

The Best Instagram Shopify Strategy for Your Store



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MAY 9, 2018

Do you have an Instagram account for your Shopify store? If not, your eCommerce store might be falling behind competitors that have an Instagram Shopify strategy to take full advantage of a platform with 800 million monthly active users.

Currently, more than 70% of US businesses use Instagram and that number is expected to rise.

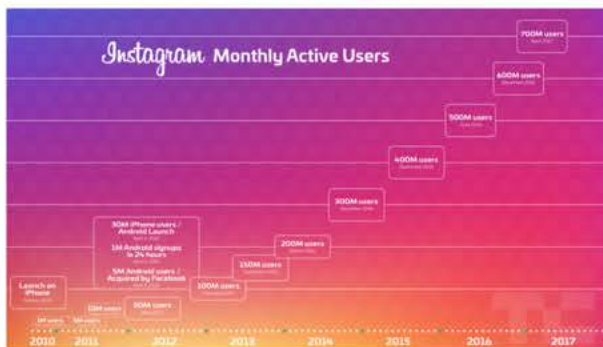


Image via Techcrunch

If your eCommerce store has an Instagram account, don't pat yourself on the back just yet.

Without a solid Instagram strategy for your Shopify store, you're wasting valuable time and missing out on sales from users who engage with brands at a rate that's 84 times higher than Twitter.

Instagram also holds the attention of the average user for roughly 25 minutes a day. With all of that time, it gives businesses a great chance of users seeing their content.

Luckily for Shopify stores, eCommerce profiles rank among the top categories for receiving some of the highest engagement on Instagram:

Total User Engagement on Branded Profiles on Instagram



Source: SocialBakers, New Report: 41, 100, 8000, 10,000 Instagram profiles compared by brand. All engagement defined as a sum of all likes and comments on posts & posts.

Image via Social Bakers

1. Know Your Audience

The key component of an Instagram eCommerce Shopify strategy is knowing who you're targeting. In order to post content that excites and engages with a user, it's crucial to identify who that user really is.

Before even signing up for Instagram, craft a thorough outline of your ideal customer. According to **AudienceOps**, this requires 5 steps:

1. Know your business from the customer's point of view. Write down exactly what problems your products solve and why someone should buy the product you offer instead of choosing a competitor's product.

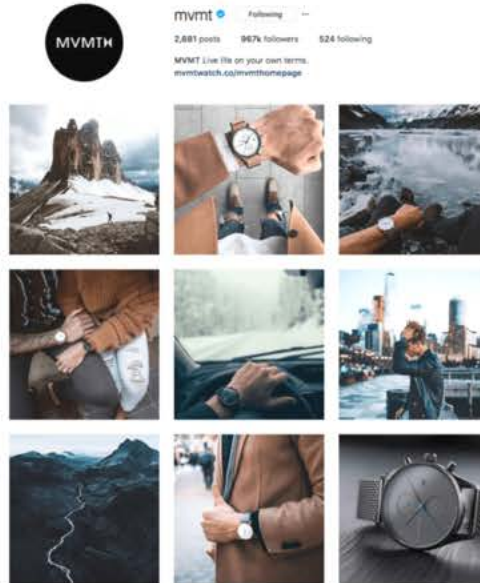
instead of creating a competitor a product.

2. **Determine your goals.** Are your customers happy? Are you targeting the right people who would benefit most from your products? Jot down exactly what should come out of this Instagram channel.
3. **Analyze past interactions.** Write down the biggest mistakes and biggest victories when dealing with customers in the past. See if there are common themes and identify them.
4. **Build a customer profile.** In this step, answer anything and everything about your customer. This can range from age and demographics to their buying habits. Feeling unsure about this? Pick a few of your best customers and ask them to chat about why they chose your store.
5. **Remember your hard work.** This valuable information needs to be put to good use. Base all of your decisions on what you've learned about your customer and create content to be tailored specifically to this customer.

E-commerce store, **MVMT**, exploded on Instagram due to the steps they've taken in perfectly tailoring content to their ideal customer.

