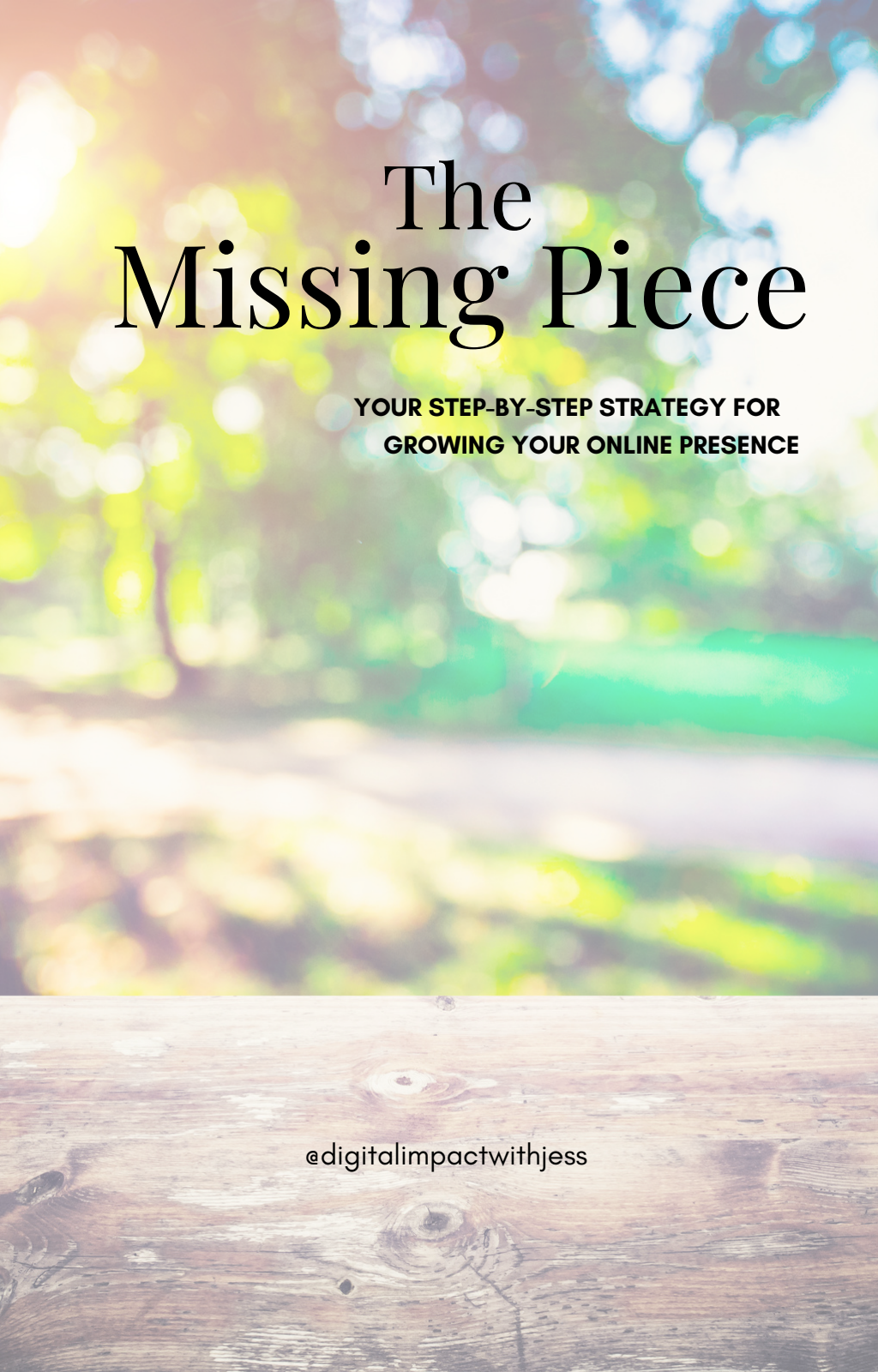




The Missing Piece

**YOUR STEP-BY-STEP STRATEGY FOR
GROWING YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE**

@digitalimpactwithjess

WELCOME

I am so glad you're here!

Lately, I have been hearing from so many in the online space all of the frustrations around growing on social media, and feeling like there's just that one piece that's "missing". I've been there, I know the feeling. That's why this product was "born".

Through a lot of trial & error in my own businesses, I decided to use my experience to help others fill the gaps they're feeling, so they can find success without having to make the same mistakes along the way. Lucky you, I've already made them for you!

In case we haven't "met" before, I've been an entrepreneur for a decade, and am currently a multi-business owner, so when I say I have made the mistakes and "failed forward", I mean it!

Now, let's dive in and find YOUR missing piece!



xo

Jessica Jones

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A photograph of a long, straight path lined with tall trees, leading towards a bright, hazy horizon where the sun is low. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the overall atmosphere is warm and serene. The word "mindset" is written in a black, italicized serif font, centered over the path.

mindset

mindset

All right, let's get real for a minute. Creating content and being able to monetize is an incredible journey, but it's not always easy.

Sometimes, we get in our own way and hold ourselves back with self-doubt, fear, and negative thoughts. But, here's the good news - by shifting our mindset, we can break through those barriers and unlock our full potential as content creators.

Mindset is hands down the most important thing when it comes to building an online presence.

That's why we're starting this chapter by diving into some of the mindset shifts that can help you achieve your dreams.

So, if you're ready to take your content creation to the next level, let's dive in and start unlocking your full potential.

abundance mindset

Abundance is a belief that there are enough resources, opportunities, and success for everyone. It's all about recognizing that there's enough space for all of us. Rather than seeing other creators as competition, you can view them as inspiration and potential friends.

By being open to learning from others, & sharing your knowledge and resources, you'll be able to tap into a world of new opportunities and growth. Here are some ways you can tap into your abundance mindset as a content creator:

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CREATORS

Collaboration is a great way to expand your reach and connect with new audiences. Look for creators in your niche who share your values and interests, and reach out to them about potential collaborations.

CELEBRATE THE SUCCESS OF OTHERS

When other creators in your niche achieve success, celebrate it! Congratulate them and support them in any way you can. The success of others doesn't mean you can't achieve it too. By creating a habit of celebrating each other's wins, you'll create a positive and uplifting environment!

SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE WITH OTHERS

One of the coolest things about being a content creator is that you get to share your knowledge and expertise with others. By sharing your best tips, you are creating a strong community and positioning yourself as a trusted authority in your niche. Win-win!

FOCUS ON YOUR SELF

Let's be real for a moment - we all have those moments where we look at other people's profiles and feel like we're not good enough and start comparing ourselves. But here's the thing: constantly comparing ourselves to others is a recipe for disaster. Instead, try focusing on being your own competition! Set goals for yourself and work to improve your own content with each new post.

impostor syndrome

This is a common feeling for anyone who starts creating content. It's that nagging voice in your head that tells you you're not good enough, and that someone else is doing better. But here's the thing: imposter syndrome is actually a sign that you're pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone. Here are some ways that will help you overcome this syndrome.

EMBRACE FAILURE: Take risks, try new things, and learn from your mistakes. Start seeing failure as an opportunity to grow.

