



HOW INSTAGRAM'S LATEST FEATURES CHANGE THE GAME FOR MARKETERS



THE CURRENT STATE OF INSTAGRAM MARKETING

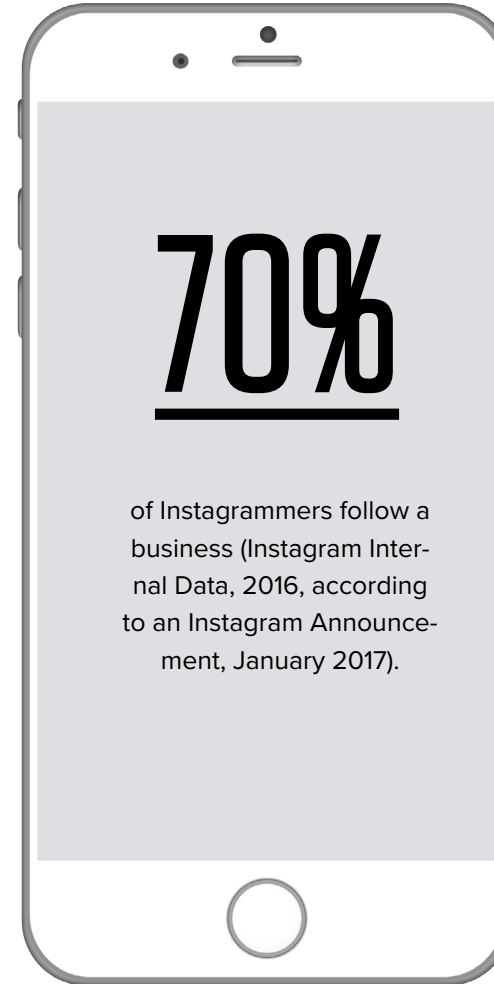
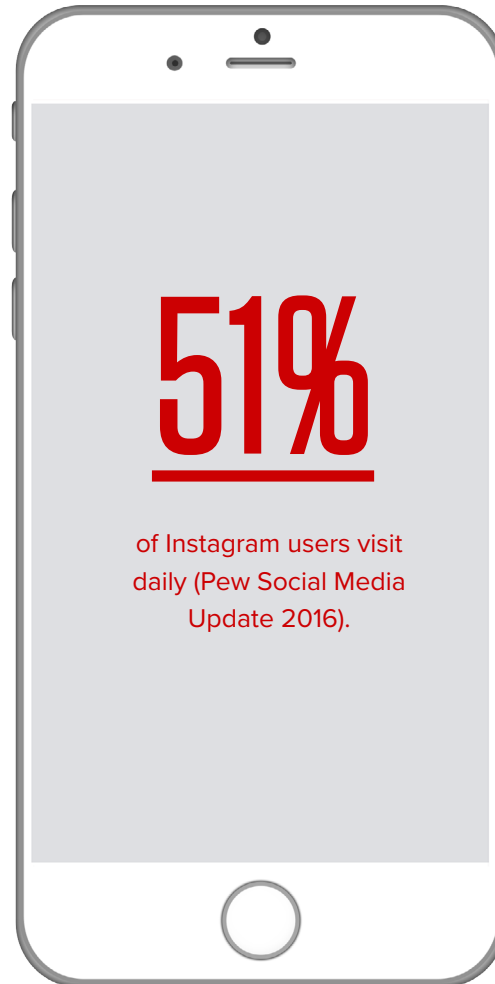
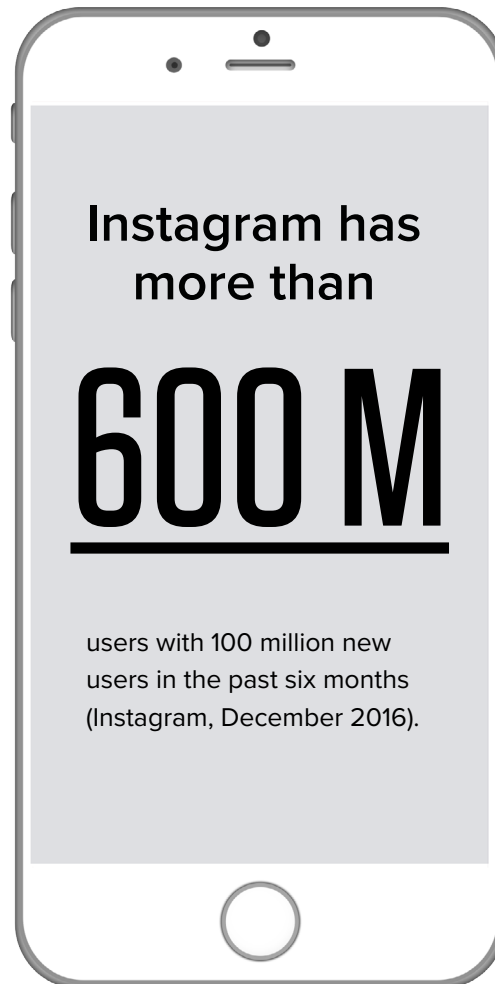
Instagram is a social media mainstay, the crown jewel of aesthetically pleasing content – and now home to more spontaneous, casual, and effortless content. With 1+ million advertisers and 60% of consumers discovering new products on Instagram, any brand looking to increase their digital marketing efforts should look to Instagram. Instagram’s latest features allow individuals and brands to share more candidly – liberating photos and videos from the tight constraints of the Instagram feed that historically was only home to the best of the best.



