



Social Media Guide for Business

Getting Started on Instagram



Guide: getting started with Instagram

I. Instagram

What is Instagram?

[Instagram](#) is a mobile application that allows you to share images with a community of followers. After choosing a photo, you can edit it, tag other Instagram users, choose a location, and share. Instagram is available on IOS, Android, and Windows mobile phones and can be managed on multiple platforms.

Why should you use it?

[Instagram](#) is a powerful social media platform from which your business can derive many benefits.

1. The application is free and available at the App Store
2. Instagram is an effective marketing tool that leverages content generation, with over 300 million active users per month
3. Instagram allows business to build an engaged online community, as gaining followers, interacting with individuals and other companies creates a two-way relationship
4. High quality photos and engaging content can create a competitive edge for a business by increasing brand exposure and awareness

How to set-up an account:

1. [Download Instagram from the App Store.](#)
 - i. Press "Get" → "Install" → "Open"
2. Once you open the application, you will have to **create an account**. You are only able to create an account on your mobile device, and can access the account either on a mobile device or a computer thereafter.

To create an account:

- i. Tap sign up, enter either
 - a. Your email address to sign up or;
 - b. Login with your Facebook account

If you sign up with an email address, enter the following information: username, password, personal information(optional), profile picture.

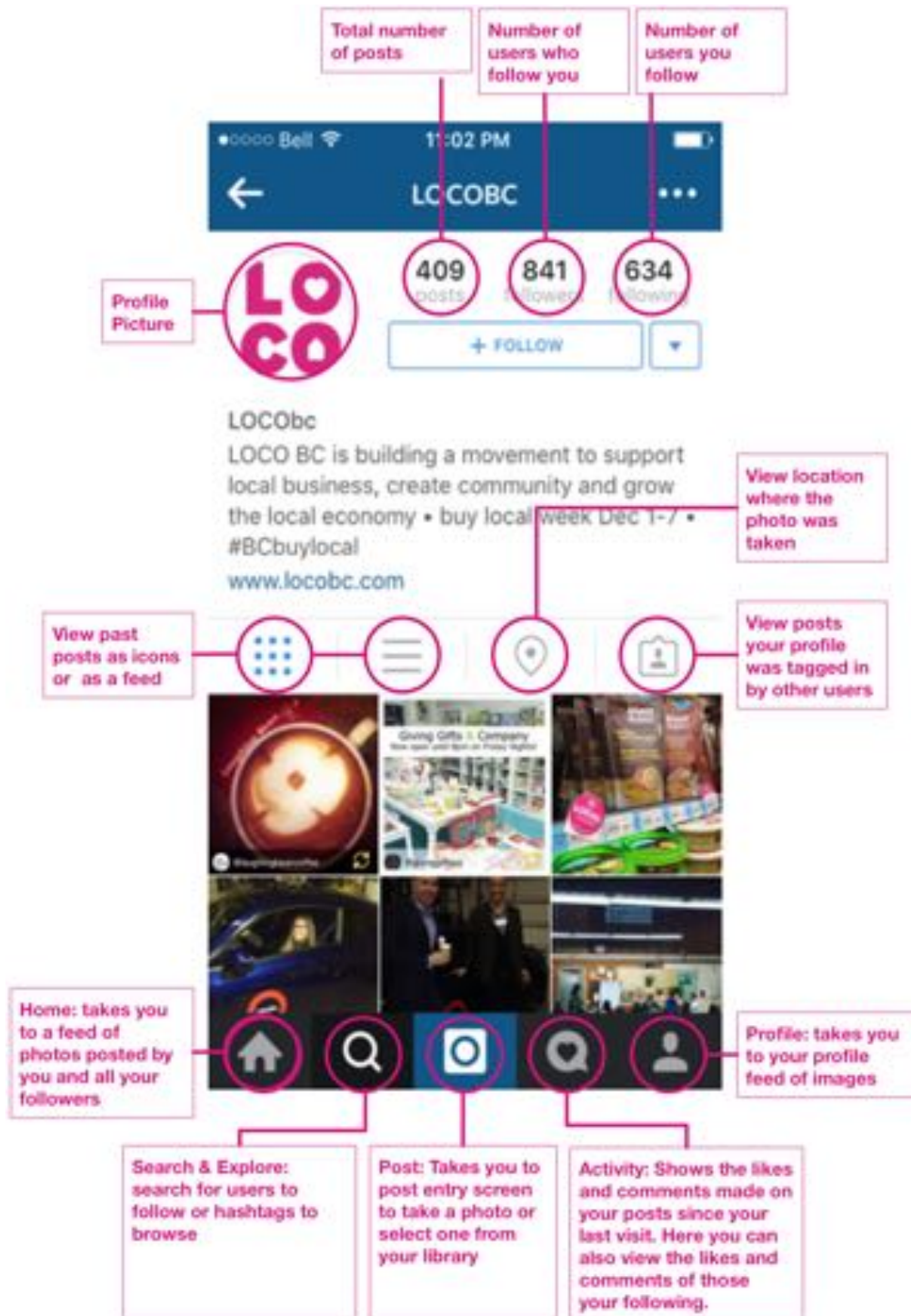
- a. Username: can be your company name, for example @locobc
 - b. Password: make it easy to remember! If you forget your password, you can ask Instagram to send you an email to reset it. Be sure you are entering the right email when you sign up!
3. **You are all set up!**