Take one glance at this Instagram profile and you know exactly who this brand is targeting.

Consider this the goal for an Instagram Shopify strategy:



2. See What Competitors Are Up To

Competitors are valuable resources on Instagram. They can show you exactly what does and doesn't work when it comes to an Instagram Shopify strategy.

Take a look at how they engage with their audience, what type of content they're producing, and what people are responding to most.

This information is priceless in how you can shape your Instagram channel.

After you've been posting for a while, use tools like Talkwalker to compare your Instagram activity to your competitors.



3. Profile Optimization

An Instagram profile is, essentially, a homepage. It may not be the very first impression a user has of a company (especially if Instagram ads are running), but it's the last chance to impress a customer so that they click on the one and only link in your profile.

That's right—one link. More on that later.

That's why it's important to make your profile shine. There are a few factors for this to be possible.

Clean Profile Picture

Logos commonly act as a company's profile photo. That's not a mistake—it's easily recognizable and can help users become more familiar with your brand when they see it on Instagram or elsewhere.

Rather use a photo other than your logo? Make sure it's relevant to your brand so it can be just as recognizable.

It's also important for this photo to be clean, simple, and eye-catching.

Compelling Bio

Have a pitch that you always use for your eCommerce store? This is where bios come in. You've got 150 characters to showcase your company's personality and entice the user to take action.

Don't feel obligated to use up all of the characters, though. Some eCommerce companies opt to let the images speak for themselves.

Instagram now allows users to include hashtags in their bios. This is a great opportunity to take advantage of your own hashtag that customers can use to tag your products.

Here's how Puma kept it simple while also utilizing their own hashtag:



Image via Sprout Social

Shoppable Links

Tempted to just use your homepage for the link in your bio? Think again. An Instagram Shopify strategy should optimize shopability as much as possible.

Tools like Like2Buy give customers the ability to "window shop" in a gallery without leaving Instagram.

This allows customers go straight to the product they're interested in, which will inevitably help drive traffic and increase conversions.

Forever 21 uses this tool to easily shop within their Instagram feed:





If your company is running a sale or special offer, it can also be a good idea to use this link as a way to route customers to a **landing page**.

Customize Instagram Funnel

Having a successful conversion funnel is one of the most crucial aspects of a successful Instagram strategy.

After clicking on your Instagram link, visitors should arrive at a page that is immensely simple for them to make a purchase. Try **Shogun Landing Page Builder** to easily customize product pages for the highest possible conversion rate.

Using Shogun, you have the ability to edit existing product pages or create a completely custom page for Instagram users to land on.

4. Authenticity Wins

A huge mistake companies make is treating Instagram like Facebook. This isn't the place to post links to your website.

Here's what **Forbes** has to say about authenticity on Instagram:

"We've learned that people appreciate the authenticity of an artful approach versus a direct advertisement."

Avoid including too many CTAs in order to keep your company's authenticity intact.

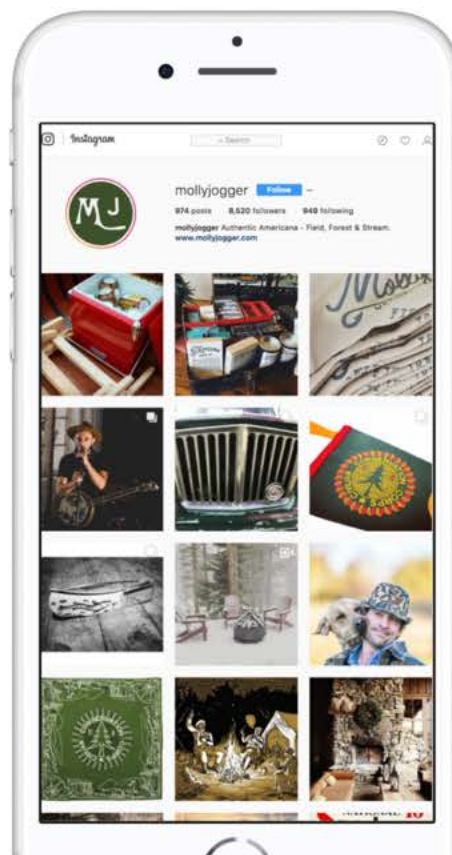
Although Instagram users have an engagement rate with brands that's 10 times higher than with Facebook, that doesn't mean your caption should contain a sales pitch.