BE YOURSELF: Remember that you have your own unique voice and perspective to share with the world. Don't compare yourself to others. Focus on what makes you unique and share that with your audience.

CELEBRATE SMALL WINS: Don't forget to take time to celebrate your successes, no matter how small they may seem. Recognize your accomplishments and give yourself credit for the hard work you've put in.

mindset

Remember, changing your identity and mindset takes time and consistent effort. But, by focusing on the type of person you want to be and proving it to yourself with small wins, you can make the shift and achieve the success you want.

As you work towards your goals, it's important to celebrate every small success along the way. These can be as simple as hitting a certain number of views or likes on a post, or receiving positive feedback from your audience.

Keep track of your wins in a journal. Have a dedicated section where you can write down all your achievements, big or small, and often revisit them when you need a little confidence boost. Trust me, it always works wonders!

A photograph of a long, straight path or road stretching into the distance, flanked by tall, mature trees. The sun is shining brightly from the end of the path, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene with a warm, golden light. The ground is covered with fallen leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The word "niche" is written in a cursive font across the middle of the image.

niche

what is a niche?

Niche is just a specific area or topic that you focus on as a content creator. It's what makes your content unique and helps you attract a targeted audience. For example, my niche is online marketing, more specifically, I help people make money online with digital marketing.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When you focus on one niche, it's easier to talk with your target audience. Here are just a few reasons why having a clear niche is important if you want to level up your social media presence:

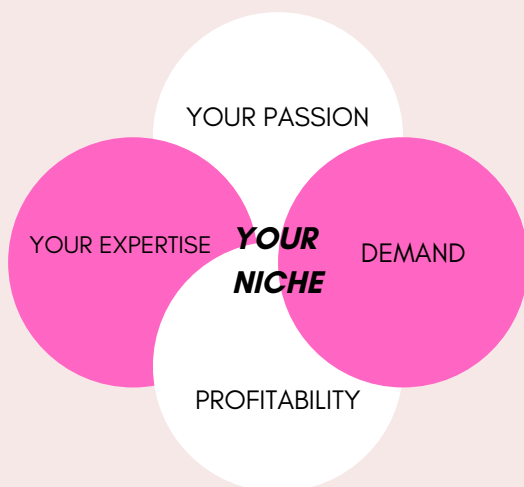
IT BUILDS CREDIBILITY: When you have a niche, you become an expert in that area. People start to see you as someone who knows what they're talking about and can be trusted.

ATTRACT THE RIGHT AUDIENCE: When you have a clear niche, you attract a specific audience that is interested in the things you talk about. You build a following with high focus interest, so it's much easier to monetize your content.

what is a niche?

IT MAKES YOU STAND OUT: With so many content creators out there, having a niche can help you stand out from the crowd. It makes it easier for people to remember you and it also helps you differentiate yourself from others who may be creating similar content.

THE PERFECT NICHE: Your niche should sit at the intersection of things you are passionate about, the things you are knowledgeable about, the problem you are solving for others, and 'is there a demand for this'? Also, make sure you are choosing a niche you can make a profit from in the future.



CHOOSING YOUR NICHE

Picking a niche is one of the most important things you'll do to build a successful content strategy. It determines your audience, content topics, and revenue potential. So, let's dive into how to pick a niche that's right for you!

FIND YOUR PASSION & EXPERTISE

Think about what you love! What hobbies, interests, or experiences have you had that you can't stop talking about, and that you can use to add value to your content? Choosing a niche that you're passionate about is important because it will keep you motivated and excited about creating content.

LOOK AT MARKET DEMAND

While it's important to choose a niche that you're passionate about, you also need to consider if there's a demand for it. The easiest way to do this is to ensure that there are already successful creators in your niche. Competition is actually a great sign that there is a demand for the type of content you will be creating

TARGET AUDIENCE

Once you've found a niche that you're passionate about and that has demand, it's time to think about your audience. Who are they? What do they need or want? What problems can you solve for them? Think about what types of content would be most valuable to them.

NARROW IT DOWN

It's time to get specific! Narrowing down your niche can help you stand out from the crowd and attract a more targeted audience. For example, if your niche is fitness, you could narrow it down to "lose weight with keto diet"

DEFINE THE PROBLEM YOU SOLVE

Think about the problems that your target audience has, and how you can solve them with your content. This will help you create content that's relevant and valuable to your audience.

MONETIZATION OPTIONS

Consider how you can monetize your content, and if there's demand for your niche. You can monetize your content through advertising, affiliate marketing, sponsorships, or selling products or services.

your assignment

Now that you understand the importance of having a niche and have learned the steps to choose the perfect one for you, it's time to take action and get to work!

STEP 1: YOUR PASSION & EXPERTISE

Brainstorm topics or areas you are passionate about! Write down everything that comes to mind, even if it doesn't seem relevant to content creation. To help you out, here are a few questions to get started:

- What hobbies or interests do you have?
- What topics can you talk about for hours?
- What professional or personal experience do you have that can add value to the content?

STEP 2: NARROW IT DOWN

Now that you have a list of topics, it's time to narrow it down. Look at your list and identify the top three topics that you're most passionate about.

your assignment

STEP 3: MARKET RESEARCH

To validate your niche, find at least 3 big creators in your niche or very similar. This will prove that there is a demand for the content you will be putting out

CREATOR 1: # FOLLOWERS

CREATOR 2: # FOLLOWERS

CREATOR 3: # FOLLOWERS

STEP 4: DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

Let's start by identifying your ideal audience's demographic characteristics such as age, gender, location, education, and occupation.

Think about what kind of content they might be interested in, and what their values and beliefs might be. Let's have some fun creating your ideal follower persona! This exercise will help you understand your audience's interests, behaviors, needs, and wants so you can create content that resonates with them and build a loyal following

your assignment

- Next, let's think about your target audience's interests and behaviors on Instagram. What kind of content do they engage with and share? What accounts do they follow? What do they search for? What are their pain points and challenges?
- Now, let's consider what your target audience needs and wants from your content. What solutions can you provide to their challenges or pain points? How can you entertain, educate, or inspire them? Think about what kind of value your content can provide for them.
- Lastly, let's create your ideal follower persona.
 - Give them a name, personality traits, and a backstory that reflects their characteristics, interests, behaviors, needs, and wants. This will help you create content that speaks directly to them and builds a connection with them.

HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF PERSONA:

Amy is a 32-year-old stay at home mom living in Los Angeles. She is passionate about her kids, and want to start a side hustle to help on the budget of her household. Through your content, you can inspire Amy to take action and start her own business, provide her with tips on entrepreneurship and business management, and offer insights and recommendations on marketing, branding, and growth strategies.

CREATE YOUR PERSONA

- What are your ideal audience demographics?
- What are their values and beliefs?
- What kind of content do they like to consume?
- What kind of accounts do they follow already?
- What value can you provide for them?

the problem

The main key to success in creating content, is the problem you solve for your audience. You need to create content that resonates with them and offers solutions to their pain points.

But, how do you find the problem you solve? Start by thinking about your niche and target audience. What are their struggles and what keeps them up at night? What are their pain points and what solutions can you offer through your content?