Follow through the rest of the guide to get a tour of the app, and learn how to post pictures.



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Navigating the Home Page





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Making an Instagram Post on a Mobile Device:

Step 1:
Open the Instagram App



Step 2:
Click on the camera icon



You will be directed to a new screen

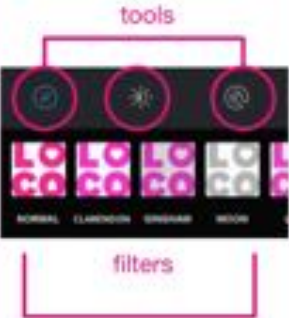
Step 3:
Select image from Camera Roll or take a picture or video on the spot



Step 3: Full Window
Click next to proceed to photo editing



Step 4:
Edit photo using tools and filters



tools

filters

Step 4: Full Window



Step 5:
write a caption

LO CO

tag something or someone

Tag People

add a location

Add Location

Refer to "Using Hashtags & Location Features"

Step 5: Full window



Step 6:
Share photo to Instagram and other social media platforms

Facebook Twitter

Tumblr Flickr

By clicking the Facebook and Twitter icons, you enable Instagram to access these accounts and post to them simultaneously



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Navigating the Post:

(example of a post on our Instagram page)



A. Taking Advantage of #Hashtags

Hashtags are used on all popular social networks including [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#). They categorize content on social media which also makes this content discoverable to viewers through searches they make.

Listed below are the “do's and don'ts” of using hashtags:

DO:

- Be specific when using hashtags – this helps to narrow and capture your target market which leads to better engagement
- Create your own business hashtag or use one or two existing hashtags that fit the photo
- Make the hashtags relevant – this will ensure that your hashtags actually describe your photo. Relevant hashtags are important when trying to attract new followers. Effective hashtags will interest them and they will continue to like and comment on your photos

DON'T:

- Do not have more hashtags than words
- Do not create hashtags that are as long as sentences



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B. Take Advantage of Location

The location tool identifies content by the location in which it was taken. You can allow Instagram to access your location and “geotag” the photo. The location is attached to the content in **Step 6** of “Making an Instagram Post.” Adding the location will tie you to the local community. As your business will have a following of local shoppers, local users will appreciate and react to content they know as being generated in Vancouver. This will increase foot traffic. As we are together trying to kindle the “buy-local” culture, attaching a location generates, compiles, and showcases the amazing local products our city is proud of.

