

Hashing Out Hashtags

Increase reach and engagement
for your small business

GoDaddy® Social

HOW TO USE HASHTAGS EFFECTIVELY

Instagram



Instagram posts with at least one hashtag receive 12.6% more engagement.

Many users and businesses use **hashtags** on **Instagram** to increase their post reach and get their content in front of new users.

USING RELEVANT HASHTAGS

Using hashtags in your caption that are relevant to your brand, local area, and industry will get new eyes on your business' Instagram content and help boost your engagement.

What's considered relevant? Anything your followers would find interesting or anything you think might help your post reach more people on the platform.

Here's the Blue Moon Hotel in Miami, FL using relevant hashtags to their brand, local area, and industry:

bluemoonmiamisb • Follow
Blue Moon Hotel, Autograph Collection

...

67 likes

bluemoonmiamisb The other side of Miami nights...

bluemoonmiamisb #bluemoonhotel #bluemoon #collinsave #miamimoments #miamiliving #instatravel #hotellife #hotelgoals #homeawayfromhome #travelbug

FYI: You can add up to **30 hashtags per post**, but some studies have shown that when you go over 10, **engagement can start to drop**.

The number of hashtags you use on each post can vary and should add value. Don't add hashtags just to add them. Experiment with the type and number of hashtags you use on your posts and stick with what resonates most with your audience.

Brand hashtags: #bluemoonhotel, #bluemoon

Local hashtags: #collinsave, #miamimoments, #miamiliving

Industry hashtags: #instatravel, #hotellife, #hotelgoals, #homeawayfromhome, #travelbug

Instagram



USING THE RIGHT HASHTAGS

Instagram users can not only follow other users, but they can also follow **specific hashtags** as well. This means more reach for your business if you are using the right hashtags. So, how do you know if you're using the right hashtags for your business? **Search for them!**

When you type a hashtag into Instagram's search bar, you can see not only related hashtags, but also how many times each hashtag has been used.

In this example to the right, you might think you want to use the hashtag **#NewYears**, but **#NewYear** has been used by more people, so it might be better to go with that hashtag instead to ensure that you can get the most eyes on your content.

Hashtag	Post Count
#newyear	24,229,746 posts
#newyearseve	6,034,130 posts
#newyears	4,856,320 posts
#newyeareve	894,665 posts

Where should hashtags go?

Integrate trending or widely-used hashtags into the body of your caption. Then, add the rest within the caption after hitting enter a few times, or as the first comment on your post.

In the caption

If you want to add several hashtags within the body of your caption, make sure to add a period, then hit enter, then a period, then enter, at least three times so users don't see those hashtags unless they click, "More."

Here's local Austin spot, Fresa's, using a trending hashtag within the body of the caption (#nationalmargaritaday), then adding more relevant hashtags a few spaces down to give the post reach without distracting from their message:

fresaschicken
Fresa's - South First

89 likes

fresaschicken We like to think every day is National Margarita Day 😊 Cheers to the official #nationalmargaritaday

#fresasatx #austineats #eeeeateats #atxeats #atx #austin Texas #igaustintexas #austin #texas

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If you don't want to use periods for spacing, you can copy and paste blank characters instead. Just google "invisible spaces for instagram."

Instagram



As a comment

Once you've posted on Instagram, you can comment on your own post with the hashtags you'd like to add.

Here's local Washington, D.C. restaurant, SeoulSpice, using Instagram to promote their happy hour, and then adding several relevant hashtags in a comment to try to reach more Instagram users who might be searching for those topics:



147 likes



seoulspice During our Happy Hour (3-7PM Daily), pick up a bowl AND a beer for just \$10. Does anyone do HH better than SEOULSPICE?

15w



seoulspice #seoulspice #koreanfood #yelpdc #instadc #igdc #nomadc #tenleytown #brightestyoungthings #acreatedc #dcdining #dceats #dcfoodporn #foodporn #yelpdc #foodbeast #instaeats #instafood #instayum #inmybowl #eeeeeat #HH #happyhour #its5oclocksomewhere #nomnom #instaeats #drinkporn #beer #beerme #cheers #thirstythursday

15w 1 like Reply

Brand hashtags: #seoulspice

Local hashtags: #yelpdc, #instadc, #igdc, #nomadc, #tenleytown, #brightestyoungthings, #acreatedc, #dcdining, #dceats, #dcfoodporn

Industry hashtags: #koreanfood, #foodporn, #foodbeast, #instaeats, #instafood, #instayum, #inmybowl, #eeeeeat, #HH, #happyhour, #its5oclocksomewhere, #nomnom, #drinkporn, #beer, #beerme, #cheers, #thirstythursday

Their goal with this combination of hashtags is to reach people in their city looking for delicious food and beverages (and specifically Korean food and craft beer) on Thursdays for happy hour -- and, to tell those people that they should visit their business over anyone else!

caption

comment

Instagram



BE THOUGHTFUL ABOUT YOUR HASHTAGS

Are there local hashtags that are popular in your community or hashtags that are relevant to the specific photo you're posting? Work them in to be sure you're capturing new audiences and engaging with your current followers as well.

Here's Lizard Thicket Boutique in Murfreesboro, TN using branded hashtags as well as fashion-related hashtags that are intended to resonate with their fashion-forward followers, like [#bohostyle](#), [#lookswelove](#), and [#ootd](#) (see left):

If you search for [#ootd](#), (outfit of the day), you'll see that that hashtag has almost 200M uses on Instagram (see right):



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white lace top, denim shorts, and brown boots, is sitting on a concrete ledge. Behind her is a large, illuminated neon sign that reads "Lizard Thicket". She is leaning against a metal railing with some green plants growing through it. The background shows a city street at night.

lizardthicketboutique • Follow

lizardthicketboutique Boho vibes all around
↳ #lizardthicketboutique #lizardthicket
#Lttstyle #bohostyle #crochet
#sweaterweather #ootd #lookswelove
#desert
wearethewtravelers @alex_denning 🌸

jenn_stonge @lizardthicketmesa do you ladies have this top? 😍
lizardthicketboutique @jenn_nguyen10 What size are you looking for? 😊

763 likes JULY 19, 2018

Log in to like or comment. ...

