

Instagram's Role in Golf Course Marketing

Why and How You MUST Use It

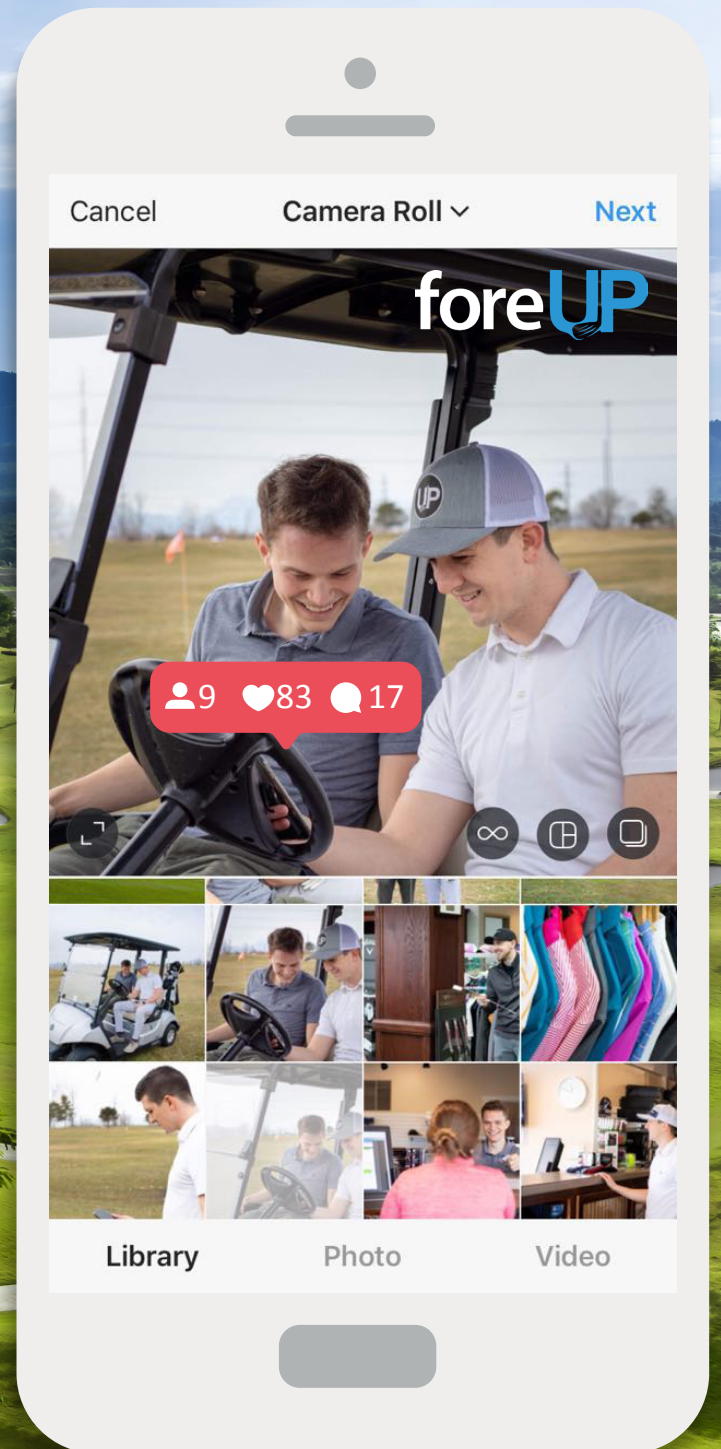


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Introduction

It's no secret that golfers are uniquely devoted to their sport. They'll make all kinds of sacrifices to get in a full round of golf over the weekend or whenever they can squeeze it in.

But the obsession doesn't only stay on the course. Golfers love talking about the game, watching the game, and carefully planning their next equipment purchase. Golfers even love looking at golf. Instagram and other social media platforms are full of accounts that post pictures of beautiful golf courses, and one of these accounts has over **25,000 followers**.

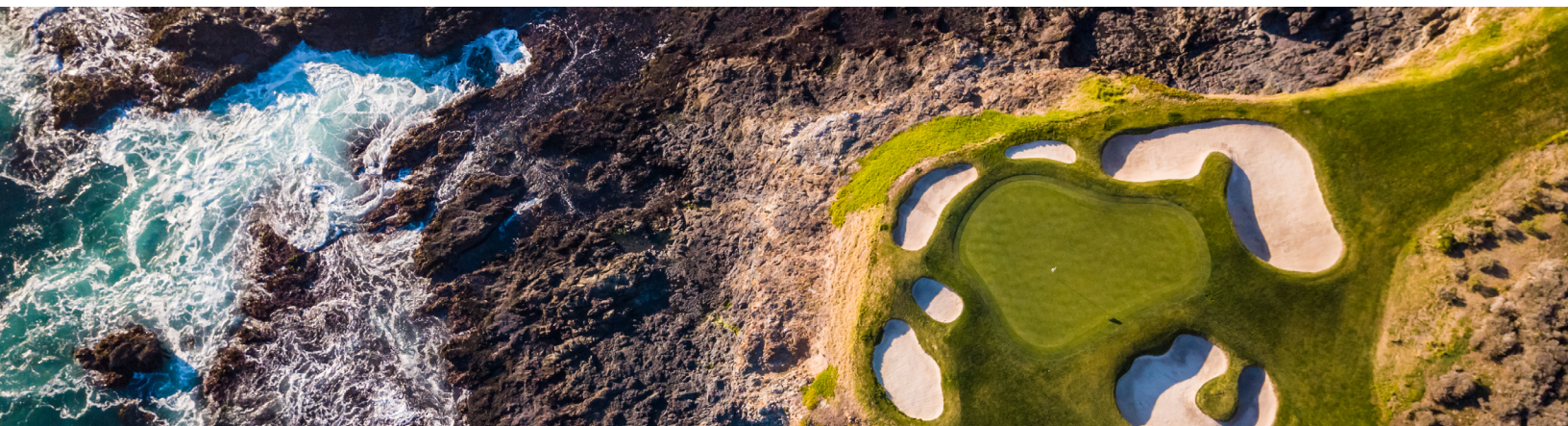
But you don't have to be a big-name brand to get a cult following on Instagram. In fact, the golf industry is a particularly excellent one for Instagram because of the game's visual appeal and the sport's passionate fans; people don't just like golf. When they love it, they can't get enough of it. That makes Instagram a great place to keep their attention in between their tee times, with #droolworthy photos that subconsciously (and consciously) leave them clamoring through to schedule the next one.

Just take a look at [Riverside Country Club](#), only a few miles away from our headquarters in Provo, Utah. They have 3,624 followers, and they do it all by using a few of the tricks you'll find in this book.



In this book, we will:

- Take you through the competitive landscape, showing you what social media to pay attention to and what that means for your club or course.
- Teach you how to create the perfect image for your post, along with the necessary hashtags and handles.
- Share with you our secret formula for success in getting people to notice and follow you on social media.



Why Instagram?

For the last fifteen years, Facebook has ruled as the king of social media. Despite stiff competition from Instagram (whom they later bought out), Twitter, and Snapchat, they still maintain 1.1 billion active users per day **just on mobile devices**. And while Facebook still owns the lion's share of social media attention, it seems to be slowly losing its grip on the marketplace.



This past year, its subsidiary Instagram surpassed 1 billion users, the majority of whom are millennials, and it's showing no signs of stopping in terms of customer acquisition. During the same period, Facebook's stocks dropped to an all-time low for recent history, largely due to customer privacy issues.

Now, stock price obviously isn't the same as a company's success or use—Facebook continues to add millions of new users every day. But the numbers don't lie: Instagram is quickly becoming more liked and used by everyone. And despite its initial insistence on being a platform for sharing creativity with friends, it has quickly become a major marketing platform.

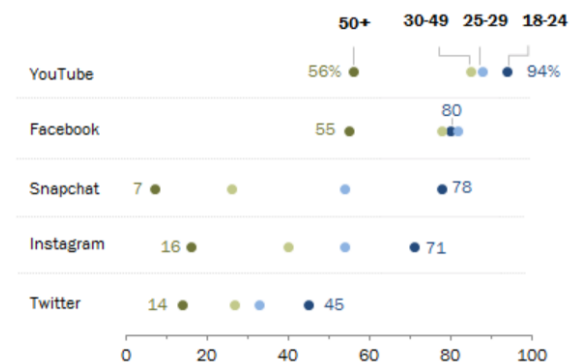
Who, exactly, is using Instagram?