However, while content can now be shared more often and more freely, brands will always need to respect the relationship with the consumer, and should continue to focus on creating content that adds value. Posting just to try to rack up more engagement metrics can not only hurt you in the algorithm, but can also be a turn off for consumers. So, while Instagram may sing the praises of more, brands need to be as diligent as ever about creating content that’s in alignment with marketing and business goals. Instagram isn’t going away anytime soon. If your brand wants to connect with today’s young, mobile-first consumers, the reality is that you can’t just “be on Instagram” —you need to master it.

KEY STATISTICS ABOUT INSTAGRAM FOR MARKETERS

The current state of Instagram marketing can be enhanced with data about its usage.



INSTAGRAM
STORIES



5



8

INSTAGRAM
LIVE



9

INSTAGRAM
DIRECT

FEATURES COVERED IN THIS MINDSHARE



INSTAGRAM MULTI-
PHOTO UPLOADS

10



11

NEW SECURITY
FEATURES

INSTAGRAM STORIES

Instagram Stories allows fans to share multiple photos and videos of their day in a slideshow format called your “story”. Users can bring their story to life in new ways with text and drawing tools, overlay stickers and geotags. The photos and videos will disappear after 24 hours and won’t appear on the profile grid or in the feed.



150 million daily users

Now, Instagram Stories has more than 150 million daily users, after launching in August 2016 (Instagram Internal Data, Dec. 2016, per an Instagram Announcement, January 2017).



70% of Instagrammers follow a business

It's no surprise that one-third of the most viewed stories are from businesses (Instagram Internal Data, Dec. 2016, according to an Instagram Announcement, January 2017).



Business profile visibility

For businesses converted to a business profile, you will be able to see the reach, impressions, replies and exits for each individual story within Business Tools.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

INSTAGRAM STORIES

Key Takeaway: Understand nuances in Instagram and Snapchat audiences, as well as what context consumers are in when using the app (Snapchat still has a more unedited, raw feel to it). Marketers should think about how Instagram Stories' expiring content factors into their overall approach. Instagram Stories can be used for engaging your audience, building awareness around new products and services, and immersive storytelling.

INSTAGRAM STORIES

Uses

- Capture an audience with emotive content that resonates.
- Provide information relevant for a limited time.
- Give sneak peeks.
- Provide a behind-the-scenes experience.
- Feature live event coverage.
- Engage with influencers, or use influencers to “takeover” your Instagram by posting your content for the day.



