posting are early in the morning, from 5–7p.m., and late in the evening, from 10p.m.–midnight. Experiment thoughtfully to see what works best for you. We have found that for a U.S. audience, posting before or after the hour (e.g. 5:50p.m. or 6:10p.m.) works best, as the average American's schedule tends to revolve around the hour. The ideal recipe for a tweet includes a link, a handle (e.g. @YourGallery) or hashtag, and an image. You can also schedule tweets in advance, so consider scheduling all tweets for the week at once and checking them regularly to respond to followers and take note of what is performing well.

9 Ways to Speak Tweet



1: REPACKAGE CONTENT



Always credit your source (including @Artsy!) and there's a good chance they will retweet you if the content is formatted well.

2: START WITH A NUMBER



Lists tend to perform well in general, so try to promote content that follows that format.

3: START WITH WWWWWH



Start with who, what, when, where, why, or how to tease the content to which you are linking.

9 Ways to Speak Tweet



4: ASK A QUESTION



Start with a question to entice followers to click through to content.

5: START WITH .@



Starting with @ makes that tweet only visible to you, that account, and people who follow you both (think of it as a semi-private conversation). Use this technique if you would like to thank someone for a shoutout or ask them a question, otherwise add another character before @ to make it visible to everyone

6: NAME DROP

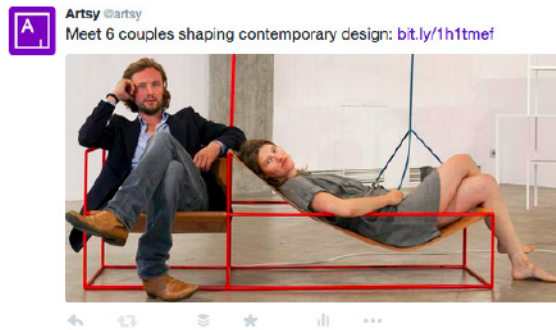


Keep recognizable names close to the start of the tweet so they catch attention.

9 Ways to Speak Tweet



7: "MEET" THE ARTIST



Make profiles on your artists more approachable by using this format.

8: START WITH A VERB



"Explore," "discover," "go inside," and "find out" are all great ways to start a tweet.

9: START WITH OTHER KEYWORDS



You have mere seconds to hook your followers so always frontload your tweets with key words and phrases.

Anatomy of a Tweet



GIVE CREDIT

Always credit your sources prominently.

PRO TIP: Include their handle as part of the caption or between the caption and link with “(via @___).” Also, be sure to follow outlets whose content you regularly tweet and engage with them.

IMAGES USE UP CHARACTERS

Keep in mind that attached images take up 23 of 140 characters and appear horizontal (roughly 2:1 in aspect ratio) in the feed.

PRO TIP: If you are promoting an image without any associated rights issues, crop the image to 2:1 before attaching it, to ensure it appears correctly. Otherwise, select an image that complements your tweet even if cropped randomly to 2:1.



USE IDENTIFIERS

When appropriate, use identifiers like “artist” or “photographer” as not all of your followers may pick up on to whom you are referring.

PRO TIP: Find opportunities to tag your artists on Twitter (if they use it actively) to draw attention to their accounts and help them develop their following.

LINK

Always add your links to the end of the tweet, followed by any relevant campaign hashtags. Frontload the tweet with what will hook readers the most and save everything else for the end.

ADDITIONAL FORMATTING TIPS FOR TWITTER



What are ideal image dimensions for a cover photo, profile image, and image included in a tweet?

Cover photo: 1500x500px

Profile image: 400x400px

Tweet image: 280x150px

Also [check Twitter](#) to make sure dimensions have not changed

What are best practices for using a hashtag?

Avoid using a hashtag unless it is tied to a specific campaign or trend. With so few characters, tagging an artist/etc. will do more for you than hashtagging their name. Unlike on Instagram, you can search both words and hashtags on Twitter so there isn't as much of a need to hashtag as frequently.

What are best practices for tagging?

As with hashtagging, be mindful of the purpose of tagging an account in your tweet. Always credit your sources and only tag accounts otherwise if you want them to be notified or if you feel there is a strong chance they will retweet you. Tweet legibility should be a top priority so keep your copy as streamlined as possible.

“Being effective at social media, whether for business or personal use, means capturing people who have short attention spans. They're only a click away from a picture of a funny cat, so you have to make your thing more compelling than that cat. And that can be a high bar.”

—Alexis Ohanian, Reddit

Scheduling & Measuring Success

HOW TO SCHEDULE POSTS

Facebook and Twitter both have internal scheduling tools that are easy to use. Depending on your preferred workflow, you can use tools like [Hootsuite](#), [Buffer](#), or [Sprout Social](#) to schedule/monitor posts or work within each platform natively. Different social tools offer slightly different services, so shop around to avoid wasting money.

HOW TO KEEP TRACK OF WHAT YOU POST

No social strategy is complete without some kind of content calendar. Create a simple spreadsheet like the one here that outlines what you plan to post to each platform throughout the week.

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
INSTAGRAM							
FACEBOOK							
TWITTER							

HOW TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR PERFORMANCE

Schedule time weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly to update a simple spreadsheet and keep track of your growth and engagement. Set your own benchmarks by determining how rapidly you're growing and use those numbers to set goals for the future (e.g. "we've grown by 200 followers per week for the past 4 weeks, let's aim for x number of followers by x"). Social analytics take time to compile so use your time wisely. Analytics are only useful if they are actionable so avoid wasting time compiling data unless it can directly influence your decision making.