Instagram is gaining so many users, where are they all coming from? And who's using it? The Pew Research Center recently published their findings on social media demographics, and the results are a little surprising:

Initially, Instagram gained a reputation for being a platform for artistic, creative, and adventurous millennial. As it's gotten older, it's obviously maintained a very young demographic, which might make it seem like a poor platform for marketing and outreach. However, 32% of all Internet users are on Instagram, making the platform an absolutely essential part of the social media landscape.

Social platforms like Snapchat and Instagram are especially popular among those ages 18 to 24

% of U.S. adults in each age group who say they use ...



Source: Survey conducted Jan. 3-10, 2018.

"Social Media Use in 2018"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



Why People are Going to Instagram

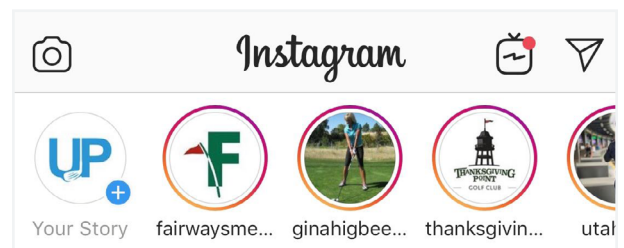
We've established that a lot of people are using Instagram—especially tech-savvy millennials. But what's drawing them? *Forbes* magazine offered the following explanations for Instagram's irresistible pull:

Mobile functionality. 75% of Americans own smartphones and spend 2 ½ hours per day in apps on their phone. Instagram has always been a mobile-only platform, and its friendliness to on-the-go editing and creation has always helped it to stay true (or close to true) to its original mission to create real, in-the-moment experiences to share with friends.

Visual nature. The human brain shows a strong preference for processing information through sight, which is why visual marketing has taken such a strong uptick in recent years. Instagram's infinite-scrolling feed is made to prioritize beautiful visuals, and the result is an abundance of beautiful photography and thoughtful, visually-oriented posts.



Novelty. Unlike its cumbersome, slow, or overblown competitors, Instagram is laser-focused on delivering a simple, visually-driven experience. While it's gotten a little more complex in recent years (group chat, stories), it's stayed pretty much the same, making it a very different platform from all the other options available.



So what?

Everything we've said so far has established that Instagram is a social media juggernaut. But that begs a simple question: so what?

There's a very simple response to that: **Instagram is a marketing gold mine.**



Instagram has one of the **highest conversion rates** of any social media platform at 3.1%, coming in above Pinterest, Twitter, Snapchat, and YouTube. And while 3.1% may not sound like a lot, that's about as good as email marketing is in any industry.

What's more, its unique features like stories have unique **marketing potential**. When Instagram first rolled out story ads, Airbnb (a hospitality app which allows individuals to rent out their house like a hotel), saw a **double-digit increase** in their advertising recall.

Instagram helps companies establish a beautiful, memorable brand, something essential in any marketing strategy. The cell phone cover manufacturer Peel saw a **3x ROI** when they started advertising on social media, and a large part of that advertisement was their success on Instagram, which they used as a platform for customer interaction.



What to Post

Post Pictures

Like we mentioned in chapter 1, Instagram revolves around visually compelling content like videos and artful photos. Big-name brands like Airbnb, Tesla, and GE (yep, the dishwasher manufacturer) have gotten themselves a substantial following through their innovative and gorgeous content.

It's likely that you don't have any training in photography or access to an expensive camera and Photoshop like those brands do. No sweat. You don't need all the equipment and expertise in order to make engaging content. All you really need is your phone and a few good tips & tools.



Photos on Your Phone

Professional Instagrammers, photographers, and even Oscar-winning filmmakers use their phones to capture high-quality photos and video. While iPhone generally dominates the phone camera market, other cell phone makers are catching up.

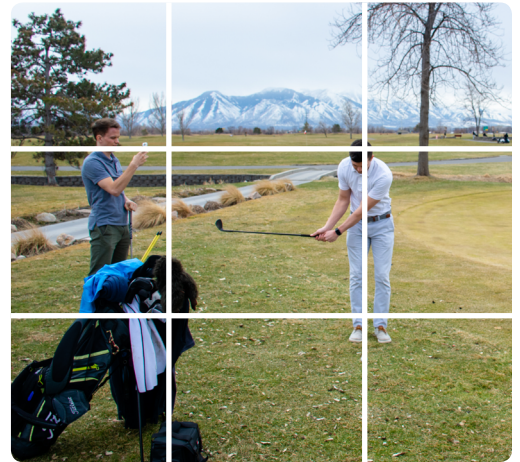
If you want to up your game, here are a few suggestions:

Focus on the rule of thirds.

You may have seen these gridlines on your phone's camera and wondered what they are.

Those lines are to help you make full use of what's known as the Rule of Thirds. This means that with any given image, you divide it into thirds horizontally and vertically, producing the gridlines seen above.

Then, you want to put the most important information (visually) around the lines of the center square.



The golfers are located at the intersection of the right line and left vertical line.

When taking photos, it isn't as important which of the inner lines you choose as that you do choose one. But when filming or taking pictures of people, you generally want their eyes to be on the upper line:

Editors

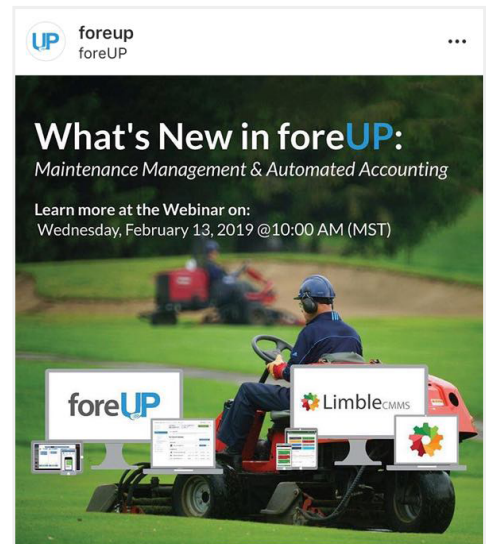
There are literally thousands of photo editors that you can use on your phone itself. One that is making waves right now is [Enlighten](#), which won Apple's App of the Year. [Afterlight](#) offers additional filters, textures, and frames, and lets you make collages and split images.



Know your audience.

This one is pretty straightforward when it comes to golf courses: your followers like golf. This means that you can post **anything** golf-related, like motivational quotes from great golfers, shots of your greens, videos of people having a good time at the course, golf tips from your head pro, and any other golf-related thing you can think of.

This allows you to easily slip in promotional content like tournament announcements, rainy day discounts, holiday specials, and restaurant deals without people feeling like you're just advertising to them constantly (even though you are!) **Done right, Instagram can be a fantastic and successful ad channel.**



When to Post

According to HubSpot, the best times to post on Instagram for B2C businesses are as follows:

Best Time: Saturday at 11:00 AM & 1:00 PM CDT. This is when people eat brunch or start to hang out with their friends.

Most Consistent Engagement: Everyday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM CDT. People usually check their phones during lunch or when they start to run out of mental energy toward the end of the work day.

Best Day: Wednesday. Hump day is a good day to remind yourself about how much fun you'll have during the weekend.

Worst Day: Monday. This one's pretty self-explanatory.



Runner up: 5:00 AM CDT from Tuesday to Friday—people usually check their phones right when they wake up.