II. Best Practices:

Best Practices for Your Own Posts

1. Use high **Quality Content** – By following these guidelines below you are supporting the credibility and value of your brand and business by communicated your product as high quality
 - i. Use high quality photos that are clear and are not pixelated
 - ii. The caption is central to the photo
 - iii. The content is original – Original content ensures the authenticity of your content based on your brand's values and products
2. **Captioning:** Keep captions concise and clear as users scroll through their feeds quickly. It is thus very important to grab their attention and keep it! Employ a friendly and conversational tone to engage your followers. Developing a story with all components of content creates a story that appeals to viewers.
3. **HashTagging:** Refer to “**Take Advantage of Hashtags**”
4. **Photo Editing:** Make sure when using filters and other editing tools that your pictures look real – you do not want your posts to be over filtered, too saturated or blurry. Our best word of advice: less is more!
5. **Bio:** When creating the biography on your profile, include
 - i. the mission and values that your business stands by - This will encourage your viewers to check out your products
 - ii. Link to your website (if applicable)
 - iii. The location of your physical store (if applicable)

This allows viewers to become customers and acts as the first step to generating a sale

6. **Tagging:** This feature allows you to identify customers, employees, businesses you are collaborating with, etc. that are showcased in the photo. Tagging builds a community, makes the content more personal, and creates a network of local businesses.



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Best Practices for Engaging with Others on Instagram

[Instagram](#) not only acts as a marketing tool, it is the perfect channel to engage customers. Interaction can come in several forms

1. **Following customers:** This helps your business gain a sense of the customer segment that is interested in your product.
2. **Ask Questions in your captions:** This increases the engagement of viewers with the content itself. This creates an experience for them by encouraging interaction, and will increase general interest
3. **Company Hashtag:** Create a hashtag for your business and encourage your customers to post pictures of them using it with the hashtag. When you add the campaign hashtag **#BCbuylocal** for example, you are connecting to a larger campaign and your posts will appear on bcbuylocal.com.
4. **Comment on other pictures:** Especially those of your customers. This will emphasize how you value them as clients and extend the customer service beyond the physical interaction.
5. **Photo Contests:** An extension of item 3 – entice customers to post pictures of themselves using the product with the reward being a give away. This will double as an effective marketing campaign. It will also aid in the adoption of your business's hashtag and the generation of content (i.e., reposting).



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III. One Step Further : Complimentary Applications

There are several Apps available in the application store that will expand, improve and enhance the content you produce.



**Photo Editor
by Aviary**

[Photo Editor by Aviary](#) allows users to create and share beautiful photos with over 20 free tools.

Benefits:

- Free – available at the App Store
 - Provides superior photo editing capabilities that are user friendly and instantly on a mobile device
 - Direct sharing options with social media platforms
-



PicFrame

[Pic Frame](#) helps users to combine multiple photos into frames and share them via social media. It includes 73 adjustable frames that support up to 9 photos or videos, add text labels to your frames, add music etc.

Benefits:

- Free – available at the App Store
 - Make you Instagram content more rich, interactive, and diverse
 - Ideal for showcasing multiple products
-



Over

[Over](#) allows users to superimpose creative text and artwork to your photos.

Benefits:

- Simple and intuitive
 - Allows for the integration of hashtags in the photos themselves
 - Allows users to tell a story
-



Iconosquare

[Iconosquare](#) provides Instagram users with "statigrams" or key metrics about your Instagram account. For instance, it gives your total number of likes received, it tracks your most liked photos ever, it calculates your average number of likes and comments per photo, it determines your follower growth charts and more.

Benefits:

- Free – Available at the App Store
- Helps users to build a successful brand presence on Instagram
- Iconosquare aids in monitoring growth of your Instagram profile



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IV. Resources:

Listed below are links to resources that will aid in the following areas

- Education
- Instagram Planning
- Instagram Campaigning

How to Improve Your Instagram Marketing

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/improve-your-instagram-marketing/>

Variety of Tips for Different Social Media Platforms

<http://blog.hootsuite.com/>

26 Tips on Using Instagram for Business

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/instagram-for-business-tips/>

A Small Business Owner's Guide to Using Instagram Effectively

<https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/small-business-owners-guide-using-instagram-effectively/>

How to Create an Instagram Marketing Strategy

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

How to Schedule Social Media Content for Next Week, Next Month, and Next Year

<https://blog.bufferapp.com/schedule-social-media-content-plan>