

INSTAGRAM TRAFFIC TYRANT



EXCLUSIVE REPORT

Generate Traffic Using Instagram

Instagram is the golden child of social media. It's not spoken about as often, in a digital marketing sense, as the bigger, more established platforms, but this is just part of the reason why you should be marketing on Instagram.

It should come as no surprise to you when I say that Facebook and Twitter are both saturated with advertisements, and users have learned to tune out to the constant noise businesses are making on these platforms.

On the other hand, Instagram is a relatively new social platform. Only 36% of marketers have actually committed to the platform, resulting in an overall higher brand interaction.

Generally, people have significant doubt that Instagram and other photo sharing social media platforms can be used in a business setting. Whether to increase brand awareness or increase conversions.

However, you should consider these facts:

Instagram has a per follower engagement rate of 4.21%, which is 58 times higher than Facebook, furthermore users share close to 40 million photos every day. Every second, these photos garner an overall average of 8500 likes, and 1000 comments.

That in itself is proof of massive audience engagement.

Perhaps even more impressive is that if someone follows you on Instagram 100% of your content will make it onto their feed unlike Facebook.



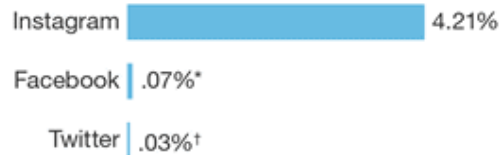
Social media marketing is often considered the alternative to SEO. The reason being that in SEO situations it can be difficult to escape the shadows cast by market leaders. However, the reality is that social media compliments SEO as Google picks up your social signals and rewards your footprint by improving your page ranking algorithm.

By this, I mean that your links are buried by the flood of content that these leaders are consistently pumping out. Meanwhile, Instagram is the opposite end of the spectrum, and once you get that follower, they will see all of your content. It doesn't matter if they also happen to be following Nike, Coca Cola, and NASA as well.

The Instagram Demographic

Instagram is the ideal platform if you're targeting users in the 18 to 34 year-old zone, but don't let this fool you at all.

User interactions with brands' posts as a percentage of brands' fans or followers



Base: 1,526,388 user interactions on 162 Instagram brand posts

*Base: 1,405,249 user interactions on 329 Facebook brand posts

†Base: 98,298 user interactions on 910 Twitter brand posts

Source: Q1 2014 US Top 50 Brands Social WebTrack

113021

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Expanding on that, 68% of its users are female, and more users are reported to live in cities rather than rural areas. Have you ever wondered why Instagram is so popular in the fashion industry? Well, if you're selling younger woman's clothing, you should already be on the platform.

There are millions of users and it's more than possible to market to other demographics on the platform. Always keep in mind who's using the platform when marketing on Instagram, and you can properly target your audience.

The Secrets To A Successful Post

Now that you understand a bit how you can use Instagram to market your brand or really anything, it's time to look at some of the most common Instagram posting mistakes that marketers make.

One of the fundamentals of digital marketing is that you give away free content, so that in turn, your audience will see your online presence as valuable. On Instagram, you have to view your posts as your content. That's what you have to work with.



This post perfectly targets Instagram's demographic. Look at how it's been structured and try to decipher why it works. What I'm attempting to draw your attention to is that nothing is actually being sold.

This post is a photo of a well-dressed model. Maybe the audience comes along and likes what she's wearing, and they think it's something they would like to wear. The audience then considers this quality content, so they comment, like, or follow.

If you read the text, the audience is being asked to click a link and go to a blog. A lot of them are even tagging their friends, which creates a viral reach effect for traffic.

A great post as it is not aggressively selling anything. Social media marketing is all about being social, and it's important that you measure the success of a post by the overall audience engagement.

If you make content people are talking about, it will end up being shared around and as a result, draw in a larger audience. From there, you can then direct them down your marketing funnel, get them on your email list, or do anything else you'd like. How is this engagement measured?

Starting off, we need to set objectives, or goals. Actions that we would like to see people taking after seeing our content.

In a marketing context, we tend to call these 'action conversions' or 'call to action'. A conversion is any action that a lead or visitor takes that you deem beneficial to your business.

For example, your conversions on Instagram are, for the most part, the engagement supported by the platform.

Here some examples of conversions on Instagram:

- Receiving a 'like'
- A new follower
- A user following a link to your landing page
- A user playing a video

It's essential that you place focus on doing the social stuff first, and understand that the sales and monetary pay off will come later.

How To Get People To Do What We Want

How would you normally get someone to do something for you?

Think about that for a second. Generally speaking, you would ask them.