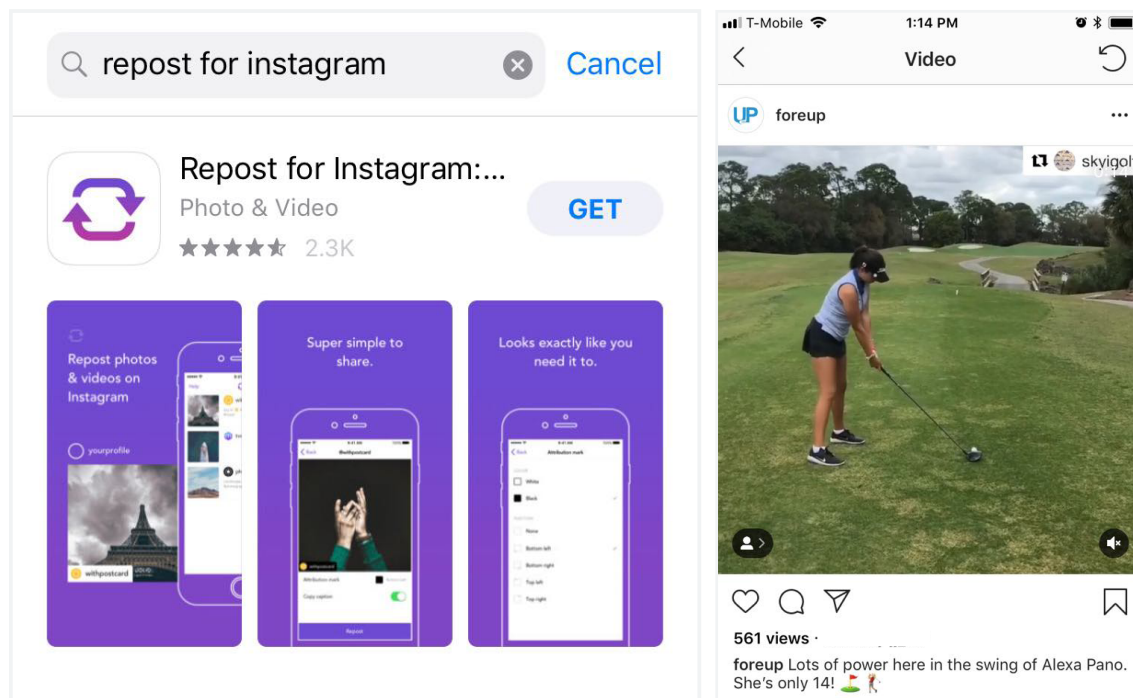
Be Consistent

As you may have noticed above, the most consistent engagement happens with the most consistent content. Posting every day, or as close as you can get to every day, will significantly impact the number of people liking and interacting with your posts.

Posting every day means that someone has to be on top of that, and between managing financials, running reports, working the pro shop, visiting with guests, teaching lessons, and fixing broken golf carts, you and your staff are spread pretty thin already.



First off, we'd say **repost**. There are a lot of people who devote a lot more time to making good Instagram posts than you do, and it's completely fair to repost their content. In fact, this can be a great way to get recognition and gratitude from those people or businesses.



For example, if a local Pro on the tour posts a video of herself at a tournament, you could repost that and voice your support for local golfing. Chances are that she is looking to gain notoriety on Instagram, and she could follow you or mention you in a comment, bringing all of her fans' attention to your course.

But the problem still remains that you have to make consistent organic posts. In that arena, we recommend that you use different automation and editing softwares to make your posting easier.



Best Free Softwares for Instagram Automation & Creation

Hootsuite & Buffer

These two apps offer essentially the same service with some small differences. With both you can manage a small number of social media profiles in one place, track engagement, and schedule posts up to 30 days in advance.

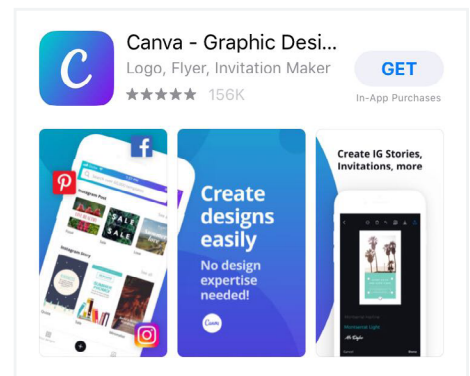
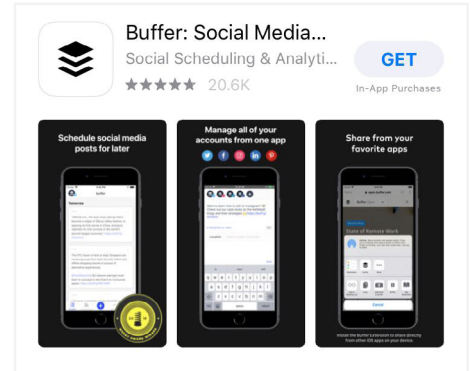
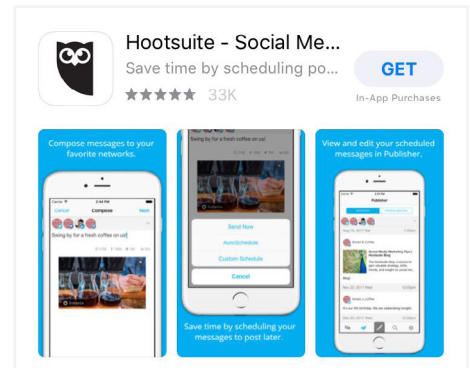
That means that you can take a picture and write out a post days, or even weeks, before you post anything. In this way you can plan any social advertising for holidays, tournaments, or special events long before they happen.

The only substantial difference between these two is that Buffer (through a Chrome extension) will automatically suggest best times to post based on audience engagement.

Canva

This is a free photo editing and design tool. There are a lot of these out there, but they tend to be either outdated (PicMonkey) or too complex for the average user (Pixlr). Canva strikes the perfect balance with a huge library of free, easily editable templates with pre-set dimensions of Instagram posts, Facebook posts, email banners, etc.

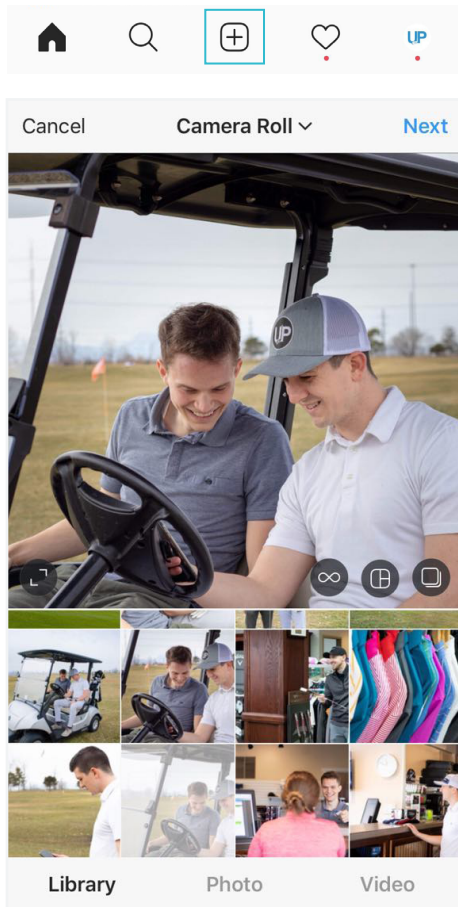
For a free tool, Canva is about the best you can get.



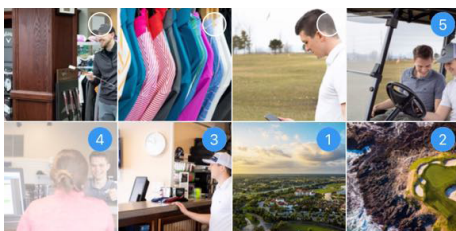
How to Post:

If you're pretty tech-savvy, you can probably skip this section. But, if technology tends to be a little confusing for you, you may find this walkthrough helpful.

