

IONOS



How to increase sales on Instagram

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1 Overview

Is Instagram more than just a platform for visually appealing pictures?

[70% of shoppers](#) look to Instagram for their next purchase. And with 90% of the one billion Instagram users following at least one business on Instagram, now is the time to showcase your brand and products.

With the goal of increasing sales, Instagram gives you the tools to position your brand to take advantage of engaged shoppers. Check out these impressive statistics about Instagram users:

[80% of users](#) discover new brands through Instagram.

[65% of users](#) visited a brand's website after seeing a product or services on Instagram.

How can you leverage this audience to increase sales? We'll discuss how to build a foundation of trust with followers and then the key social tactics needed to turn followers into sales.



2 Increase sales with trust

2.1 What's your story?

- Storytelling is such a big part of effective Instagram marketing, and it's really important to have a clear story that you are trying to tell through your Instagram imagery and captions. Instead of simply showing merchandise, think about how you can sell a lifestyle with your brand.
- Educate customers on how your products enhance their life or well-being. These are the stories your brand needs to be telling, instead of simply just sharing the features and benefits of the products you are trying to sell.
- When a follower knows you as a person, they'll start to look at your brand and products differently. And since the drive to support local businesses is rising, you'll have another reason to share your small business story on Instagram.

Try this: Ask yourself these three questions to start building your story. Then share them with a post or create IG stories.

- Why did you start your business?
- Which company values are most important to you?
- What does their support do for your business and goals?

You're not just selling a product, you're selling a story...a lifestyle.

2.2 Be the solution

- In order to make sales you need to convince shoppers that your product is the solution to their problem. A great way to accomplish this is to use Instagram to tell users what they can expect after purchasing your product.
- For example, anyone can buy a pair of shoes, so don't post a picture of them on a white background. It tells you nothing other than "Hey those are some nice-looking shoes". Instead, use other imagery to suggest to your audience that they're not only buying the shoes, but the destinations they can go with the shoes.
- As you build your story, don't just tell consumers that you are the solution. Show them how you are the solution.

Try this: Find out how your competitors are positioning themselves on Instagram. Look at how they are talking about their business and product. Find out where you differ from them and present that as the solution.

"Instagram plays a key role at every step of the purchasing process. People use the platform to discover what's trending, research products before buying... and each of these moments offers touch points on Instagram where marketers can drive action."

SOURCE: <https://www.facebook.com/business/news/insights/how-instagram-boosts-brands-and-drives-sales>

2.3 Engage with your audience

- Focus less on selling and more on providing value to build trust first – only then will selling flow more easily. There's real value in using direct messages to engage and connect with your customers before making the sale. So you don't need to rush customers using external links.
- Social proof and engagement are incredibly important in persuading first-time buyers that you have a brand they can trust. Make sure to include genuine Instagram testimonials and comments, and integrate your Instagram page into your website.
- Try building a relationship with your audience before you start selling to them. Chances are they're more likely to listen to you, if you've already established a connection with them.

When it comes to building relationships with your customers, look for quality engagement over quantity.

2.4 Find the balance

- Instagram users want to be inspired, entertained, or educated. They don't browse the platform to be sold to. But that doesn't mean you can't!
- Use the 80/20 rule: 80% of the time (or 4 out of every 5 posts) share value with your followers – inspire, entertain, or educate them.
- Then 20% of the time (or 1 out of every 5 posts) share something promotional – a product, sale, or special offer.

Try this: Use social media scheduling tools to prepare and plan out your content. A little thought and coordination will help you in the long run.

Use the 80/20 rule as an outline.

"Instagrammers want to hear from brands, so deliver content to them at every stage of the consumer journey. Post content that promotes discovery (like targeted ads or hashtags), aids in research (like testimonials, reviews or product details) or helps at decision time (like offering sales or limited-time offers)."



3 Boost sales with tools

Now that you've established your business as a trustworthy brand, you're in a great position to increase sales. Here's how to do that.

3.1 Get a business account

- Turn your account on Instagram into a Business Account to get insights about your stories, posts, and followers. You'll be able to:
 - See real-time metrics on how your stories and promoted posts perform
 - Get insights into your followers and how they interact with your posts and stories
 - Add company information like business hours, location, and phone number
- With a business profile, you can increase sales and expand your reach with Instagram shoppable posts. These allow followers and customers to easily find out more about the product. Shoppers can complete their buying journey – from discovery to checkout – without ever leaving the Instagram app. Your shoppable posts come right up in their Instagram feed. [See commerce guidelines](#)
- Want another way to increase sales? Boost your posts directly from within the app just by clicking on the Promote button under each post. Promoted posts have Instagram generated call-to-action buttons with clickable links. They're also an easy way to boost sales by getting your products in front of shoppers you might have missed.