In fact, go for the opposite.

Instagram accounts thrive on authenticity (or at least the appearance of it). Take **Mollyjogger** for instance. Instead of inundating their feed with product advertisements, this Shopify store creates diverse, compelling content that users actually want to stick around for to see what's next.

At first glance, this channel looks like it could belong to a person instead of a company. That type of authenticity will promote trust and keep users coming back.

They know this company isn't trying to pull anything over them.



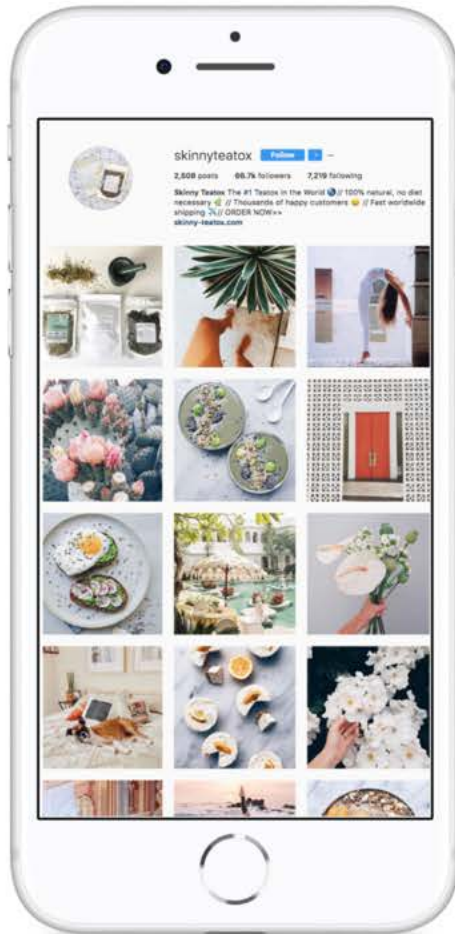


5. Pick an Aesthetic and Stick to It

People crave consistency. In the way that website design should be consistent, this is the case when it comes to Instagram feeds.

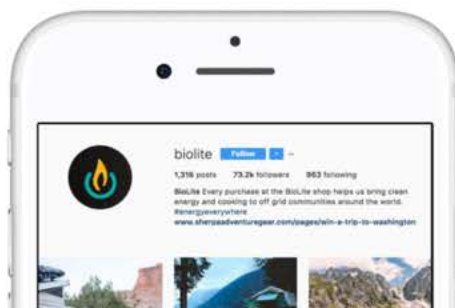
Think of your Instagram channel as a collective whole, each photo should match the other in some way. How can your eCommerce store do that? There are a number of ways.

Instagram Shopify account, **Skinny Teatox**, uses a similar color palette as well as a light, airy tone among all of their posts:



Shopify store, **BioLite**, makes content a theme throughout their Instagram feed by posting lifestyle photos and videos of customers using their products.

This is a great way to humanize your company while exciting Instagram when their photo is featured.





Nike Lab has been especially creative when it's come to an overall aesthetic. They utilized Instagram's columns to craft an incredibly eye-pleasing format:



Image via ATAK

Look at the most successful Instagram channels and you'll notice a common aesthetic that brands will always stick to.

That's because Instagram is an incredibly visual platform (obviously). Because of this, companies need to figure out a way to stand out. They can do this through style guidelines and by owning a visual niche.