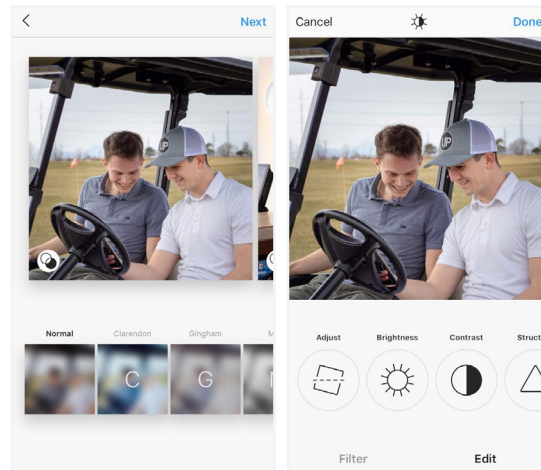
In Instagram, click the plus icon (+). This will bring up your phone's photo gallery:



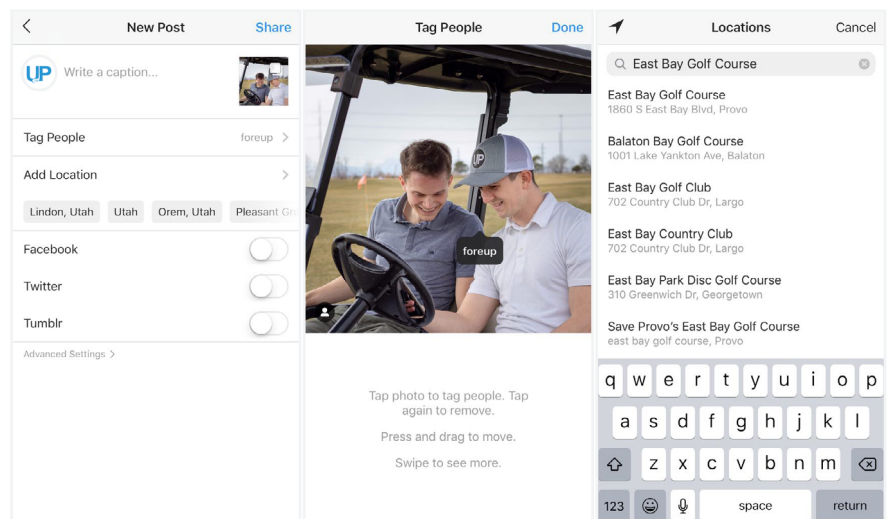
Looks like you have more great golf images you also want to post! To do that, you'll click the "Multiple Images" icon.



Now it's time to edit your photos. In this screen, you can add one of Instagram's famous filters to your photos. To edit one image at a time, tap on the image you would like to edit.



In the next screen, you can add a caption, tag people, add a location, and choose to post to Facebook and Twitter.



Hit "Share" and your post will go live!



Hashtags, Handles, and Holidays

To the newbie, Instagram can seem like a strange world of wannabe fashion models and dog-crazed fans, full of odd inclusions of the # and @ symbols. However, with a little interpretation, this idealized social fantasy can become both clear and useful, especially when you know how and when to use those symbols.

#Hashtags

No symbol is more representative of current social media than the hashtag. It's such a part of contemporary culture that it found its way onto late night tv.

How does it work?

Let's say you took a gorgeous picture of your golf course. Adding the hashtag #golfcourses would allow other Instagram users to find your photo when they searched the hashtag #golfcourses.

As you can see, there are over 101K posts with the hashtag #golfcourses, which means that it would be easy for your post to get lost in all the images. If you want people to find your post and follow you, a less specific hashtag would be useful.

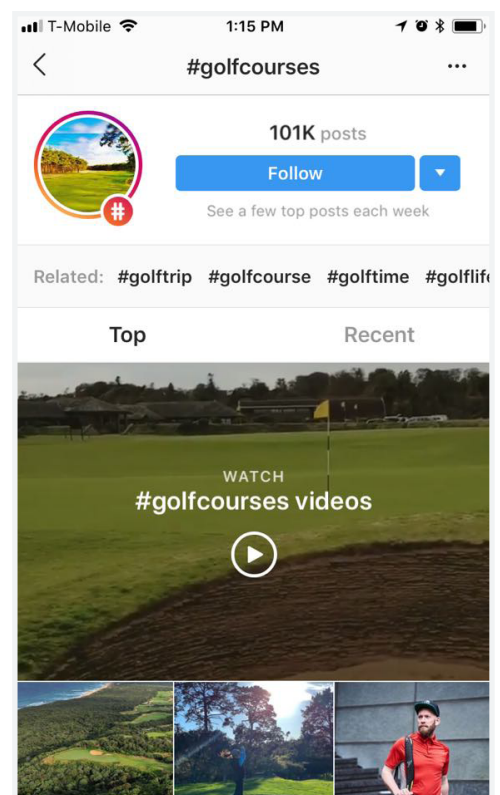


The hashtag first appeared on Twitter in 2007 as a way for people to easily find related content and ideas. Its use quickly spread to other platforms, but nowhere is it more used than on Twitter and Instagram.

Generally Specific Hashtags

People spend a huge amount of time on Instagram, and a fair amount of that is used in the "Explore" tab. This allows the user to both search for users and hashtags, but it also features a stream of auto-generated content based on posts that you've liked, accounts you follow, and hashtags you like.

Explore is becoming an increasingly important part of Instagram marketing strategies because it is essentially a free platform for people to get noticed. You can use it in the same way through the use of strategic and branded hashtags.



Strategic Hashtags

As we mentioned above, the more general a hashtag, the more posts you have to compete with. The trick is to find the balance between too specific and too general. For example, #golf is too general, but #greenGrassAtCaliforniaGolfCourse is a bit too specific, because nobody is going to search for that OR see it on someone else's post (and then click through to see others - like yours.)

Something like #BaileyCreekGolf, #CAGolf, or #BaileyCreekGolfCourse is more likely to be found, since its more focused on a specific audience but not so specific that the market is too small.

The best way to do this is to look at what hashtags other courses and golf companies are using who have a successful Instagram profile, and then to use those, or to modify them to fit your company.

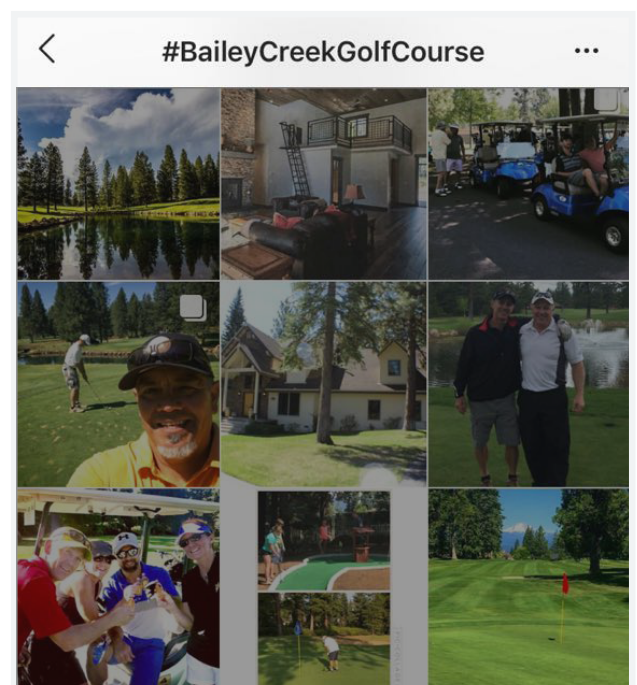


Branded Hashtags

Now that we've told you to not be too specific in your hashtags, we're going to turn around and negate that, but perhaps not in the way you'd expect. Branded hashtags are ones that specifically reference your company. You don't want them to be too long, but you still want them to be unique. A good one for Bailey Creek Golf Course might be #baileycreekgolfcourse or #baileycreekgc.

You can use branded hashtags to get noticed on Instagram. For example, if a player took a picture at Bailey Creek, by using the hashtag #baileycreekgolfcourse, that picture would now be linked to the golf course. The people who follow the player could look at the picture and click on the hashtag, bringing up a whole page of beautiful pictures of your course, which might push them to book a round there the next weekend.

Branded hashtags can also be used in promotions. If you're trying to get noticed more on Instagram, you could offer a discount on a tee time or tournament fee for anyone who uses your branded hashtag in a post from a picture on your course. This makes sure that people start using your hashtag, increasing your likeliness of getting noticed.



Using Hashtags Wisely

A few years ago, Instagram placed a limit of 30 hashtags for any post on the site, because some people were putting in a huge amount of completely irrelevant hashtags in the hope that they would get noticed (for example, putting #hockeyfans on a picture of an aspiring athlete at a baseball game).