Remember, we are marketing to people, not robots. If you scroll back up and look at American Eagle's post they are asking people to click on a blog post. Think of it like this: your content is you doing something for them. People love to reciprocate, so if you then ask them to do something, they are more likely to do such.

Asking your audience to do something is commonly known as a 'call to action', and you should have a call to action for all of your marketing efforts, when applicable.

Your call to action should be easy for the audience to act on. I will touch on this in greater detail shortly, but for now, you need to remember that the vast majority of Instagram users are on their phones.

Don't put barriers in the way - you need to keep things really simple. If you ask people to go to your blog there need to be a link, and when they arrive, your blog needs to be easy to navigate. This means it should be mobile friendly to increase conversions.

How To Get Your Instagram Generating Traffic

How would you normally get someone to do something for you?

Social media marketing is truly a content game. At the end of the day, if you're taking bad photos with no context, then no one is going to pay any attention to your efforts.

What I would recommend is that you take a long hard look at the biggest players on Instagram and see what they are doing. Look at popular posts as well from accounts that you happen to follow.

- [Nike](#)
- [National Geographic](#)
- [NBA](#)

Study the marketing efforts of these companies. Nike uses a lot of video, which is hugely effective and popular on Instagram, to further engage their audience, and National Geographic takes amazing photos. NBA has the star factor of every NBA player to focus a lens on.

So... what do all of these businesses have in common?

They do what they do, and they do it well. They focus on what their demographic would enjoy and interact with. Nike does not take amazing photos like National Geographic, and National Geographic doesn't have hundreds of athletes to film.

There is no one recipe for success. Find what you do well and do it the best you can.
Ideas for content you can post

- Photos of your product
- Photos of people enjoying your product
- Quotes
- Infographics
- Selfies

I recommend that you read this guide if you're struggling for content ideas:

<http://sproutsocial.com/insights/instagram-marketing-strategy-guide/>

As a general rule of thumb, most businesses start by posting photos of their product being enjoyed in some way. This is fine, but you want to move past just doing that if you want to further your audience engagement.

Can you tell your businesses' story with photos? If, say, you own a tech company and find yourself at an exhibition, by all means bring a camera and document it for your audience so that they feel included. Make them feel like they're benefiting from the content of your posts.

Another tried and tested way to kick off an Instagram account is with a competition of some sort. This works really well if you already have an audience built up on another social media platform, which you can then use to "cross" promote it.

It's actually a very common tactic in the fashion industry. I'm sure you've seen a post along the lines of 'post a photo wearing our clothes' and go into the running to win x,y,z. Those kinds of posts end up driving tons of traffic and even going viral.

Benefits

- You can share thousands of photos of your products or anything.
- Your brand becomes a *trending* hash tag.
- You will get new followers regularly and expand your audience.
- The social conformation of seeing hundreds of people in the clothes or using your products will increase sales and conversions.
- You position yourself as an authority because of all the content you now have.



Promotional Strategies For Instagram

In 2012, Facebook bought Instagram for a casual billion dollars. As a result, the two platforms are very well integrated. As such, you can post Instagram photos and videos directly to Facebook, and vice versa.

You should make it a point to have both platforms and use them to promote one another for optimal traffic and conversions.