#ootd Search results

Top People Tags Places

- #ootd 196,952,292 posts
- #ootdfashion 3,706,307 posts
- #ootdstyle 662,816 posts
- #ootd 502,941 posts
- #ootds 100,906 posts
- #ootd 180,124 posts
- #ootd_kob 168,160 posts
- #ootdindo 6,984,664 posts

This boutique is harnessing the power of popular, trending hashtags to capture the attention of new users clicking on that hashtag. Once they click on that hashtag, they might see Lizard Thicket's Instagram post and give them a follow or purchase something from their store!





Tweets with hashtags are **33% more likely to get retweeted than tweets without hashtags.**



Engagement will drop on Tweets with more than two hashtags.

WHAT ARE THE BEST HASHTAGS TO USE ON TWITTER?

The same rules for Instagram also apply on Twitter. Be sure to use hashtags that are relevant to your brand, local area, and industry and that your current and potential followers might find interesting. If your business' account is public, any users who search for a hashtag you're using just might find your tweet in their search results.

Here's Bickmore Auto Sales in Gresham, OR using branded, local, and industry-related hashtags.

Bickmore Auto Sales @BickmoreAuto · Oct 22
Don't miss out on one of our inventory specials! A 2014 Mazda CX-5 Touring with an internet price of \$16,488 ! ow.ly/MaXT30m2W9y #BickmoreAutoSales #Gresham #OR #usedcars #autosales #cars

This way, they can reach people searching specifically for their business, researching car sales in Gresham, OR, or looking for car sales anywhere in the country.

Brand hashtags: #BickmoreAutoSales

Local hashtags: #Gresham, #OR

Industry hashtags: #autosales, #usedcars, #cars

Without those hashtags, only their current followers would see this tweet in their feeds.

Here's Passion Fish, a local restaurant in Bethesda, MD, using **#sushi, #lunch**, and their local community hashtag **#Bethesda** to bring customers in for their bento box lunch deal:

Plus, they added a link designed to drive traffic to their website -- this is a good idea if you want to entice potential customers to peruse your menu or find directions to come in for lunch.

PassionFish Bethesda @PassionFishBeth · Follow

Our \$15 Bento Box **#Sushi** Special is **#Bethesda**'s best **#Lunch** deal! Your pick of a Sushi Roll + Salad & Slaw. Info: ow.ly/gg1F30k0E12



USE HASHTAGS TO START CONVERSATIONS

You can also start conversations on Twitter with the help of hashtags.

1. Search for popular hashtags or keywords that relate to your business in Twitter's search bar.
2. Find tweets using those hashtags.
3. Identify a tweet that your business could interact with in a friendly way.
4. Start chatting!

For example, if you're a restaurant in Austin and it's lunch or dinner time, use the search bar in Twitter and search the hashtag **#hungry** and local hashtag **#ATXeats** to be sure you can find people in your area. Start a conversation with anyone using those hashtags and invite them in to try your delicious food!

Here's a great conversation between Ohana Steakhouse and a Twitter user that ended up bringing that user into their restaurant:

MattinOregon (@MattinOregon) - Feb 9
Im craving steak for breakfast! Question is: medium or medium-well?
Replies: 1 Retweets: 0 Likes: 0

Ohana Steakhouse (@OhanaSteakhouse) - Feb 9
Question is: medium or medium-well?
Replies: 2 Retweets: 0 Likes: 0

MattinOregon (@MattinOregon)
Replies to @OhanaSteakhouse
this tweet just got me and three friends here for food tonight #welldone give the guy that runs the twitter a raise!
Follow

And, here's Ace Hardware reminding a Twitter user that they can come to them for all of their new apartment needs:

Kris Ahlman (@KrisAhlman) - May 2
Old apartment clean - ✓
New apartment clean - 🎉🎉
Replies: 2 Retweets: 0 Likes: 5

Woodward's ACE (@woodwardsaceca) - May 2
That's amazing! Feeling accomplished?
Replies: 1 Retweets: 0 Likes: 1

Kris Ahlman (@KrisAhlman) - May 2
And exhausted 😴
Replies: 1 Retweets: 0 Likes: 1

Woodward's ACE (@woodwardsaceca) - May 3
Well, kudos! If you need any tools or anything for your new place, keep us in mind.:)
Replies: 1 Retweets: 0 Likes: 1

Kris Ahlman (@KrisAhlman)
Replies to @woodwardsaceca
After this tweet response i will be dropping by today 🙌
12:23 PM - 3 May 2017
1 Like Follow

Other Hashtag Tips:

- **Watch your punctuation.** Exclamation points, spaces, commas and apostrophes will break a hashtag.
- **Research your hashtags.** You don't want to misspell a hashtag, misuse the hashtag, or use a hashtag that's defunct.
- **Count your characters.** When creating a custom hashtag, mind the character count. Lengthy hashtags are hard to read and aren't as effective as to-the-point hashtags. Example: **#happyhourtohanagrill** vs. **#ohanagrillhh**
- **Don't forget about your brand.** It can be tempting to use the most popular hashtags in your posts, but your post could get lost in the social media shuffle if you only use trending, high-volume hashtags in your posts. Remember to use hashtags that will increase brand awareness and direct customers to your business.

Start hashtagging today on Instagram and Twitter to get more eyes on your posts and win more customers through social media!