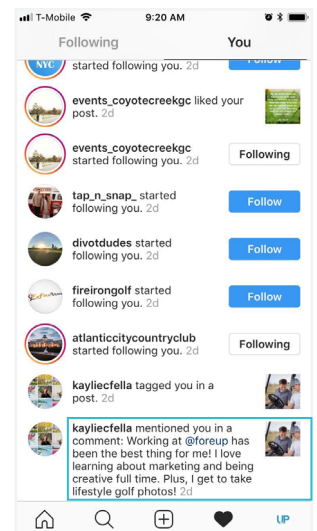
Although some accounts still max out the 30 hashtag limit, **its generally wise to use much fewer**. Research shows that the posts that get the most interaction have between **4-8 hashtags**, with interaction dropping off markedly after 10 hashtags. So take some time to decide which hashtags will be best for a post, and use them sparingly.

Handles

Handles work in much the same way as hashtags, but instead of being aimed at a type of content or an idea, these are aimed at accounts. For example, Raleigh Creek's Instagram username is @raleighcreekgc. Every time that a player types that in a post (called "@mentioning" in Instagram parlance), Raleigh Creek will get a notification that they've been mentioned in a post, and people who click on the handle in the player's post will be taken to Raleigh Creek's profile.

This means that handles can be used in a similar way to hashtags to promote or get notoriety on Instagram. You can also use it to mention other courses and influencers. For example, foreUP's account has @mentioned several large accounts, including Tony Finau and the PGA Show, in their posts, which resulted in the accounts giving us a shoutout, which raised the number of our followers.

Unlike a hashtag, using @mentions won't bring you up in such a broad array of search terms; your course only shows up when people search the specific handle. This is a better way to help people follow your account, and handles and hashtags should both be used in any complete marketing plan.



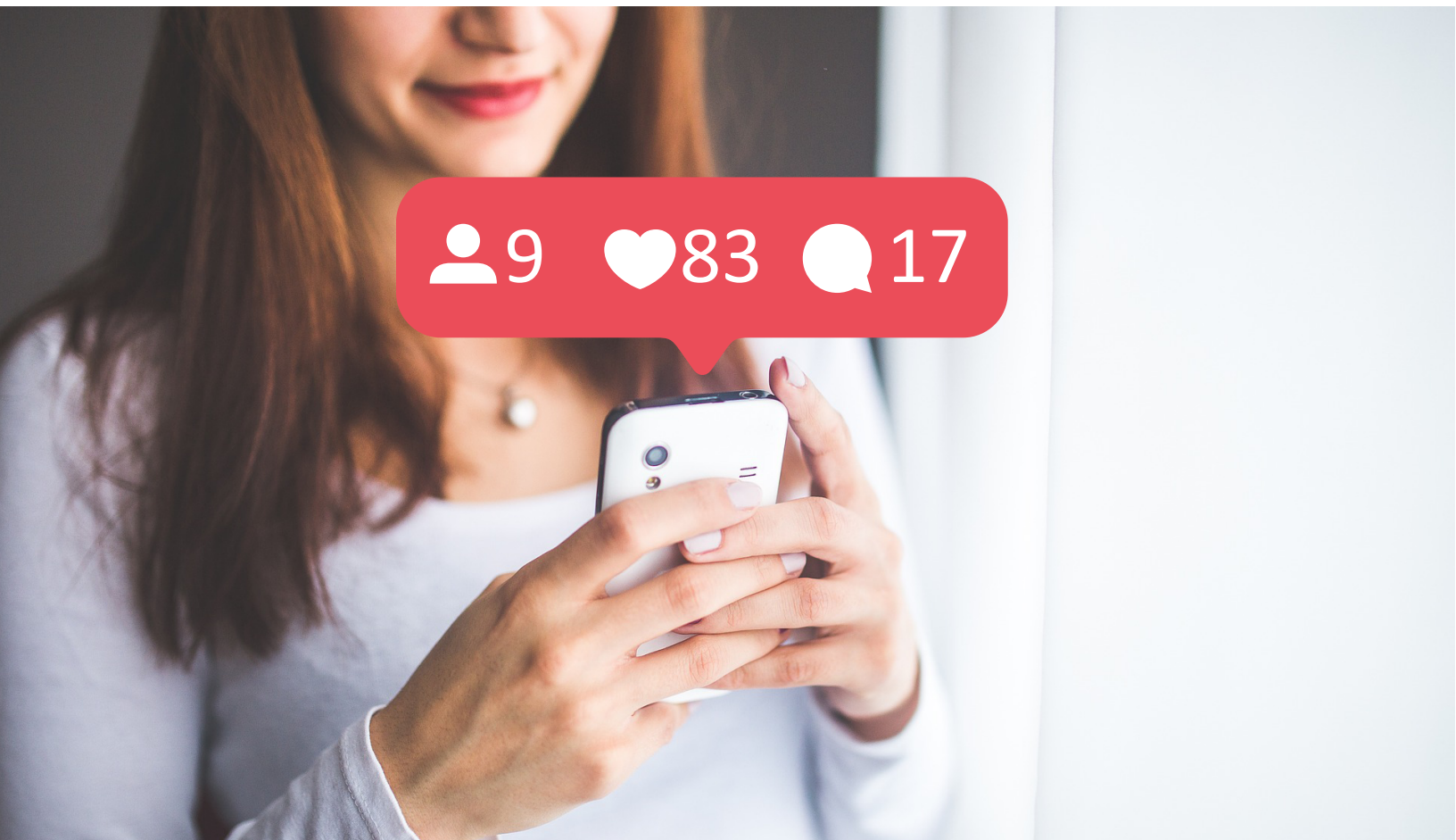
Holidays

Much like Pinterest, Instagram easily lends itself to unique and holiday-themed posts. Users often engage more with posts relating to the holiday, and they present the perfect opportunity to add a little personality and relatability to your brand.

Holiday-themed material.

Take photos of happenings around the course: the ugliest Christmas sweaters your players are wearing, the most creative jack-o-lanterns carved by your pro shop staff, the results of your Thanksgiving food drive, the huge barbeque your grill puts on for the 4th of July. These kinds of posts result in huge engagement and let your followers know that you're just people.

In addition to this kind of people- and activity-focused content, you can use Instagram to promote holiday-themed tournaments at your course or events in your clubhouse. And last of all, don't forget to add a holiday-appropriate hashtag!



What is an Influencer?

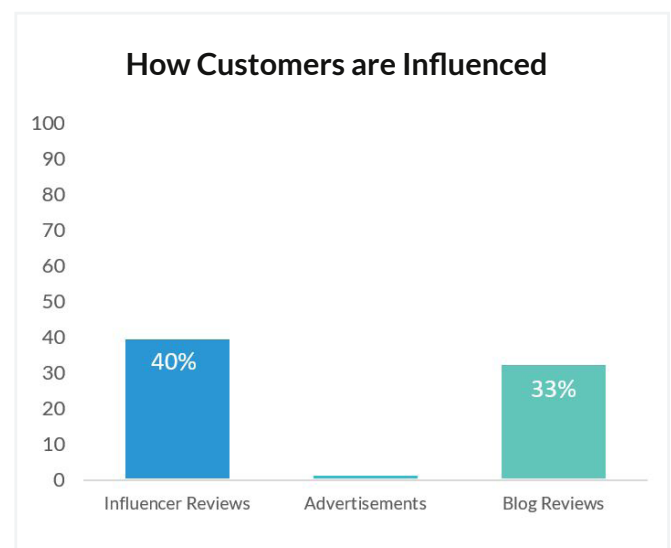
Influencers are Instagram users who have an established credibility and audience, and who are then able to easily persuade (or “influence”) others to use products by virtue of their trustworthiness and authenticity.

Some examples in the golf world include the PGA Tour, Greg Norman (@shark_gregnorman), Tiger Woods (@TWspot), Colin McCarthy, PGA (@colinmccarthypga), and Paige Spiranac, (@_paige.renee).

Why Influencer Marketing

When you look at the stats below, it makes sense why influencer marketing is a popular tactic to drive sales and occupancy:

- Around **40%** of people reported that they purchased a product online after seeing it used by an influencer on YouTube, Instagram, or Twitter.
- When it comes to millennials, only 1% of them trust advertisements. However, **33% of them trust blog reviews** for their purchases.
- According to a study by Tomoson, influencer marketing yields a \$6.50 return on investment for every dollar spent.
- 71% of influencers believe that it's an **authentic** and **honest** voice that keeps their audience engaged.