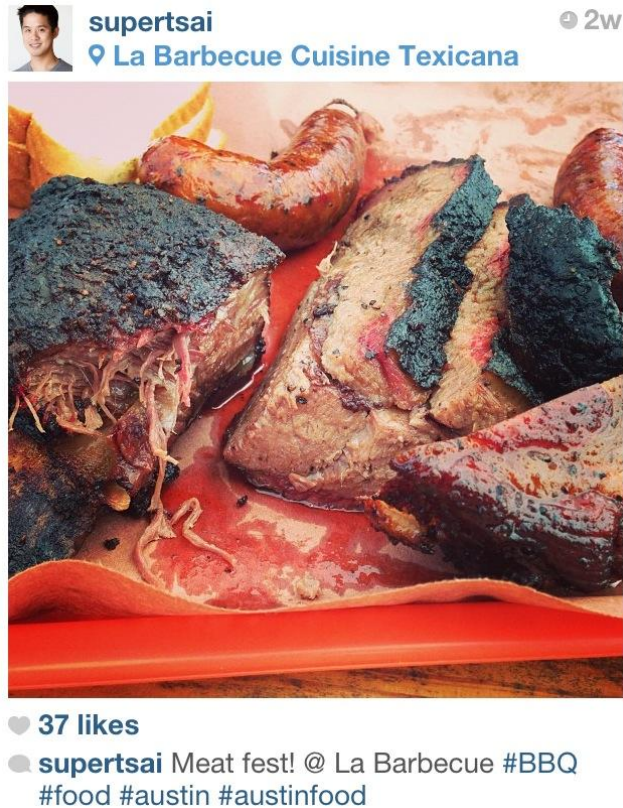
Promote Your Competitors

Yes – you heard me right. Social media is about community. Businesses schooled in traditional marketing shy away from promoting their competition out of fear of losing sales. I mean, this makes sense when you're trying to lure a handful of people into a bricks and mortar store, but there are billions of people on the internet. The customers you will gain far outweigh those, which might spend money with your competitor. We're talking about an evergreen pool of ever expanding leads that are all around the world on the internet.

Build Your Community Around An Actionable Hashtag

One of the downsides of the platform is that Instagram feeds can be quite difficult to find on your own. You might not get to use your businesses' name as your username, and because of that, the only way to reach new audience is if your content is shared, or liked frequently. A hashtag is a great way to reach a larger audience. Your hash tag will be displayed for people searching for similar content, and because of that, it allows more and more people to discover your content and brand.

Businesses post hashtags around upcoming events, and things they know will attract a lot of attention. Do some research on popular hashtags for your niche or market and use them in your posts.



As an example, these four hashtags are likely to attract the attention of people looking to eat in Austin, Texas. This is a clever use of hashtags to draw in an audience which wouldn't have otherwise found the account.

On the other hand, hashtags need to be in good taste and relevant to not just the subject matter of your content, but your brand as well. You might think, more hashtags translates to more traffic, but if people find their way to your feed through an irrelevant hashtag they will quickly leave and never return. Because of that, it's not a good idea to flood a photo with all sorts of hashtags. I generally like to recommend using 2 – 5, and of course, they should all be relevant to the content of the post.

There's nothing that looks worse than an account that you can see is stuffing hashtags into their posts. It detracts from the message and the text as the caption. Try to avoid using this kind of practice.



By now, you're probably wondering what not to do.

Well, this is an example of a hashtag done in terrible taste. Have a look at how they could have done this way better. Gap is a clothing shop that spans all sorts of ages and styles of clothing. Had they offered to donate clothes to people affected, this would have gone super viral for the right reasons.

Instead, they used the opportunity to promote their own products for more sales. Wrong!

Social Media Reputation Management

I thought that I would include this, because your social media reputation can make or break your business in a lot of ways. Truthfully, the power is with the consumer in this social media age.

There are so many channels through which they can voice negativity about your brand, and bad reviews run the potential to cost you your reputation, your audience, and in turn – your sales. When you're social media marketing, there are bound to be mistakes that happen.

For instance, you might be tired and stressed, and you post something without thinking it through. The next thing you know there is this constant stream of hate coming into your feed and your sales take a hit, as does your reputation.

What do you do at this point?

Apologise, apologise -oh, and- apologise.

Many business owners will adopt an aggressive tone and start fights to defend their position and their brand. When it comes to marketing, especially on the internet, you need to leave your ego offline and separate. This will only end up making it worse. We are all human and mistakes happen. Own up to it, and have a go at making it right.



I managed to conjure up a great example of this for us to look at.

This nice pair of shoes are Nike's, 'black and tan' model. They were released on Saint Patrick's day and they were intended to pay homage to Guinness.

Nike messed up. The name is shared with the 'Black and Tans' which was an infamous British military reserve unit during the Irish struggles in the 1920's that amongst other incidents of violence, opened fire on civilians during a football match.

So, what do you think Nike did? Did they come out swinging and tell the Irish people to get over their past? Absolutely not, they apologised, shelved the shoe, and donated the profits to charity.

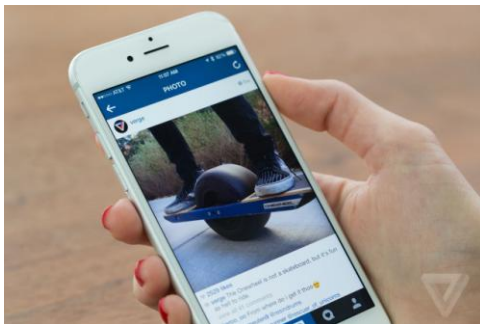
The Mobile Nature of Instagram

In closing, we've now gone over in depth how you can position your business or brand as a valuable player on Instagram. You should now understand not only how to create valuable content, but also how to generate traffic and conversions with the platform.

Instagram is first and foremost a mobile app. This presents a number of challenges that you have to consider at all times when marketing on the platform.

"If it can't be done with a thumb, it can't be done at all."