There are a few ways you can define the problem your target audience struggles with:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Looking at comments on YouTube videos and Instagram posts related to your niche can be a great way to understand your audience's struggles and pain points. By reading through comments, you can gain insights into your audience's experiences, opinions, and frustrations. You can see what kind of questions they are asking, what problems they are facing, and what solutions they are looking for.

SURVEYS AND POLLS

Reach out to your existing audience with surveys and polls to gather information. Ask questions about their struggles, pain points, and challenges. This will give you insight into their needs, and help you tailor your content to their interests.

FORUM DISCUSSION

Browse forums and online communities related to your niche to see what people are discussing. Look for topics related to pain points and challenges your audience is facing.

KEYWORD RESEARCH

Use keyword research tools like Wordsream to find out what people are searching for in your niche. Look for high search volume keywords related to problems and challenges your target audience is facing.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Chances are that you have lived through the struggles and pain points of your target audience. Use that knowledge to create content that resonates with them. Share your own story and insights to build a connection with your audience.

A photograph of a paved path leading through a forest of tall trees. The sun is shining brightly from the end of the path, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene with a warm, golden light. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees on either side form a natural canopy. The text "content topic" is written in a black, italicized serif font, centered horizontally and slightly above the middle of the image.

content topic

content topics

Choosing topics is the secret to never running out of content ideas, especially when you're just starting out.

By identifying topics that sit within your niche and align with your audience's interests and needs, you can create a roadmap for your content creation journey.

This can help you stay organized, build a loyal following, attract new audiences, build authority within your niche, and monetize your content in the future.

When choosing your topics, make sure to narrow it down to 2-3 topics and choose topics you can instantly think of at least 10 content ideas for.

Let's look at a few examples to help you choose yours.

content topics

TRAVEL

- traveling on budget
- how to plan a solo trip
- most Instagrammable
- locations

FINANCE

- investing tips
- financial news
- how to create a budget

WELLNESS

- morning routine tips
- healthy meal prep
- at home workouts

PARENTING

- tips for new parents
- different parenting techniques
- fun activities for kids

BEAUTY

- skincare tips for glowing skin
- easy makeup tutorials
- product reviews

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- benefits of journaling
- goal setting
- manifestation

FASHION

- how to build a capsule wardrobe
- where to shop for sustainable fashion
- outfit ideas

FOOD

- restaurant reviews
- 20 min dinner recipes
- meal plans

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sunburst at the horizon. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are mostly evergreens. The text "starting a new account" is overlaid in a black, italicized serif font.

*starting a new
account*

SHOULD YOU START A NEW ACCOUNT?

If you already have an existing account, you might be wondering if it's better to stick with it or create a brand-new one. While this is different for everyone, here are a few things to consider when making the decision.

1. Are the majority of your followers your high-school friends and coworkers?
2. Have you changed (or are you planning to) your niche dramatically?
3. Would you prefer your family and friends not to see your content creator page just yet? (this is totally normal! True story: I started my account from zero & blocked some family to be more comfortable in sharing the content I wanted to share!)
4. Do you want to change your IG handle?
5. Do you feel like you need a fresh start?
6. Do you feel like you are following all the steps in the book and your account still isn't growing?

If you have answered YES to more than two of these questions, starting a new page might be a great idea! It might be scary creating a new fresh page, but is often the right thing to do for three reasons.

A) Algorithm is likely to favor new accounts: if you have a history of low engagement or sharing low-quality content, the algorithm is unlikely to push out your new content to wider audiences. With a brand new account, you have the chance to start with a clean slate and make the algorithm work in your favor.

B) Your current audience will not engage with your new content: the level of engagement from your current audience is a key signal to the algorithm. If your content has shifted significantly from what your followers are used to, they may not engage as much, which can hurt your overall reach and visibility.

C) Sometimes you need a fresh start: if you feel uninspired and find yourself in a rut, starting a new account might be the thing you need to shake things up and channel your professional content creator energy. By setting new goals, exploring new niches, and experimenting with fresh content strategies, you'll have the opportunity to reinvent yourself and get the boost of motivation you need to create your best work yet

creator or personal

If you are reading this guide, chances are that you are ready to make content creation your full-time gig. Generally, you should opt-in for a creator account for two reasons:

1) you will have access to all your insights and analytics. This is a must for creating a successful content strategy

2) you will have the option to add a link in your profile, which will allow you to monetize your audience!

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sunburst effect at the horizon. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are dense on both sides. The overall tone is warm and golden. The text "personal brand" is written in a black, italicized serif font, centered horizontally and slightly above the middle of the image.

personal brand

Building a personal brand will make you stand out from the crowd. What is a personal brand, really? You can think of it as your reputation. It's what others think of when they think of you.

Your personal brand is what sets you apart from others in your niche and builds trust with your audience. A strong personal brand can help you attract new followers, & build a loyal community.

ELEMENTS OF PERSONAL BRAND

VISUAL IDENTITY

Your visual identity is everything from your profile picture to the fonts and colors you use in your content. When you have a consistent visual identity, it can make your brand more memorable and recognizable to your audience.

YOUR TONE OF VOICE

Your tone of voice is the way you express yourself through your words, both written and spoken. It's not just the words you use, but also your choice of emojis, sentence structure, and even punctuation. All of these elements contribute to the way your brand communicates with your audience

YOUR VALUES

These are the guiding principles that drive your personal brand and define what you stand for as a creator.

CONSISTENCY

Branding needs consistency. Make sure that your content, visual identity, and tone of voice are consistent across all of your social media platforms. Also, make sure you stick to your posting schedule so you don't let your followers down!

ENGAGEMENT

If you want to build a strong community around your personal brand, it's important to engage with your followers on a regular basis. Whether it's responding to comments and messages, or creating opportunities for your followers to interact with you and each other.

visual identity

Creating a strong visual identity is crucial for building a strong personal brand and standing out! Here are some steps you can take to create your branding. Let's get creative!

FONTS

Choose 2-3 fonts to create your aesthetic across all your content. To find aesthetic fonts that suit your style, you can use Canva or AdobeFonts.

COLORS

Select 2-3 colors that represent your personal brand and use them consistently across all your content. You can use Canva to help you select a color palette.

YOUR CONTENT STYLE

Creating a signature photo and video style is a great way to build a recognizable brand and following. Plus, a cohesive look just makes everything look more put together!

visual identity

MOODBOARD

A great way to get clarity on your visual identity is to prepare a mood board. Find images that inspire you on Pinterest and you can put them together using Canva.

PERSONAL STYLE

Personal style is a key element in creating a cohesive visual identity. By showcasing a consistent look and feel in your content, you are expressing your personality and creating a memorable experience for your audience. So, what's your go-to style? What colors and outfits make you feel the most confident and comfortable?

TEMPLATES

Using templates can save you time, help you maintain a consistent visual identity, and elevate the quality of your content.

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sunburst at the horizon. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are mostly evergreens. The text "your profile" is written in a black, italicized serif font, centered over the path.

your profile

your profile

Your profile is your showcase! It's super important to have your profile organized strategically so whenever someone new lands on your profile, they will want to follow you. Think about it as your chance to grab their attention.

A strong Instagram profile makes a great first impression, paving the way for more followers. Ready to build yours?

YOUR USERNAME (@handle)

Your username should be memorable. You can either use your actual name as a username or align your username with your niche. For example, if you are in the wealth niche, you can use "WealthWithSam", It's easy to remember and suggests that you focus on sharing content about wealth, making it appealing to others interested in the topic.