Influencer marketing is most likely impacting your social media strategy, PR strategy, advertising strategy, and customer conversion strategy already. But these aren't the only areas of your marketing stack that influencer marketing can be used to amplify your brand's message and reach.

Here's a list of influencer marketing use cases that will help your drive marketing results:

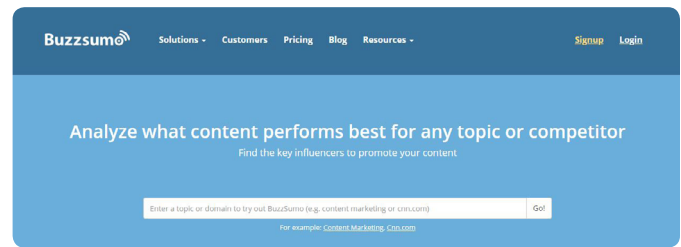
- Brand awareness and reputation
- Brand advocacy
- PR outreach
- Content marketing
- Digital advertising
- Social media selling and marketing
- Lead generation



Remembering who your favorite influencers are or looking for the perfect influencer can be overwhelming. We suggest using these key tools to help keep you organized throughout the process. Here are some amazing tools to help you find the right influencer and to keep you organized:

BuzzSumo

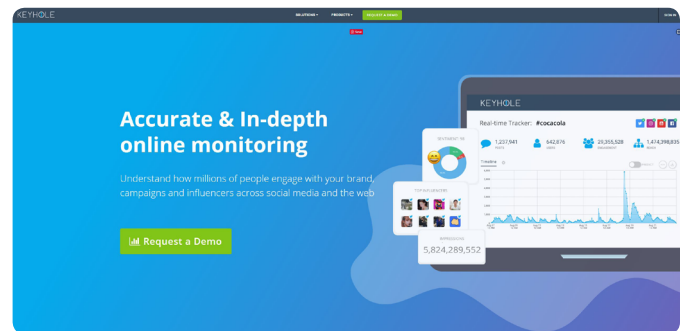
This is a great influencer marketing tool that can easily help you find true influencers. **BuzzSumo** can be used to search and quickly identify high-quality content that performs well or can also be used to find your ideal influencer.



Keyhole

Keyhole is an influential marketing platform that tracks the most influential people who are engaging with your brand, and promotes your content to increase your brand reach.

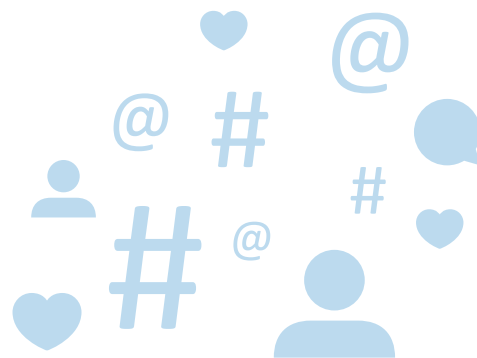
The hashtag tracker feature performs best with Instagram and Twitter.



An easy influencer marketing strategy is a simple hashtag search that helps find any brand advocates that are already posting about your industry, brand, or competitors online.

It tracks all of the following stats for hashtags:

- Reach
- Impressions
- Number of users
- Number of posts
- Number of followers
- Average number of reposts
- Average number of likes



Organic Influencers

How do you build a relationship with Influencers?

Every business can benefit from creating buzz about their facility, brand, or product, and influencers help do just that. Influencers help build credibility by displaying diverse forms of social proof.



One of the most important steps to building a relationship with your ideal influencer is by putting out a ton of high-quality content on social platforms. You can never have too much content!

Remember to properly optimize the content you create. You want to make it easy for a social influencer to discover your content, share it with their followers and integrate it into the details of their online footprint.

Some Awesome Ways to Build a Relationship with an Influencer:

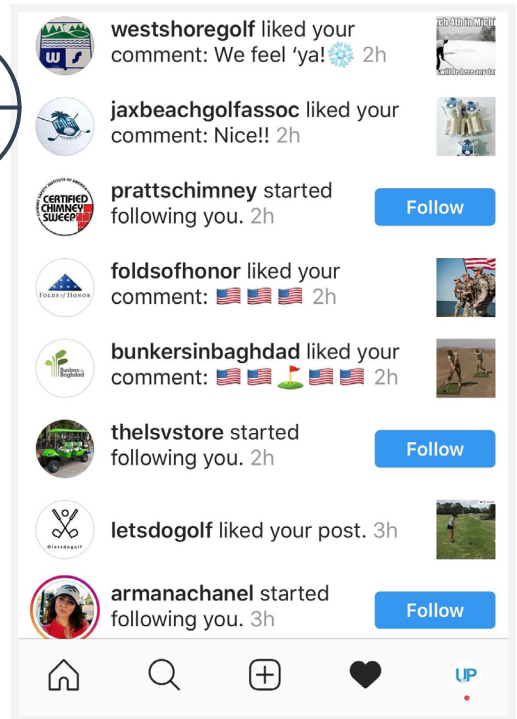
- Create addictive content
- Analyze and study their needs
- Like their posts on social media
- Follow them on social media
- Be **genuine** and respectful
- Share their content online
- Ask them to contribute a guest post on your blog
- Comment and engage **regularly** with their content



Regardless of whatever initial strategy you use, you'll probably need to initiate contact with them. **Send them a Direct Message** via Instagram.

Share with them who you are, what you admire about their posts or content, let them know that you share a common interest or passion with them, such as growing the game of golf. Let them know that you were wondering if they would be interested in being an Instagram

influencer for you and your brand. **It doesn't cost you anything to ask** them the question and then you can go from there and see where it leads. It's a good idea to reach out to several people or accounts that you would like to have an influencer relationship with.



After you build a relationship with your Influencer, offer an incentive to persuade them to work with you.

Some Incentive Ideas Are:

- A monetary bonus in exchange for the endorsement
- Offer to send them a swag bag
- Offer a discount or give them something free from your facility
- Give exclusive access to a product that hasn't been released yet

Not all brand influencers want to be paid with money. There are a few other ways to have influencers share your brand without having to pay them a big chunk of money.



Other Ways to Pay Influencers:

- Help shape their image
- A year free of product or services
- Create quality content for their audience
- Help grow their audience and influencer outreach
- Discount codes that are exclusive to their following
- Offer to give them swag for a giveaway
- Offer experiences (trips, events, travel, etc.)



Once you have established your relationship with your favorite influencers by communicating through social media platforms, it's time to shift your engagement to a more direct manner. Send your influencer a personalized email.

In your email you could say something like:



“Hey there! I loved your latest post on XYZ. I really enjoy all of the high-quality content that you share on social media! I am _____ and am in the _____ industry! I think we share a lot of similar interests. I would love to connect!”

Paid Influencers

How do I get an influencer?

You can either start with trying to organically develop relationships with individual or brand influencers, people, and accounts that you follow, or you can reach out to a marketing agency that already has established relationships with influencers (ie. Swing by Swing Golf, Golf Stars Agency).

Sometimes using a paid influencer can get a little pricey. Look at people you already follow or follow you people who have large followings, partnership brands that you have relationships with already, other businesses in your community, loyal customers, or local PGA pros. Also, don't forget the influence of your employees and your family.

How much does a social media influencer cost?

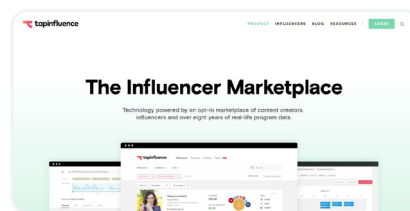
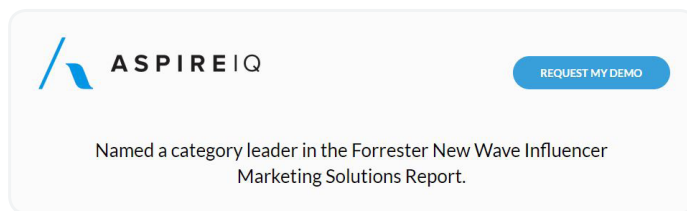
On average per Instagram post it is **\$0.14 for every engagement**, Instagram video is **\$0.16 for every engagement**, and for **Instagram Story it is \$0.06** for every view. For example a post with 1,000 likes on Instagram would cost an average of \$140. A post on Instagram can be as high as \$1,000 per 100,000 followers. However, keep in mind that there is no simple formula for establishing X amount of dollars per X amount of posts; in most instances, it's calculated on a case-by-case basis.