Suggested Metrics To Track

TOTAL FOLLOWERS	TOTAL CLICKS	TOP PERFORMING POST
# NEW FOLLOWERS	TOTAL LIKES	BOTTOM PERFORMING POST
# OF POSTS	TOTAL SHARES	NOTABLE MENTIONS

Scheduling & Measuring Success

7

4 FREE TOOLS YOU SHOULD USE

1: [Social Analytics Chrome App](#)

Use this free tool to see all cumulative social shares of any URL. Once you install it, you can click on it while visiting a website to see all shares across Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.

2: [Iconosquare](#) + [INK361](#) for Instagram

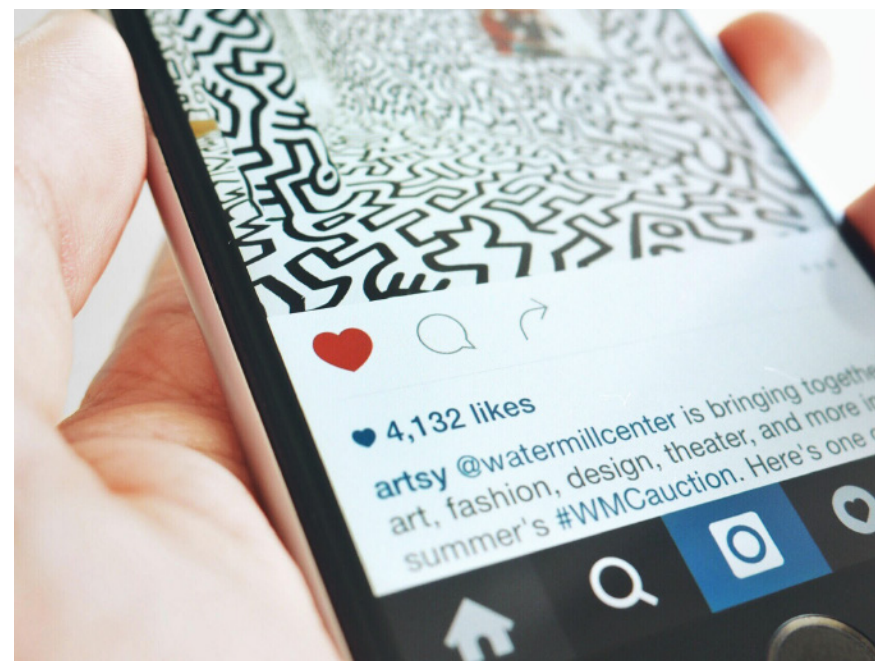
Since Instagram lacks any internal analytics, use these sites to see basic statistics.

3: [SumAll](#)

SumAll sends a daily and/or weekly email report that tracks basic stats for most platforms and compares them to past performance. If you don't have any time to collect data yourself, consider signing up for their emails.

4: [SocialRank](#)

This tool allows you to search your Twitter and Instagram followers by a variety of parameters, including bio keywords, location, interests, company, number of followers, and more.



Scheduling & Measuring Success

5 METRICS YOU WOULDN'T THINK TO PULL

1: See the best time to post on Instagram

Experiment with post timing and click Statistics > Optimization on Iconosquare to see what post times have led to your highest engagement.

2: Find out where your Instagram followers are located

Click the “Snapshots” tab on Iconosquare to see a geographic breakdown of your Instagram followers.

3: Find out what press is getting the most traction on social

Use the Social Analytics Chrome App to see how many times online press about your gallery has been shared on social. You might be surprised to find how many times the content has been shared.

4: Determine what kind of content performs best for you on Twitter

Visit [Twitter analytics](#) > tweets > top tweets and investigate different date ranges to see what kinds of content your followers respond to most.

5: Use your competitors to help inform your content decisions on Facebook

Add pages to watch (competitors, similar galleries, etc.) in the overview section of Facebook insights. You can track and compare your growth to theirs, or see their top posts under the “Top Posts From Pages You Watch” section of the posts tab. Use this to inform what kinds of content you experiment with producing and get ideas for new kinds of content that might perform well.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

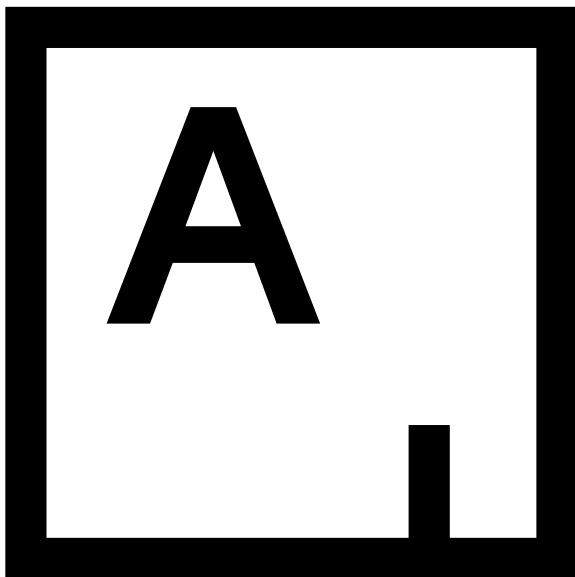
[Buffer Blog](#)

[Simply Measured](#)

[SumAll](#)

[RazorSocial](#)

[SocialBro](#)



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