Keep it short and sweet.

Username are searchable on Instagram, which means people can find your profile by typing it into the search bar. Having keywords related to your niche increases the chances of other people finding your profile!

If you build your profile across multiple platforms, keep your username the same!

YOUR NAME IN BIO

Your name is also searchable. Optimizing your name in your bio can increase the discoverability of your profile. Here are a few ways you can optimize your name in your bio:

1. Use your real name or a business name. If you're building a personal brand, use your real name. For businesses or brands, use your official business name. This helps your audience recognize and associate your content with you

2. Include keywords. Add relevant keywords to describe your niche and expertise. For example, if you are a life coach, you could add keywords such as "Life Coach" or "Mindset Mentor" next to your name. This helps others interested in the same topic discover you more easily.

Keep it concise: avoid using too many words or emojis in your name, as it can look cluttered and unprofessional.

Test different variations: you can experiment with different name variations to see which resonates best. Remember that you can only change your name twice every 14 days.

YOUR BIO

Your bio should spotlight how you make a difference in the world and what people can expect when they follow your profile. Show us how your content adds value to our lives!

When someone lands on your bio, they should quickly understand what you do and whether your content is right for them. Trust me, this is key to building a strong and engaged community

CALL TO ACTION AND A LINK

Now is your chance to monetize your account. Having a strong call to action will make a total difference in your results.

Some good examples of a call to action are:

" Free guide here"

" Find my Amazon favorite. "

" Book your call now "

" Learn exactly how "

If you want to add more than one link in your bio, check out these websites that let you design aesthetic linkin-bio pages to showcase your offerings:

Canva (completely free)

Milkshake (completely free)

Stan Store (this one is \$29 per month, but allows you to sell your products directly. Click [here](#) to get your free 14-day trial)

YOUR PROFILE PIC

A great Instagram profile pic should have the following:

Your beautiful face: Helps people connect with you (unless faceless, then pick a relevant photo to match the “vibe” of your page)

Smiling face: Invites others in and showcases your approachable vibe (again, unless faceless)

Bright background: Makes you stand out and catches the eye

By including these elements, you'll create a friendly and memorable first impression for your audience!

YOUR STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Instagram Story Highlights will help your followers to find more about what you do and binge watch your content. They provide easy access to important information. Here are my favorite highlights to have:

Q&A

Your Story

Results

Lifestyle

Testimonials

Branded Highlights covers help keep the look and feel of your Instagram profile consistent with your overall aesthetic.

Here is an example of an optimize profile:

- Memorable username
- Good profile picture
- Name
- Bio
- CTA + Link
- Highlights

your assignment

OPTIMIZE YOUR PROFILE

Now that you learned what goes into a great Instagram profile, it's time to optimize yours. Complete these 6 steps to ensure you are set up for success and growth!

Step 1: Choose a memorable and relevant username that reflects your brand or niche. Make it consistent across all platforms you use (even if you are not planning to use some platforms immediately, it's good to secure your handle now!)

Step 2: Optimize your name in your bio. Use your real name or a business name and include keywords related to your niche. Keep it concise and test different variations.

Step 3: Create a compelling bio to showcase your value and the content you provide. Ensure it's clear, concise, and shows how you make a difference in the world.

your assignment

Step 4: Add a call to action and a link in your bio. You can choose an appropriate CTA that encourages engagement, and create an eye-catching link using one of the suggested websites

Step 5: Update your profile picture to include your face, a smile, and a bright background to create a friendly and memorable first impression.

Step 6: Create and curate Instagram Story Highlights that showcase your best Stories, provide important information, and express your personality and values. Use branded covers for consistency.

Well done! With your new polished bio, you are all set to attract and engage with your audience!

A photograph of a paved path leading through a forest of tall trees. The sun is shining brightly from the end of the path, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene with a warm, golden light. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees on either side form a canopy overhead. The text "the algorithm" is written in a black, italicized serif font, centered over the middle of the image.

the algorithm

The world of Instagram can be confusing sometimes, but worry no more! To succeed on Instagram, it is crucial to understand how the algorithm works. In the next few pages, I will decode the Instagram algorithm for you. I will be sharing insights and tips on how to make the algorithm work in your favor. Let's dive in!

WHY DOES THE ALGORITHM EVEN EXIST?

You probably know that the Instagram algorithm significantly impacts everything on the platform. The smart technology determines if your posts are seen, and who gets to view them by using a variety of signals. The algorithm exists mainly because there's an overwhelming amount of content out there, and Instagram wants to ensure that they're showing us what they believe we'll find interesting. This way, we'll all stick around on the app longer.

IS THERE JUST ONE MIGHTY ALGORITHM?

Instagram doesn't have just one algorithm. Instead, it uses several algorithms for different parts of the app like the main feed, Stories, Explore page, and Reels. Each algorithm focuses on making the content relevant and exciting for the user. Let's see how each of them works.

feed algorithm

The Instagram main feed algorithm determines which posts to display in your feed by evaluating several factors:

ENGAGEMENT: It looks at likes, comments, shares, saves, and time spent on a post. More engaging posts are shown first.

RELEVANCE: The algorithm picks posts you'll likely enjoy based on your interests and actions, including content from accounts you often interact with.

TIMELINESS: Newer posts are shown before older ones. Post consistently and at good times to reach your followers.

RELATIONSHIP: If you interact a lot with someone (likes, comments, messages), their posts are more likely to show up in your feed.

story algorithm

The Instagram Stories algorithm is different from the main feed algorithm, but its main goal is to show you relevant and engaging content. Here's a simple explanation of how it works:

RELATIONSHIP: The algorithm shows Stories from people you interact with a lot (like, comment, or message) first in your feed.

INTERACTIONS & VIEWING HABITS: If you often watch someone's Stories, watch them completely, or engage with them, their Stories will show up first in your feed.

RECENCY: As Stories only last for 24 hours, the algorithm prioritizes fresher content. More recent Stories are generally displayed ahead of older ones.

reels algorithm

The reels tab often shows you content from accounts you don't follow, which makes it slightly different from the main feed and stories algorithm. Its main goal is to optimize for relevance, ensuring that the reels you see align with your interests.

Here are some key factors it takes into account:

TOPIC: The algorithm checks the video's theme to ensure it matches your interests.

WATCH TIME: The more time people spend watching a reel, the more likely the algorithm will show it to others.

SIMILAR CREATORS: If you've interacted with accounts that have related content, you'll see more reels from similar accounts.

WHAT YOU LIKE: It looks at reels you've liked or watched before to find similar content.

explore algorithm

This is where the key to your growth is! While feed & story algorithms optimize the content for your existing audience, the explore page shows your content to a brand-new audience. Here are some of the things the algorithm looks at when curating your explore page:

YOUR ACTIONS: The algorithm looks at your likes, comments, and follows to show you content similar to what you've engaged with on the Explore page.

NICHE: It shows popular content on the topics you're interested in, making it easy to find posts you'll enjoy.

COMMON INTEREST: If you and someone else liked the same post, and you liked a new post, the algorithm might show that new post on their Explore page because of your shared interests.

recap

If your eyes glazed over as soon as you heard the word 'algorithm,' don't worry; you're not alone!