E-Commerce store, ASOS, does a great job of holding to a consistent theme through posts with pops of color throughout their feed:

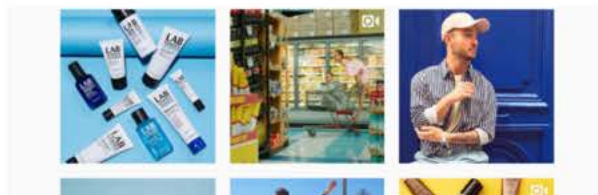




Image via Sprout Social

According to research from Sprout Social, here are the best times to post on Instagram in 2018 (all time frames are recorded in Central Time Zone (CST):

- Wednesday at 3pm
- Thursday at 5am, 11am and 3 to 4pm
- Friday at 5am
- Thursday is the best day to post to Instagram.
- The safest times to post to Instagram are Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Sunday is the least engaging day for Instagram.

Create a Consistent Content Calendar

Daunted by sticking to a schedule? Use scheduling tools like **Later** to craft posts. Input them into an easy drag-and-drop (which we especially love) calendar at the post time listed above and your content will be auto-published to Instagram—no notifications required.

This calendar will help to drive traffic and gain more followers. According to **Buffer**, posting consistency is more important than posting frequency.

"Stick to a regular posting schedule, but generally don't post more than a few times a day. One or two great posts a day is better than 10 mediocre posts."

– Union Metrics

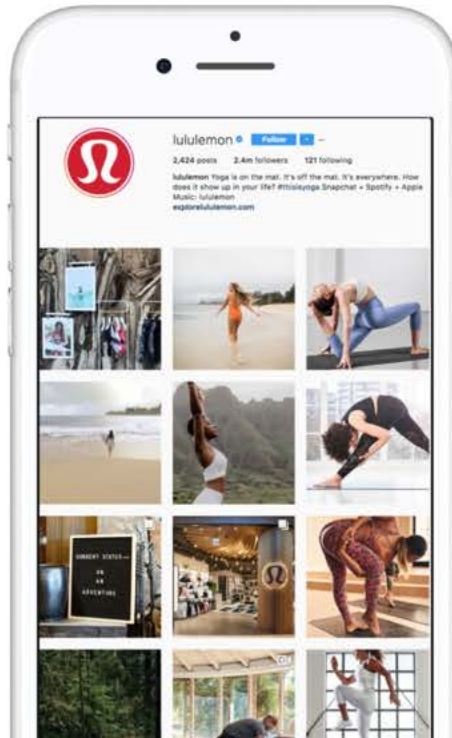
Keep your feed interesting by mixing up the type up photos or videos you post. Here are examples of different types to swap between:

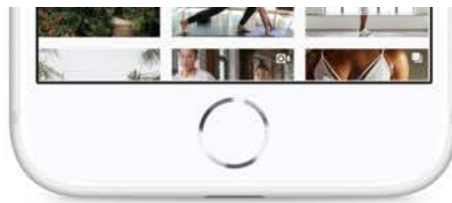
Use styled posts to include more than one of your products to create a scene:



Image via Small Talk Social

Utilize lifestyle photos and videos like Lululemon to show your products in action:

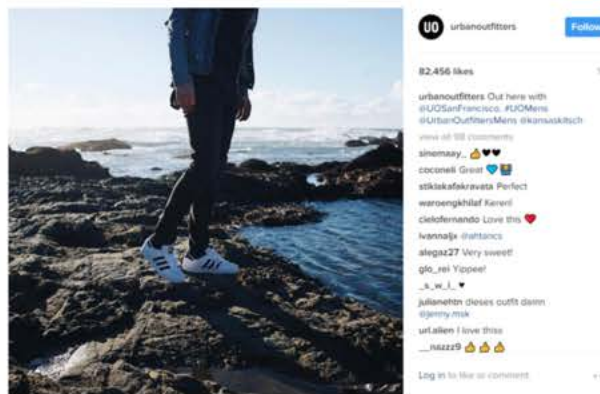




Intermittently include simple product shots to create diversity within your feed:



Take a page from Urban Outfitters' playbook and feature Instagram users' photos that include your product:



7. Tag Every Post

Tagging is typically thought of as hashtagging. This is an essential step for having a successful Instagram account. Use these tips when it comes to your hashtagging strategy:

Hide hashtags within the comments section of your post to make your caption more readable.

