INSTAGRAM

SETTING UP AN INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

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Introduction

Instagram is known as a business to consumer social network platform. The platform allows you to quickly show pictures and videos from your mobile device. It is great way to show potential customers who the industry authority is. Instagram is quick and easy to use. Posting is done from cellular devices or hand held tablets. How you position yourself on Instagram relies heavily on hashtags. Essentially, hashtags are used so that people with similar interest or who are looking for a product can find your post. For example, Scorpion is known for its industry leading truck bed liners, therefor we would use a hashtag of #truckbedliners. Anyone that would search for #truckbedliners would then be exposed to our posts. The total number of users of Instagram has now passed 300 million and is growing at a faster rate than any other social network. Its demographics favor a younger age, but you do not want to miss this group.

Getting Started

To get started with Instagram, you will need to download the Instagram app on an iOS or Android phone or tablet, or on Windows Phone 8 or above. While you can view Instagram online from your desktop computer, you'll need to create your account using the Instagram app. Once you've downloaded the app, tap the Instagram icon to open it. Tap "Register with Email" to sign up with your email address, or choose "Register with Facebook" to sign up using your Facebook account. If you register with an email address, the app will prompt you to create a username and password and fill out your profile information. If you choose to register with Facebook, the app will prompt you to sign in with your Facebook account if you're currently logged out.

If you want to edit your profile information, like your name, username, or email address, you can go to your profile by tapping the person icon in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen. Tap "Edit Your Profile" and type your new name, username, website, or bio. Once complete be sure to save your changes or tap the done button.

How to navigate Instagram

Your profile shows your bio and the photos and videos you've posted to Instagram. From your profile, you can also edit your profile information and adjust your Account Settings. You can navigate to your profile by tapping the person icon in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen, and make changes by tapping the "Edit Your Profile" button or access more information and choices by tapping the gear icon to access Options. You can write a bio of up to 150 characters on your profile, or add or change a profile photo to import from your phone's library, Facebook, or Twitter. Also from your profile, you can access your Photo Map, which enables you to showcase where you've taken the photos you've shared.

The camera enables you to take photos with the Instagram camera or share photos from your phone's photo library. You can access the camera by tapping the center icon in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen, and from there can take a photo or video or choose a photo from your photo library.

You can use the Search & Explore function to find people to follow, search for specific users, and explore hashtags. Access Search & Explore by tapping the magnifying glass icon in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen, and toggling between the "Photos" and "People" views to explore posts and users, or type in the "Search" box and choose between "Users" and "Hashtags."

The Home tab shows the feed of photos posted by you and by the other Instagram users whom you follow. You can like and comment on the photos and videos in your Feed. Access your feed by tapping the Home tab in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen.

The Activity tab displays likes and comments on your posts, and shows you the photos and videos that your friends are liking and commenting on. You can access the Activity tab by tapping the speech bubble icon in the toolbar at the bottom of the screen, and toggling between the "Following" and "You" views.

You can also find people whom you might like to follow through the Explore tab, which you can access by tapping the magnifying glass icon. Tap "Photos" to see photos and videos that people whom you follow have liked or that a large number of Instagram users have liked. Tap "People" to see accounts that you might like, based on whom you follow, whom you're connected to, and what photos and videos you like on Instagram.

Another way to find other users is to search for people or hashtags on Instagram. Using the search bar at the top of Search & Explore, choose whether you're looking for users or hashtags. You can search for people by their name or their Instagram username.

How to take or post a photo with Instagram

When you share posts on Instagram, you have two options: taking a photo with Instagram's camera, or uploading one from your phone's photo library. You can tap the camera icon at the bottom of the screen to take a photo, or to select one from your phone. From the camera, you can switch the photo grid on and off, switch between the front-facing and back-facing camera, or choose whether or not to use the flash. You can tap the shutter button to take a photo, or hit the video icon to record video.

Once you've chosen a photo, you can add effects from the editing tools at the top of the screen or select a filter from the choices at the bottom of the screen. Then you can write a caption for the photo, tag people in the photo, add it to your Photo Map, or share it to Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, or Flickr. When you write the caption to your photo, you can use #hashtags and @mentions. Mentions let you bring a post to the attention of another user who will get a notification when you mention him or her in a post — and hashtags will help other Instagram users to find your posts, or help you to tag or categorize your posts for yourself.

To tag people in a photo, tap "Tag People" and tap on someone in the photo. Start entering their name or username, and select the correct users from the dropdown menu that appears. If the person that you want to tag doesn't appear in that menu, tap "Search for a person" to find him or her. If your photos are public, then anyone can see the photo, and the person tagged in the photo will get a notification. If your photos are private, then only people who are following you will be able to see the photo. The person whom you tag in the photo will get a notification if they're following you. (You can see and manage the photos that other people tag you in from your profile.)

When you post your photo, it will appear both on your profile and in your feed. If you've set your profile to private, only the people whom you've approved to follow you will be able to see it.

Instagram is a user friendly app. Just like any other social media, there is small learning curve. Instagram support does offer an excellent help center that can be accessed directly from your profile page.