Understanding how Instagram algorithms work can be overwhelming and confusing, but it's crucial to creating a successful presence on the platform. Here's a quick recap of what Instagram algorithms prioritize:

- Instagram algorithms want to show you stuff you'll love and find interesting.
- They look at your past activity and how long you spend on the app to determine what you might like.
- They prioritize content from creators you follow and interact with, and topics & content you're likely to engage with.
- The goal is to provide a fun and personalized experience that keeps you on the app for as long as possible

train the algorithm

Now that you know how the algorithm works, it's time to put it into practice. I outlined some ways to make sure you are using it in your favor:

HAVE A CLEAR NICHE: We discussed the importance of having a clear niche earlier, but I will say it again. It's necessary to allow the algorithm to categorize your content and push it to your ideal audience.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR FOLLOWERS: Reply to your comments and DMs, engage with your followers, and target audience's content. The more people interact with your content, the more Instagram's algorithm will promote it.

ENGAGE WITH OTHERS IN YOUR NICHE: Make friends with other creators in your field, engage with their content, and even collaborate. This way, you'll get more exposure and attract their audience too.

CALL TO ACTION: Encourage users to engage with your posts by asking them to comment, share, or like. This boosts your engagement rates and helps the algorithm recognize your content as worth sharing.

POST CONSISTENTLY: By posting regularly, your profile stays at the forefront of your followers' minds. Plus, the more content you post, the more likely you will land on the explore page.

DIVERSE CONTENT: Use Instagram Stories, reels & carousels to diversify your content and reach different audiences

VALUABLE CONTENT: Focus on creating content that educates, entertains, or inspires your audience. High-quality posts get more likes, shares, and comments, which means more visibility.

UTILIZE INSTAGRAM SEO: Use relevant keywords in captions, hashtags, and profile info to help people find your content. This increases your chances of being discovered and promoted by the algorithm.

A photograph of a long, straight path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sunburst at the horizon. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are silhouetted against the bright light. The text "creating content" is overlaid in a black, italicized serif font.

creating content

creating content

Creating content that resonates with your target audience and helps you stand out is super important. Here are the 7 steps to follow if you want to craft content that grabs your audience's attention and keeps them coming back for more.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

To create content that truly resonates, you can start by understanding who your target audience is. Identify their interests, preferences, and pain points. Once you know your audience inside & out, you can craft content that speaks directly to them.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Look at other influencers or creators who have captured your target audience's attention. Create a list of 10 content creators your ideal audience already follows and study their content to understand what works best and identify any patterns or trends. Use these insights to help shape your own content strategy, making sure to add your unique spin.

creating content

STRONG VISUALS

A visually appealing design is crucial for capturing your audience's attention. Focus on using high-quality images and videos, clean layouts, and attractive color schemes.

PROVIDE VALUE

Your content should always aim to provide value to your audience. Think about how you can educate, entertain, or inspire them with each piece of content you create. The more value you deliver, the more likely your audience is to engage with your content and keep coming back for more.

MAKE IT ABOUT THEM

Focus on your audience's interests and needs. Craft content that answers questions or solves their problems. This way, you'll build trust with your audience and boost your engagement.

creating content

KEEP UP WITH TRENDS

You can stay up-to-date with the latest events, trends, and topics relevant to your niche to keep your content fresh and engaging. This helps you create shareable content and sparks conversations, increasing its binge-worthy appeal.

ANALYZE

Keep a close eye on how your content performs using analytics tools. Track key metrics such as engagement, reach, and audience growth to understand what works and what doesn't. Use this data to fine-tune your content strategy, making adjustments to ensure your content remains binge-worthy and effective

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sunburst effect in the distance. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are lush and green. The overall scene is warm and inviting, with a strong sense of perspective.

best time to post

best time to post

Discovering the best time to post is one of the keys to getting your content seen! By posting at the right time, you increase the chances of your content reaching your audience. While the best time to post will be different for everyone, here is a way to find yours.

CHECK YOUR INSIGHTS

Go to insights - total followers - most active times. Check when your audience is the most active and aim to post 1 hour before the peak. For example, my peak is at 9 am and therefore my best time to post would be at 8 am.



best time to post

TEST & LEARN

Try a few different times and see what works best for you. For example, I also get a very high reach when posting at 6 am. This is likely because, over the next few hours, more and more of my audience will be active. I would probably not see a high reach if posting after 6 pm as that's when my audience activity starts to drop off.

STICK TO IT

Once you found the optimal time to post, you will need to stick to your schedule for a while. Your audience and the Instagram algorithm will love the predictability and actively wait for your regular posts to engage with them. Plus, it helps you create your routine.

scheduling posts

Instagram has recently launched one of the most helpful features for creators – scheduling posts! You can now schedule your posts to go live at the perfect time. Your best time to post is 6 am, but you want to sleep in? No problem! Your reels, carousels, and static posts can now be scheduled to go live up to 7 days in advance directly in the Instagram app. To schedule your posts follow these steps

- Prepare a post or a reel as you regularly would. Make sure to add your captions, keywords, and hashtags. You can also tag brands and other creators in your prescheduled posts.
- Instead of posting it right away, go to **ADVANCED SETTINGS** at the bottom of your screen. Toggle **SCHEDULE THIS POST** on.
- Set the time you want your post to go live and go out of your advanced settings. Click the **SCHEDULE** button at the top right of your screen.

Congrats, your post is scheduled to go live!

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sunburst effect in the distance. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are lush and green. The overall atmosphere is warm and serene.

apps & equipment

apps & equipment

These are my favorite apps and tools that I use to create my content! Most of these are free - you absolutely do not need to spend a lot of money to create amazing content!

APPS

Canva (Graphic Design & Templates): Easily create eye-catching designs for your social media posts, stories, and more.

LightRoom (Photo Editing): Transform your photos with filters, presets, and editing tools to create a cohesive aesthetic.

Capcut (Video Editing): Edit your videos on your phone or laptop. Capcut has many tools to make your vision come to life.

InShot (Video Editing): Edit your videos on your phone. InShot also has many tools to make your vision come to life.

apps & equipment

YOUR PHONE

You absolutely do not need a fancy camera to grow on Instagram. I shoot all my content on iPhone 11 Pro Max. Check out the next page for tips on how to make the best of your iPhone camera.

LIGHT

This is not a must, but it helps immensely if you need to shoot your content with a lack of daylight.

TRIPOD

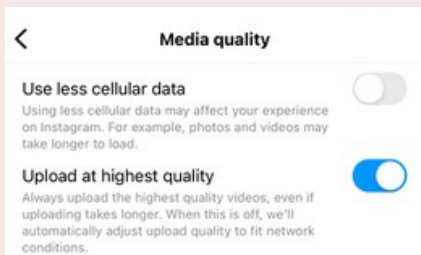
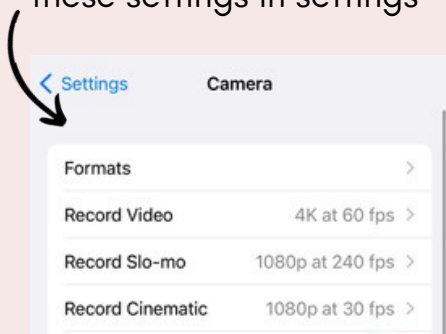
A must-have for filming reels and shooting cool pictures.

apps & equipment

IPHONE SETTINGS

While Instagram will always compress the quality of your reels, I am sharing settings I use to make my reels the highest possible quality. Please note that these settings might not be applicable to your device.