Influencer pricing typically varies greatly and takes into account the following:

- The number of posts you want
- The type of post (image, video, audio, story, etc.)
- The amount of effort needed from the influencer (Do you provide the image/video or do they?)
- Where the ad will be promoted (Will it just be on the influencer's account? Are you cross-posting it? Will you be using it in other efforts?)
- The number of fans and followers the influencer has
- The amount of engagement their posts generally receive
- The fit of the advertisement with their brand and following

Most influencers set their own rates unless they use a platform like [AspireIQ](#) or [Tapinfluence](#) that sets rates for them.



How to incorporate their assistance

You could have a simple agreement where they would agree to like your posts, make a comment, mention you in one of their posts, or even better share one of your posts. You in turn would agree to do the same! In the beginning you may need to send them a quick DM to remind them of your agreement and give them a schedule of your posts if you know the day and the time or shoot them a quick message the same day of your post giving them a quick heads up so that they can quickly like and engage with your post.

Once an influencer partnership is established, come up with a few simple guidelines such as what hashtags you would like them to use, tags, and or locations. Maybe include established days of the week and times of the days for the posts.

You'll want to share info about upcoming events, content, and messages about your business with them in advance, and let them put the posts into their own words so they can authentically share with their audience.

Companies both big and small are realizing the power of building relationships with influencers. The takeaway: Especially when trying to build your brand credibility, it's important to find organizations and people you can align with.



Being an Instagram Follower

The Importance of Engaging with Your Followers

It is important to shift your focus from the number of followers to the number of engagements that you have with your followers, because it ultimately helps you to build relationships that last. When you engage with your followers you build trust between your brand (course, club, staff, company, etc.) and your followers. Low engagement is often a red flag to potential new followers and indicates a lack of trust and authority, while a higher engagement rate builds not only trust but relationships. It lets them know that you are 'real' and that you care!

Engaging with followers on Instagram is so important going forward! This is a way for you to connect with your clients, and a way for you to gain new potential clients. Instagram is a great tool for you to direct your followers to your facility—whether it be in person or online, and create long lasting relationships.

Posting

Tip #1 - Instagram Story Stickers

One of the best ways that you can engage with your followers by starting conversations is in your story. Instagram Story stickers are a great way to encourage your followers to share their opinions and experiences with you, which in turn, will help create a loyal following that feels connected to your brand.

A few sticker ideas for your IG Story are:

The **Question Sticker**: It's a great way to get to know your audience. You could ask them what their favorite hole is on your course, favorite day or time of day to golf, what is their favorite golf ball, etc.

Poll and Vote Stickers: Your followers' opinions matters, there's no better way to boost engagement and hear from your audience than by using poll or vote stickers. Remember to keep it simple. You could have a couple different hats or shirts and ask which one is their favorite, Beer or Soda, Summer or Fall Golf, Sunrise or Twilight Round, etc.

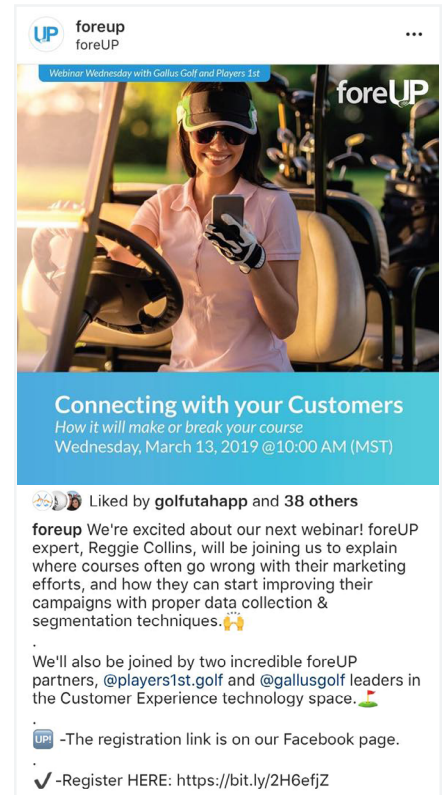


Tip #2 - Write Longer Captions

Another great way to increase engagement is to write longer captions. On most social media platforms, the shorter a post, the more engagement it gets. The most engaged-with Facebook posts are around 40 characters! **But Instagram is a different story.**

One of the factors that affects how your Instagram post performs is the algorithm “time spent on post.” So an easy way to **increase** the time people spend looking at your post is by writing an engaging (and long) caption, around **220 words**.

When you write a longer caption you can break up the sections of the post with a simple bullet or emoji. This is a great opportunity to open up to your audience about your brand and business goals, your services, your mission statement, or anything else that will keep them informed that can’t be said in a one-liner and a few emojis!



Tip #3 - Optimize Every Instagram Post and Story

Whether the post is in your story or in your feed you should be putting time and effort into optimizing your posts.

Every time you post on Instagram, you should think about including the following three things to boost your exposure and engagement:

Include a mention sticker (story) or add a tag (feed)

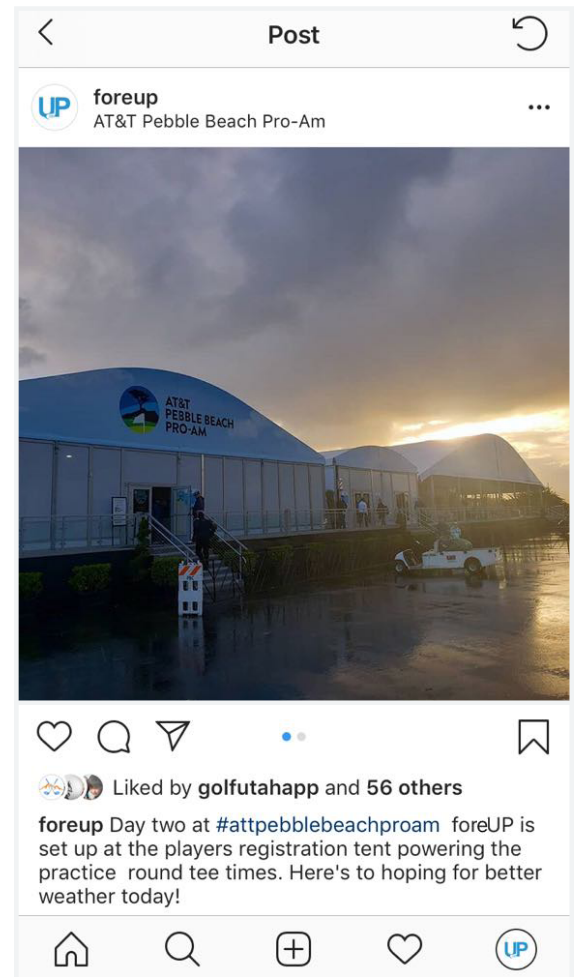
When you're posting about other brands, businesses, players, or reposting some user-generated content (UGC), it's important that you mention their account.

Not only will the account be notified that you have mentioned them, but it goes a long way when it comes to building relationships and a community. That account may, in turn, repost and thank you with a shout-out for the mention, or even share it with their followers.

Add a location

If you're looking to improve your engagement and boost your exposure, you need to start tagging locations in our posts. You can use a searchable location sticker in your stories and add the physical location on your post in your feed.

So how does it work exactly? For example if you're posting a story from a golf tournament in San Diego, you can tag the location with a sticker, and your story might appear in that location's Instagram stories or posts.



Don't forget to add hashtags

We know the importance of adding hashtags to your post captions and comments, but are you adding them to your Instagram story too? Sometimes hashtag stickers can clutter up and ruin the aesthetic of the Instagram story that you want to post, but thankfully there are ways around it.

When you want to include hashtags in your Instagram Stories, you can type out your hashtags (you can include up to 10), you can either make them the same color as the background to hide the hashtags, or pinch the text to make them smaller, and then place a GIF or image sticker over the hashtag text so it's perfectly hidden!