INSTAGRAM STORIES

Examples



Outdoor Voices uses Instagram Stories to drive users in specific cities to a surprise and delight experience.

- Limited time offer, relevant for a short period of time



Alala uses Instagram Stories to give a behind-the-scenes look at what they're doing for fall.

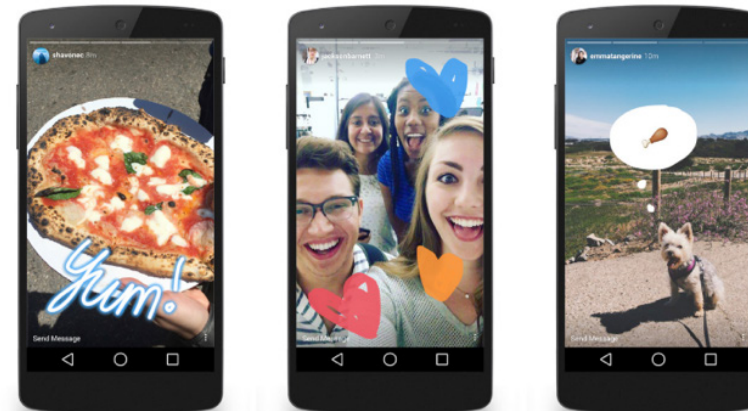
- Sneak peeks/behind-the-scenes

INSTAGRAM STORIES

Implications for Brands

Instagram Stories directly competes with the functionality of Snapchat and should be used strategically for best results. To differentiate content across these platforms, brands should prioritize understanding the nuances of Instagram and Snapchat audiences, and create a clear strategy for each individual channel.

- Brands can experiment with promoting a landing page, product pages, or blog posts by testing the efficacy of using the link to more features with a story (available on verified accounts only).
- Brands using this type of advertising can also take advantage of Facebook's expansive targeting options to create custom audiences based on specific interests, geographic locations, etc.



INSTAGRAM STORIES

Advertising

On March 1, Instagram moved Instagram Stories Advertising with full screen ads from the testing phase to global implementation.

- **Airbnb** saw a double digit point increase in ad recall from Instagram Stories advertising campaign, noting the ability to apply existing targeting to reach the right audience, in the right mindset, with the right story at scale
- Testing began with 30+ clients around the world, including: Capital One, Buick, Maybelline New York, Nike, Yoox, Netflix, and Qantas, showing the appeal of Instagram Stories to brands across a wide variety of industries

Ads in stories will now let brands use targeting, reach, and measurement capabilities to make ads personally relevant to the people you want to reach.

INSTAGRAM LIVE

Key Takeaway: Brands can engage users on a personal level, providing exclusive information they won't find anywhere else. This helps create brand advocates.



With Instagram Live, brands can use the camera feature to share a live streaming video for up to one hour to their followers. Initially, once the live stream was complete, it would disappear from the app. However, due to a recent update to the functionality, users can now save the video.

- A “Live” notification will be placed under the brand profile name during a broadcast to indicate they are streaming live.
- Users who choose to engage with Live content can comment or like as many times as they want during the broadcast.
- Brands are able to manage the commenting function, allowing them to disable user commenting or pin a comment to the top of the Live story.
- Select Live stories may also appear in Instagram’s Explore tab, possibly gaining more consumer views and traction.

INSTAGRAM LIVE VIDEO Implications for Brands

- Live event coverage and behind the scenes events now have another platform to be broadcasted on – choose your channel wisely
- We could see a potential overall decrease in engagement around other live platforms (Facebook Live, Periscope, and YouTube Live Stream etc.) because users have so many options of where to watch live content
- Know that broadcasting a live video on multiple platforms fragments your audience and decreases your power within each channel to beat the algorithm and be seen, so be mindful of cannibalizing your own content
- Factor in channel strategy and audience alignment when determining your channel mix

INSTAGRAM DIRECT DISAPPEARING PHOTOS & VIDEOS

Instagram Direct, which has grown to over 300 million users globally, allows users to send photos and videos to their individual friends and to groups that disappear after they are viewed (Instagram Announcement, November 2016).