I found the best results with my video set at 4K at 60fps. I also keep my HDR turned off. You can find these settings in settings – camera – record video



This is the setting I have on Instagram to upload better quality content. You can find this in account – data usage



carousels

carousels

Carousels are currently the hottest content type on Instagram, outshining Reels as a key growth strategy. By using carousels effectively, you can boost engagement, reach new audiences, and even drive your sales. You can do all of that without showing your face or filming a video. Pretty cool, huh?

WHY ARE THEY SO HOT RIGHT NOW? There are a few reasons why carousels are booming on Instagram:

- Easily consumable: Carousels present information in bite-sized pieces, making them easy to digest and enjoyable for users to explore.
- Active engagement: As users swipe through carousel slides, they interact actively with your content, increasing overall engagement.
- Highly shareable: Carousel posts are easy to share, increasing the likelihood of your content being discovered by new audiences.
- Great for education: Carousels are an ideal format for sharing educational content.

carousels

Here's a strategy that you can apply to your carousels:

PAGE 1

Hook - capture your audience's attention with an enticing hook (you can find hook ideas later in this guidebook)

PAGE 2-3

Intro - set a brief introduction to the topic

PAGE 4-8

Value - share valuable tips, insights, or information. Make sure to share your most valuable piece of information first.

PAGE 9

CTA - end with a clear call to action, prompting further engagement. This could be asking them to follow you for more tips, download your freebie, or save/share the post

STICK TO ONE TOPIC

You can keep your audience hooked by exploring a single topic in-depth.

HAVE A CLEAR OBJECTIVE

Whether you're aiming to teach or inspire, knowing your objective will help you create a carousel that clicks with your audience.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Make your content clear and easy to understand to appeal to a broader audience.

ADD VALUE

Make sure your carousel provides helpful insights, tips, or fun content that your audience will likely save or share.

USE A CALL TO ACTION

Ask your audience to take the next step, whether it's visiting your website, commenting, or sharing your post. Stick to one call to action per content!

CONSISTENT BRANDING

Keep your carousels on brand to make your content more recognizable.



reels

reels

We can't talk about Instagram growth without mentioning Reels. Reels are short-form videos with music and text overlays designed to be fun, engaging, and shareable.

While Instagram has officially announced that they are no longer prioritizing reels over static content, reels should *one hundred percent* be a key part of your Instagram growth strategy.

WHY ARE THEY SO IMPORTANT

There are a few reasons why you need to use reels to see success on IG this year:

- New audience: The reel algorithm will likely show your reels to a wider audience. This is such a great opportunity to get your account seen by more people and convert them into followers.
- More engaging content: Reels are catchy and genuinely enjoyable to watch when done right.
- Deeper connection: Reels are such a great way to showcase your personality. This will allow your audience to get to know you better and form a stronger bond with you.

reels

When it comes to creating reels, three types of content tend to perform well: educational, inspirational, and entertaining.

EDUCATIONAL REELS

- Great way to share valuable information with your audience in an engaging format.
- Share helpful tips and resources related to your niche.

Examples: recipe videos, workout videos, tutorials, side hustles, etc.

INSPIRATIONAL REELS

- Motivate and inspire your audience by sharing stories and quotes.
- Perfect for brand awareness and establishing yourself as a thought leader in your niche.

Examples: transformation stories, motivational quotes, travel videos

ENTERTAINING REELS

- Create a fun & engaging experience for your audience
- Super shareable and relatable

Examples: comedy skits, lip-synching, memes

HOW TO MAKE REALLY GOOD REELS

KEEP IT SHORT: when people watch your Reel until the very end, or even better, watch it multiple times, it sends a positive signal to the Instagram algorithm. Try keeping most of your reels between 4 and 7 seconds.

TEXT ON SCREEN: use text on screen (you can add this directly on IG or in a third-party video editing app) to give people more context and make your video more engaging. Bonus point if you use a strong, attention-grabbing hook.

USE CTA: Tell your viewers exactly what you want them to do at the end of the video or the start of your caption. An example of a good CTA is: comment (keyword) to get your free guide, follow for more, or save this video for XYZ.

USE TRENDING AUDIO: this one is a no-brainer, but you would be surprised how many people don't use trending audio. Choose a video that's trending (it has an arrow next to it) and has under 10k uses. This can boost your views and put you in front of a new audience. The lower the uses, the better!

KEYWORDS: utilize SEO to get your reel seen by more people. Use keywords in your captions and text overlays. Use 3-5 hashtags in your reel captions.

TAG, TAG, TAG: Don't forget to leverage the power of tagging! You can tag brands, and most importantly, you can geotag your location.



static posts

static posts

We cannot talk about Instagram content types without mentioning the OG – the static post. While not the best content type to grow your Instagram, there are a few use cases where posting a single post could be the best option.

When we talked about how the Instagram algorithm works, we repeatedly mentioned that the time users spend on your post is one of the biggest signals the algorithm optimizes for. And by nature, reels and carousels will always capture your audience's attention for longer.

That being said, you can use single static posts in your IG strategy to have your audience reshare them (another great signal for the algorithm).

Examples you can use to post static posts: quotes, picture of an achievement, etc.

A photograph of a long, straight path or road stretching into the distance, flanked by tall, mature trees. The sun is shining brightly from the end of the path, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene with a warm, golden light. The ground is covered with fallen leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The word "stories" is written in a cursive font across the middle of the image.

stories

stories

Instagram stories are the best way to connect with your audience. It's the perfect place to show the real you and give your followers a behind-the-scenes sneak peek.

WHAT TO POST

Stories are your place to shine and get closer to your followers. Use your stories to post behind-the-scenes content, announcements, personal moments, and quick tips. Showing up on stories can be nerve-wracking at the start, but I got you!

FREQUENCY

Your audience and the algorithm will love it if you show up consistently but don't overdo it! Try to be active on stories at least 5 days a week and post anywhere from 4 to 10 stories daily.

PRO TIP:

- Engage your audience by using interactive tools such as polls, Q&A, links, or question boxes
- If you are talking to a camera, always use subtitles. Only a small percentage of IG users watch stories with sound on. By adding subtitles (you can do this automatically in IG), you make your story accessible to everyone and avoid people skipping through your stories
- Switch it up and use different content formats like videos, static images, and graphics
- Add the most important stories to your highlights. While regular stories expire after 24 hours, your highlights will live in your profile forever (until you delete them!).
- Show your face. Nerve-wracking, I know, but showing up on stories is the number one way to build a strong connection with your audience.
- Use a call to action. Let your audience know what you want them to do! Using a clear CTA is the number one way to increase engagement.

An example of a call to action in a story would be: "reply with the word "tips" if you want me to share more tips like this"

LOW STORY VIEWS? HERE'S WHAT TO DO!

Low IG stories views can feel so discouraging. You put in the effort to create engaging content, only to find that it's not reaching as many people as you'd like. Don't lose hope just yet – here are some hacks to boost your views on story. Let's dive in!