SOURCE: <https://www.facebook.com/business/news/insights/how-instagram-boosts-brands-and-drives-sales>

3.2 Run ads on Instagram

- Before you start, make sure you decide what the goal of these ads should be. Within the overarching goal of driving sales, each type of ad can have different objectives.
 - **Brand awareness:** reach people more likely to pay attention to your ads to build awareness for your brand
 - **Reach:** show your ad to the maximum number of people
 - **Traffic:** get clicks to your website or to the app store for your app
 - **Engagement:** find more people to see and engage with your post or Instagram page with comments, shares, likes, event responses and offer claims
 - **Video views:** promote videos that show behind-the-scenes footage, product launches, or customer stories to raise awareness about your brand
 - **Conversions:** get visitors to take actions on your website or app, like adding payment info or making a purchase
- The following type of paid promotions allow you to reach your goals faster than organic growth. There are a few different types of Instagram shopping ads:
 - Stories ads
 - Photo ads
 - Video ads
 - Carousel ads
 - Collection ads
 - Explore ads
- The key to running ads is knowing what your audience wants, keeping your message short, and introducing the call to action (CTA) quickly.

Try this: Lead ads allow you to collect valuable information such as a potential customer's name, email, and more. Incentivise customers to give you their information by offering a free product. Use this type of ad to create a lead list and turn those leads into sales by offering your services or products.

[Find out more about lead ads](#)

3.3 Use hashtags strategically

- Hashtags are a word or a group of words that follow the # sign. For example, #GardeningTips or #HomeDecorInspo. They act as searchable keywords and keyword phrases that group content by topic. Hashtags are a great (and free) discovery tool to help you reach new and relevant audiences.
- This tool is used to get Instagram users looking at your business at the beginning of the sales journey. And if you've set up your flow correctly, they'll become a follower and engage with your business.
- Follow these best practices to leverage hashtags:
 - Aim for somewhere between 15-20
 - Start by selecting 3-5 popular topics and 3-5 related topics
 - Find 3-5 hashtags that work for your business per topic
 - Always include 2-3 of your own branded hashtags
- By optimizing your use of hashtags, you open your business to a new audience of shoppers who wouldn't have not discovered you otherwise.

Try this: Get creative and come up with a catchy hashtag that reflects your business. Encourage customers to use your branded hashtag and share their real-life stories of using your products on Instagram. This can help you increase your visibility and track user-generated content.

[Learn more about using hashtags](#)

4 Conclusion

Let's recap:

- Showcase **your story** as part of your selling strategy
- Introduce your product as the **solution**
- **Build a relationship** with your audience before you sell
- Create **content** that's informative, helpful, and entertaining
- Set your business up for success with a **Business Account**
- Run **targeted ads** to get your product in front of the right audience
- **Use hashtags strategically** so new shoppers can easily discover your business

Looking for an easier way? Meet the Social Buy Button from IONOS!

With the IONOS [Social Buy Button](#), selling on social is as easy as uploading products and making changes from one account. One intuitive dashboard syncs everything across Facebook and Instagram, so you don't need to make changes twice.

What are you waiting for? Give your customers a great shopping experience and start selling on social today!



About IONOS

IONOS is the hosting and cloud partner of choice for small and medium-sized businesses. We are experts in IaaS and offer a portfolio of solutions to get businesses present online and working in the digital space. As the largest hosting company in Europe, we manage more than 8 million customer contracts and host more than 12 million domains in our own regional data centres around the globe.

We serve entrepreneurs taking their first steps online, business owners scaling up, large companies and partners who help them reach their ambitious goals. Whether building an online presence by securing a domain, a website, moving back-office processes to the cloud or orchestrating a container cluster, our comprehensive portfolio offers a best-in-class app, server or service.

Reliability and security are engineered into the core of our products. Our self-built data centre network delivers optimal performance and georedundancy. With headquarters in Germany, we at IONOS pride ourselves on state-of-the-art technology, strong privacy policies and airtight data security.

Customers are our focus. That is why we not only have dedicated local support teams, but we also offer an industry first: a personal consultant who provides expert advice tailored to your needs.

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