Key Takeaway: This is a new way for brands to speak to smaller, targeted groups, such as influencer groups or individual influencers.



- Described as a way for people to share disappearing photos and videos directly to groups and individual friends in a “spontaneous, pressure-free way.”
- Reflects the success of Snapchat’s far less manicured style of sharing, and the increasing pressure to only post the perfect moments on Instagram.
- Can only send disappearing photo and video to users who follow you.
- Users can see if the image or video was replayed or if a screenshot was taken.

INSTAGRAM DIRECT Implications for Brands

- This feature directly competes with Snapchat, which could potentially affect views/engagement on Snapchat if users begin to choose Instagram over Snapchat.
- Brands will be able to send individual video/photo messages to their followers.
- This could create an influx of messages coming into a brand’s inbox, so factor this into community management resourcing.

INSTAGRAM MULTI-PHOTO UPLOAD

Key Takeaway: Brands should prioritize strong first photos and consider a CTA to swipe left to see the additional content.

In [February 2017](#), Instagram announced that users would no longer have to choose the single best photo or video from a particular experience, as they can now upload up to 10 photos or videos in a single post.

- Up to 10 photos and videos.
- Can be used for carousel ads.
- You can select the order, or use dynamic ordering which will show the highest performing pieces of content first.
- Single caption and square-only photos.

MULTI-PHOTO UPLOAD

Uses

- Show multiple angles, products, scenes at an event, etc.
 - Show sequence or step-by-step process.
- Show an image that visually connects together, such as a panoramic photo.

MULTI-PHOTO UPLOAD

Implications for Brands

- Need to alert people with an appropriate CTA to swipe/scroll.
- Consider first image to be the “hook.”
- Be choosy about content as always, knowing your audience will tire quickly of your brand if your content becomes a nuisance.

MULTI-PHOTO UPLOAD

Example

Everlane cleverly shows how to fill new nylon bags, illustrating the items that can fit, and how to use their product.





NEW SECURITY FEATURES

NEW SECURITY FEATURE Blurring Sensitive Content

To reduce the risk of users having an unwanted experience, Instagram has incorporated a screen over sensitive photos and videos. When scrolling through your feed or visiting a user profile, sensitive content will include a “tap to reveal” feature. Content regarded as “sensitive” is not in violation of Instagram guidelines, but has been reported and reviewed by Instagram, and deemed “sensitive content.” Instagram also announced the launch of a site informing the community of ways to stay safe: [instagram-together.com](https://www.instagram.com/instagram-together) (Instagram Blog, Fostering a Safer, Kinder Community, March 2017).

NEW SECURITY FEATURE 2-Factor Authentication

For any brand displaying content on Instagram, security features are an important consideration. With two-factor authentication now available for everyone, you can expect an extra layer of protection.

- Requires a log in code.
- Protects your account from getting hacked, and thus prevents any damage to your brand.

QUICK SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS FOR MARKETERS

- Use Instagram Stories for timely content, sneak peeks, expiring offers, event coverage, and immersive storytelling
- Instagram direct is a new way for brands to speak to smaller, targeted groups, such as influencer groups or individual influencers
- Using Instagram Live, brands can engage users on a personal level, providing exclusive information they won't find anywhere else. This helps create brand advocates.
- Understand nuances in Instagram and Snapchat audiences, as well as what context consumers are in when using the app (Snapchat still has a more unedited, raw feel to it)
- For multi-photo uploads, brands should prioritize strong first photos and consider a CTA to swipe left to see the additional content

How are you using Instagram for your brand? Leave us a comment or sign up for our newsletter to get more social media updates.