ENGAGE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE Interacting with your existing audience is crucial in increasing your story views for two reasons. By responding to your comments or DMs, you show your followers that you value their support. This will help you build a strong sense of community and increase the engagement and loyalty of your followers. The Instagram algorithm prioritizes content from the accounts you interact the most with. The more you engage with your audience, the higher the story views!

MAKE YOUR STORIES FUN To make your stories more engaging, try using polls, quizzes, or question boxes to encourage your audience to interact with your content. This also builds a strong sense of community and connection with your followers.

PRO TIP: ask your audience for their advice or opinion on things. People love to help, and this can be a great conversation starter.

TAKE A BREAK Taking a 24-hour break from posting on your stories and letting your existing stories expire can really boost your views! If you have been posting way too much on your stories, take a break. When you post a fresh story, you will notice an increase in the number of views compared to if you would just continue in the existing sequence.

POSTING TOO MUCH? Posting too many stories every day can hurt your story views. If you post too much, your audience will likely skip your stories. This signals that the user is not interested in your content to the Instagram algorithm, making your future stories less visible.

What's the sweet spot? According to the latest news, you should post 6 stories a day. 2 in the morning, 2 in the afternoon, and 2 in the evening.

ATTENTION IS THE KEY

If you don't capture your audience's attention for long enough, Instagram may interpret your content as uninteresting and limit its visibility. Solution: Draw your followers in with an intriguing hook and include engaging text to keep them reading and interacting with your stories.

UTILIZE VIDEOS

Videos are more engaging and can capture your audience's attention better than static images. We are visual creatures, so make sure to include video content in your stories – not only will it add a dynamic touch, but it'll also encourage your followers to engage more, boosting story views.

PRO TIP: When speaking to the camera in your stories, don't forget to include subtitles (Instagram can create them for you automatically!). Most people watch stories with the sound off; adding subtitles ensures they can still engage with your content and feel connected.

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, leading towards a bright light source, likely the sun, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are dense on both sides. The overall atmosphere is warm and serene.

posting strategy

posting strategy

HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU POST?

There is no perfect number of how often you should post, but below is a great starting point if you want to grow your account. This is exactly the strategy that I used since the beginning.

Reels: 2-3 times a day

Carousels & static posts: 2-3 times a week

Stories: +5 times a day, at least 5 times a week

IG live: if you feel comfortable, this is a great way to create a connection with your audience. Do it as much as you want – you can use this for live Q&A, collabs with other creators, and pitch your products and offers.

planning content

PRO TIPS:

- keep a list of content ideas in your Notes app – every time you see something interesting, note it down, and you will have a constant stream of content ideas. You can also use the "Save" function on IG directly and save any content ideas you would like to recreate in the future.
- use a content calendar – staying consistent when you have a plan is much easier. Once a week, plan out your reels, static posts, and captions for the following 7 days.
- pre-batch your content – this is a secret to consistency; every content creator I know does this. Creating content on the go can be so overwhelming. Instead, block out a few hours every week to create your reels (that way, you only need to get ready once!) and go into the session with a game plan. Have your list of reels and a list of shots you need to film ready, so you use the time efficiently.
- repurpose your best posts when you are running out of content.

repurposing content

WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

Repurposing your content is a way to get more value from your existing content. You can repost your videos across different platforms, use the shots you filmed for the video previously in new content, or even repost content that did well! If a topic resonates with your audience, make sure to turn the topic into various pieces of content.

Example: let's say you had a video about doing a healthy grocery store reel on Instagram performing well. That's a sign it resonates with your audience. Repost the video on TikTok and Youtube shorts to reach more audiences. Now take that topic and turn it into a carousel (healthy grocery checklist) or newsletter (The Ultimate Guide to Healthy Grocery Shopping), and create a freebie for your audience they can download (Printable meal planner and checklist).



hashtags & keywords

KEYWORDS

Instagram is now officially SEO friendly platform. This means that you can now search content by using keywords. Include keywords and key phrases in your captions and reel text overlay to rank in search. You can write long captions with lots of keywords.

HASHTAGS

While Instagram previously recommended using all 30 hashtags in your content, the new guidance is to use 3-5 hashtags max. Could this be the beginning of the end for hashtags? Who knows, but for now, choose them well! Use a mix of hashtags in the 10-100k, 100k-1M, and 1M+ range. You can use a website called Inflact.com to find good hashtags. Also be sure to avoid using banned hashtags. You can check your hashtags before posting [here](#).

TOPICS

Instagram recently released a new feature where you can tag up to 3 topics when posting content. This is to help the algorithm further to categorize your content and show it to the correct audience. You can find the option to select topics on the very last page of your Instagram before posting content. Not all accounts have access to this feature yet.

A photograph of a long, straight path lined with trees, leading towards a bright sun at the horizon. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees form a canopy overhead. The word "engagement" is written in a cursive font across the middle of the image.

engagement

engagement

We can't talk about social media growth without mentioning engagement. A high engagement rate is key to your account consistently growing.

You are already setting yourself up for success by creating high-quality content your audience can't get enough of and staying consistent. But, without actively engaging with your community and building those relationships, a piece of a puzzle will always be missing.

RESPONDING TO DMS AND COMMENTS

This one is a no-brainer! By responding to comments and DMs you receive, you show your audience that you appreciate their support. And, you also stay on the top of their mind! Chances are that you will not see many comments and DMs at the start, but don't worry! This is completely normal, and if you follow the strategies below, you will soon see your engagement rate soar.

FOLLOW BIG ACCOUNTS

I like to follow big accounts in my niche for a few reasons. First, you can get inspired by their content. While it's not ok to copy someone's content word for word, it helps to see what topics might be trending or ways they make their content more interesting.

The second reason is that many of your target audience will already follow these accounts, which is a great way to get seen! You can comment on their posts to get additional exposure, but you can also see who else has commented and then engage with those accounts.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR FOLLOWERS

The algorithm first shows your content to a small percentage of your followers. If they engage with it, it will show your content to wider and wider audiences. If your followers don't engage with your content, the chances are that it will stop there. Therefore, it's essential that you build relationships with your followers – comment on their posts and post interactive stories to start the conversation.

Also, the more you engage with your followers, the more likely they are to see your content.