You need to assume that the mobile user is the laziest human being on earth, for the sake of benefiting both the viewer and your business. Instagram is optimized for the mobile device, and because of that you need to think about every step of your buyer's journey from viewing your post, to where it may lead them.



if your conversion is sending your audience to a blog, how optimized is that site for mobile devices? Is it going to look funky? Have you done the proper testing?

All of these mobile sites have buttons on the top right of the screen.

But, do you know the reason why?

Well, the majority of people are right handed, as statistics have proven.





Any guesses as to why these clued up companies would do a thing like that?

They know the simple truth that you will lose sales if your site is not optimized for mobile devices at all, especially if you generate traffic through Instagram.

Here's just a few other mobile device optimization considerations

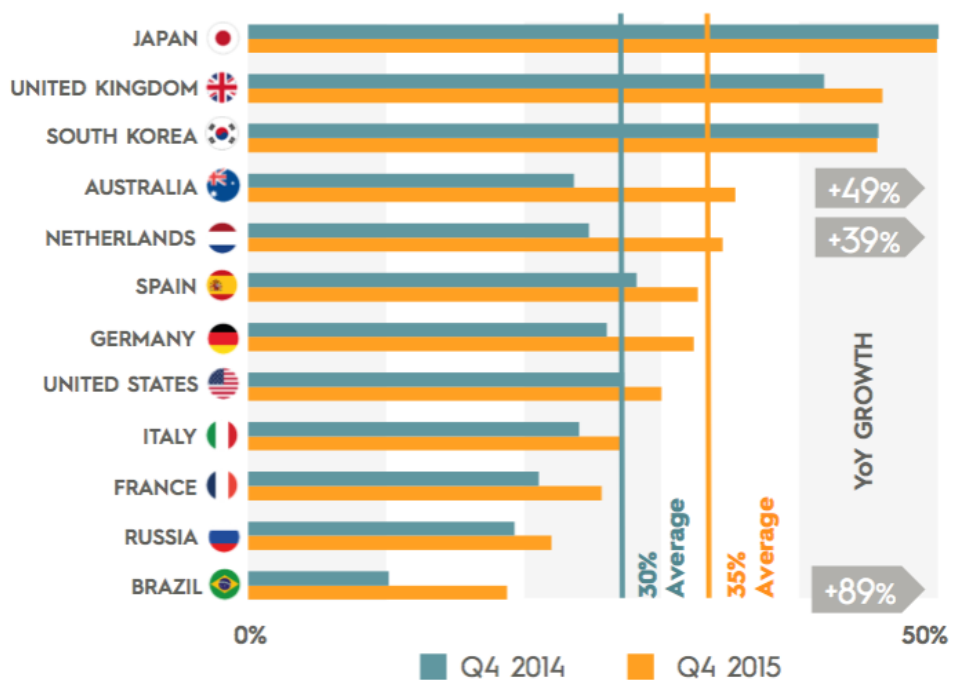
- Simple navigation
- Minimize scrolling
- Keep everything vertical
- Hierarchy in menus
- Back buttons



The world is increasingly mobile, and M-Commerce (mobile commerce) is a billion-dollar industry which is constantly growing.

Now, you might think that I'm drifting from the subject, but Instagram will draw primarily mobile traffic, and you need to be aware of this and understand what it means for your marketing campaigns.

Mobile Share of Retail eCommerce Transactions, by Country



Final Thoughts

In closing, we've now gone over in depth how you can position your business or brand as a valuable player on Instagram. You should now understand not only how to create valuable content, but also how to generate traffic and conversions with the platform.

As such, analytics are vital for tracking the buyer's journey. A massive advantage that digital marketing has over traditional marketing is that you can track a buyer every step of the way.

If you follow the buyer's journey you'll know exactly what to improve on and what areas to put more focus towards.

In a nutshell, you need analytics if you want to market successfully online. Because you are using Instagram to generate traffic and market your brand, you need to ensure that the software you use can monitor mobile traffic.

There are hundreds of products that will do this, and unfortunately I am not going to recommend one over the other, because I have no idea what you require for your business and your needs. I will, however, fully recommend that you take the time to do the research and invest in one.

The next step is to plan out your presence and your content for Instagram. Venture out and do some research on the popular accounts that are operating in the same market as you. Base your game plan on their positive results and always work to improve your campaigns by monitoring your own results.

Thank you so much for your time, and good luck with your Instagram marketing! Visit my blog and sign up for my newsletter for more insightful articles and training.

Jim Webster

Digital Marketing Consultant

<http://www.jimwebster.co.uk>