Responding

Reply to your DMs and Comments

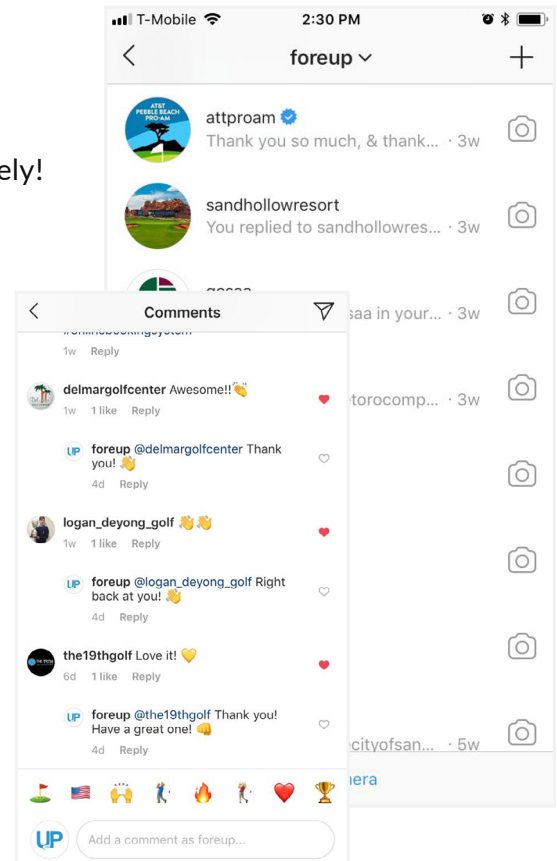
This one may seem simple, but so many brands ignore their DMs and comments on their feed. Or worse, they turn off commenting completely!

Make sure you spend time listening and responding to both positive and negative feedback. By doing this you can show that you care and provide customer assistance on Instagram too.

Why Respond to EVERY Comment:

Instagram's Algorithm

The way that Instagram works is that the more engagement you create, the higher the chance people have of seeing your posts. By simply responding to and liking your followers' comments, you are increasing the post's chance of being seen by others. This is extremely important for the success of your business' Instagram!



Customer Awareness & Appreciation

By replying to your followers on Instagram it shows that you **care** about your clients, that your business is up to date with social media, and above all lets your clients and potential clients know that **you are there for them**.

Whether you're commenting on someone else's post or responding to a comment on your own post make sure you are authentic. Sometimes the thing that pops in your head first is the most natural and genuine thing you could say, so trust your intuition while staying in your brands voice, and maintain professionalism, just as you



would at your facility. If a follower compliments your post, **thank them!** When a follower asks a question, **answer** them the best you can. If they simply comment with an emoji, reply with a smiley face or a heart to show you **appreciate** their comment.

The simple act of showing your followers, that you're listening to them is going to create an online conversation and **help build that community** that you want. The more likes, comments, DMs, and shares your posts get, the more likely the algorithm will rank it as quality content and it could even get displayed to **wider audiences** on the Explore page.

Finding People to Follow

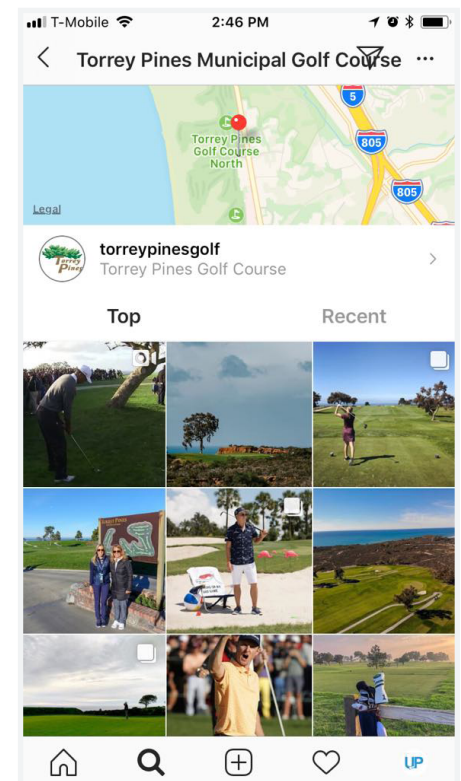
You can find new people to follow and engage with by doing these simple things:

Search locations.

If it is at your golf course and or club search that location and see who is visiting, golfing and tagging your location in their post. Once you find them, give them a follow, like a few of their posts and make a comment on one of their posts. You might be surprised (but shouldn't be) when they follow you back, like one of your posts, and possibly respond to your comment.

Search hashtags.

If you want to find people that are posting about your course simply search a few hashtags. You might be surprised to see how many people are posting about their experiences while golfing at your facility.



Look through someone's captions, like, and comments.

You can find new people to follow simply by looking at your followers captions, likes, and comments. Maybe it's their weekly golfing buddy, golf instructor, family, or friends that would also be a good fit for your brand.

Go through your followers list.

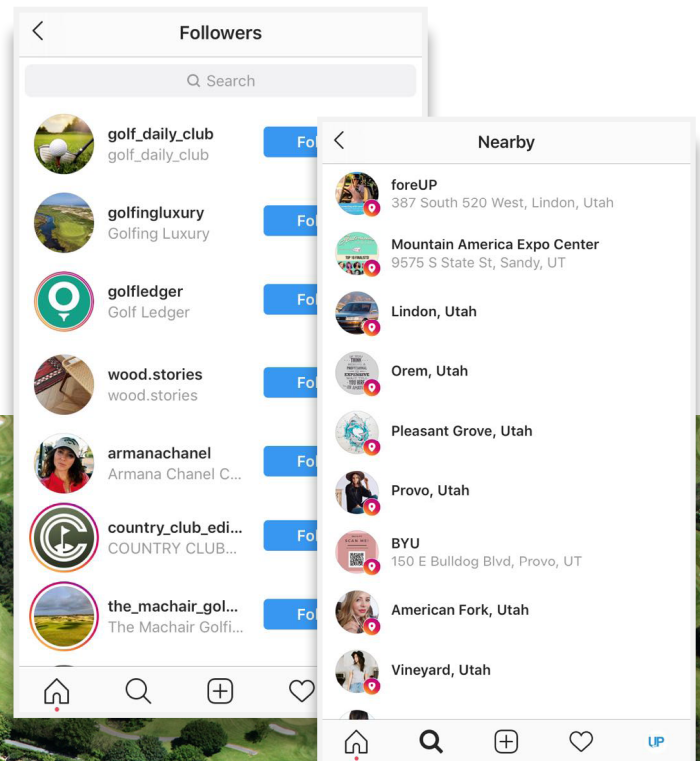
Have you checked your followers list recently? Maybe someone gave you a follow a while back and you haven't had time to check out their account, but it's someone that follows and engages with you. Why not see who follows them? You might add a few new friends to your account and when you follow the best practices for engaging, which are first following, then liking, and leaving a comment, they might possibly give you a follow back.

Look at who your friends, followers, and favorite Instagrammers are following.

One of our favorite ways to find new people to follow on Instagram is to look through who our friends and favorite Instagrammers are following, because it's easy to see that we have the same taste, are into similar things (like golf), and most likely have similar values and beliefs.

Use the geotargeting feature.

One of the great things about Instagram is the ability to tag your location for your photos, videos, and IG stories, because it makes it a great way to find people near you or with the same interests as your brand (local bar or restaurant, golf store, other golf courses near you, etc.)



Conclusion

Social media is the way of the future for marketing and brand engagement, and Instagram is increasingly the king of social media. Hopefully this ebook has given you some actionable insights into what you can do for your course. If you get nothing else from this ebook, we hope you'll at least remember the following:

1. Use Instagram to market your course.

There are too many people on Instagram, especially millennials, to safely ignore it.

2. Make beautiful, yet simple, photos for your account.

You can make a splash by using basic techniques like the Rule of Thirds and easy on-phone editing apps.

3. Use hashtags and handles.

It's a subtle art, but almost anyone can learn to use hashtags and handles to grow their audience.

4. Interact frequently.

Commenting and liking is key to your account's success, and usually the first thing that comes to mind is the right thing to say.

5. Get Influencers.

Whether you pay them or find them organically, make sure that you take advantage of influencers to give your course wider exposure.

Of course, getting a following on social media is never a guaranteed result, but doing the things listed above will give you a much better chance of gaining a fanatic group of fans who not only like, comment, and share, but come to your course again and again.



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