REMOVE INACTIVE FOLLOWERS

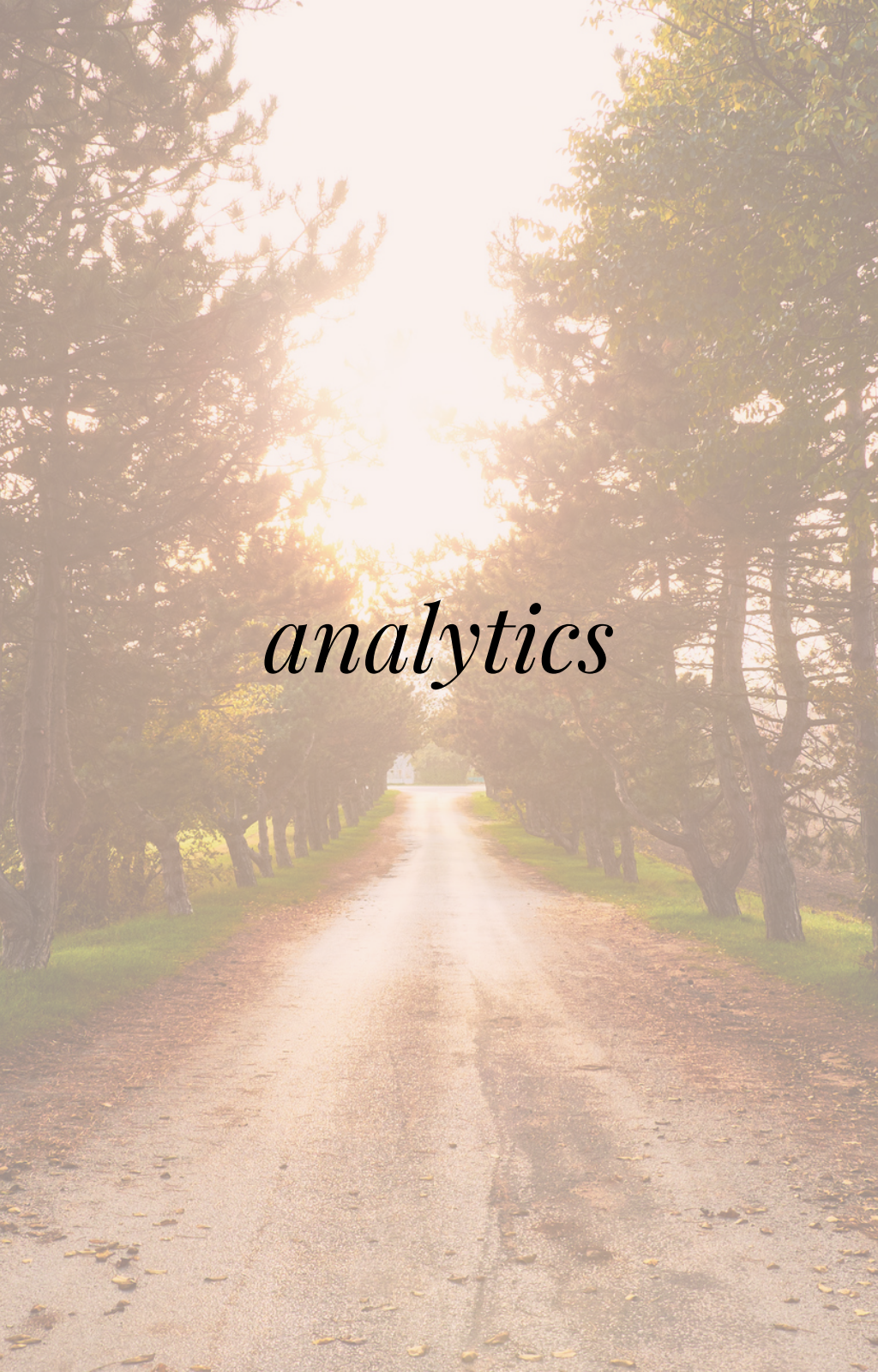
This leads me to my next tip. Remove inactive followers to increase your engagement. It sounds counterproductive, but having bots or spam accounts following you can harm your engagement and growth further down the line. A small, engaged following is always better!

ENGAGE WITH OTHERS IN YOUR NICHE

Find other creators with similar size audiences and form connections. Search hashtags, type your niche in the search bar, and look at accounts your followers follow. This is the best way to create a strong community feel and find others on a similar journey.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR IDEAL AUDIENCE

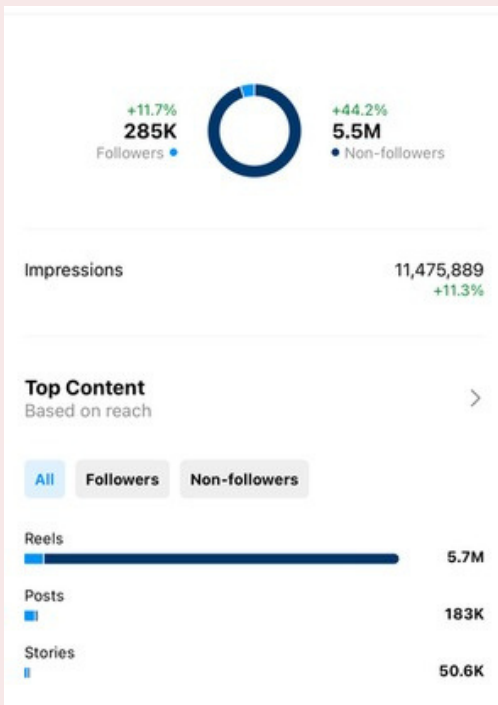
We did all the work with creating your follower's persona, so let's put it to good use. Think about where your ideal audience hangs out on Instagram, and find them! You can again utilize hashtags, brands, and big creators' accounts to find your people.

A photograph of a long, straight path or road stretching into the distance, flanked by tall, mature trees. The sun is shining brightly from the end of the path, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene with a warm, golden light. The ground is covered with fallen leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The word "analytics" is written in a black, italicized serif font, centered over the middle of the path.

analytics

analytics

I'm a big nerd when it comes to analytics, but getting comfortable with numbers and adjusting your strategy accordingly is so important to grow your account. Every month, I look at my best-performing and worst performing posts regarding reach and engagement. Then I do more of what works and less of what doesn't. It's as easy as that! Here are some of the metrics I look at



total reach

what type of content gets the highest reach

analytics

overall metrics

top performing content to inform me of what I should be posting more of.

You can change the metric from reach to likes, comments, saves, etc. to look at how your content is performing in terms of engagement.

You can check:

- number of accounts reached, split between followers and non-followers reached
- where your post impression come from
- the interactions that your post got
- how many people followed you from a specific post
- how many clicks on your link you got from that post
- and more

A photograph of a long, straight path lined with trees, leading towards a bright, hazy horizon. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are lush and green. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting, with a strong sense of perspective.

let's get to work!

let's get to work!

Set a goal. Without clear goals, tracking your progress and staying motivated is hard. Your goals will help you gain clarity on what actions you need to take, and they will help you stay on track.

So what goals should you set for yourself? Make sure you set progress-based goals rather than outcome-based goals. What I mean by this is that you should be setting goals you have control over. So rather than setting a goal of getting 100 followers next week, set a goal of posting 3 reels and 2 carousels next week. The results will come to you if you consistently take the correct action.

Here are some examples of goals you could set for yourself:

- post 1-2 reels a day
- go live once this week (if you feel comfortable)
- spend 30 minutes every day engaging with your audience / other accounts

A photograph of a paved path lined with trees, with a bright sunburst effect in the distance. The path is covered with fallen leaves, and the trees are tall and leafy. The overall tone is warm and golden.

thank you

I just wanted to say thank you for taking the time to read this guide. I'm SO proud of you for taking the first step toward your success on Instagram.

Sometimes it can seem like your goals are light years away, but trust me when I say you are closer than you think. By taking action and implementing the strategies outlined in this guide, you are already on your way to achieving your dreams.

I love hearing about your progress and wins, so please DM me on IG to share your successes. You totally have what it takes to build the life of your dreams!

You've got this!

Jessica Jones



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