Be cautious with the number of hashtags you use. Again, authenticity is immensely important in the Instagram world. Adding too many hashtags could make the post appear spammy and attract unappealing bot comments.

Create your own hashtag for Instagrammers to use. This is as good as it gets when it comes to online word-of-mouth.

Klear conducted **hashtag research** that uncovered surprising results. The study revealed that channels will receive the most engagement using only two hashtags.

The more hashtags that are used, the more engagement will gradually decrease.

How many hashtags should I use to maximize my likes?

According to a Klear study, a user should use 2 hashtags to get the most amount of likes.

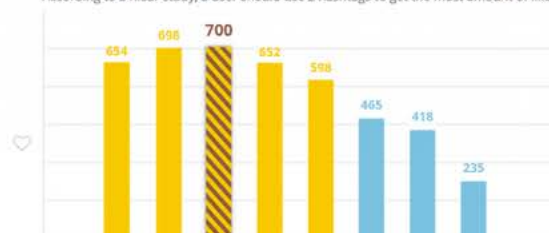




Image via Klear

Use Shopify to Tag Products

Tagging can also refer to making products in posts shoppable. Thanks to Shopify, **this is now possible** and vital for your eCommerce store.

This in-app shopping experience gives users the ability to simply click on the product that was tagged in your image, offering further engagement and a better chance of conversion.

Here's what's required to get your store ready for product tagging:

- Have an approved Shop in the **Facebook channel**.
- Operate your business in a supported country. Full list [here](#).

8. Embed Instagram Feed Into Store

Give users a way to find your Instagram feed right from your website by embedding it into your store. This is especially helpful if a user isn't feeling ready to convert, but wants the option to stay updated and continue to engage with your eCommerce brand.

This will also help to leverage your company's social influence and allow your store to appear more alive and connected.

The more an Instagram user follows along with your brand and establishes trust, the more likely they are to convert.

With **Shogun Drag and Drop Page Builder**, users can add their Instagram feed to any page using the Instagram element. Using **this element**, users can display the caption or just the visuals.

Summary

Instagram comes fully equipped with an audience like that likes to engage with companies (especially eCommerce stores). Use this list of the above tips to help your Instagram strategy for your eCommerce store.

Remember, keep track of metrics while using this Instagram Shopify strategy to see what effect the platform has on your web traffic and sales.

1. **Know your audience.** Make sure every piece of content is geared toward your ideal customer.
2. **Analyze competitor profiles.** Constantly monitor their channels to act as a how-to guide for your Instagram Shopify strategy.
3. **Optimize profile.** A recognizable profile picture, a compelling and simple bio, and a shoppable link will help customers know exactly what to do on your profile.
4. **Be authentic.** Avoid the sales pitch and humanize your eCommerce store with genuine content.
5. **Stick to an aesthetic.** Get creative and craft a cohesive theme for your posts using color, tone, or content.
6. **Post consistently with scheduling tools.** Use tools like Later to create an Instagram content calendar that will keep your feed on a consistent schedule.
7. **Tag every post and product.** Use hashtags to gain awareness and product tagging to offer an in-app shopping experience for more conversions.
8. **Embed your feed on your website.** Get more attention to your Instagram account by embedding it into your store.

Now that your Instagram is optimized for your success, does your Shopify app store listing need conversion rate optimization as well? Learn the 5 tips you need to do it successfully by [watching our quick video](#).



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One response to "The Best Instagram Shopify Strategy for Your Store"



Sarah A. Parker May 10, 2018 at 5:17 pm

Hi Kiersten,

Thank you for including Union Metrics' research in this piece. We appreciate it!

This was conducted before the algorithm changes, however, so readers should take that into consideration.

Thanks again!

- Sarah A. Parker
Social Media Manager | Union Metrics
Fine Makers of the Union Metrics Social Suite & more

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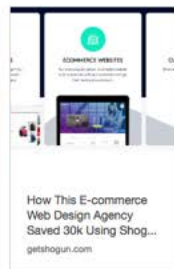
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