

EXPERT ADVICE ON HOW TO PROMOTE A BRAND'S HASHTAG ON INSTAGRAM & TWITTER

It's not always easy to stand out in the crowd on social media.

You've got a lot of competition for your audience's attention, and you need to find a way to get noticed and stay relevant. The right hashtag can do just that... if people see it, that is.

Visibility is a constant challenge for brands both big and small. So we asked thought leaders in different industries: What's the best way to choose a hashtag and promote it on Instagram and Twitter? What strategies do you recommend to get people to tune in and engage with what you're posting?

Here's their expert advice – full of steps that you can start using immediately to increase your own brand's impact on social media.

Keep it Consistent

For our brand, Ever Bamboo – a natural deodorizer and dehumidifier – our hashtag is #RethinkTheStink, which is also our slogan.

We include the tag in most of our Instagram posts and some Twitter posts. We ran a giveaway contest recently, and one of the ways for people to submit entries was to submit a pre-written tweet. The hashtag was included as part of the tweet.

The blogger whom ran the contest said that the results, in terms of blog post hits and contest entries (482), were at an all-time high.

She said, "This is the best giveaway I've ever run. Usually if I get 20 entries, I'm thrilled. The post has been clicked on 702 times."



*K.B. Lee
Founder & CEO
[Ever Bamboo Inc.](#)*

Make it Specific

One campaign, for which we recently won a local American Advertising Award, was particularly successful and increased engagement, likes, and shares, in a way we were able to effectively track.

Over a six-week period, our agency was tasked with creating and executing a social media campaign for a client, Life Essentials Institute, (LEI). LEI is a community-based organization that provides tools and support for individuals seeking a deeper understanding of who they are and how they can live a more fulfilling life.

They were looking to engage with users from all walks of life online, and in such a way that created meaningful discussion and self-contemplation. Our strategy included a series of highly targeted posts, inspirational messages, images, and thought-provoking questions structured and scheduled to build on previous content and escalate over time, using the hashtag: #ItStartsWithMe.

The key in developing a hashtag is ensuring it's specific (and thus measurable), easy to understand and spell, and that it connects with the brand. Within two weeks, likes had increased by more than 442% and shares had increased by 2100%. LEI's engagement rate during the campaign was 667% higher than the engagement rate of all pages of a comparable size.



Courtney Herda
CEO
[Smarter Searches](#)

Find the Hashtag

With our client Bill Shander, information designer and data storytelling expert, we went for the hashtag #rockthevizcomm. Not only did we make that the name of his new branded event series, but we've incorporated it into all of our marketing communications, especially on Twitter. We place it when we live tweet events, and are planning on incorporating it once we establish an Instagram account.

With Instagram, we have identified hashtags in related areas so we still are able to get visibility on whatever we are posting, and this will increase the visibility of the new #rockthevizcomm hashtag.

With former client Puff Cuff, a hair clamp product, we used #gatheryourhairfirst to instruct people on the proper use of the clamp. We held a #gatheryourhairfirst Instagram and Twitter contest to have people sharing pictures of gathering their hair in order to win the clamp.

With each, we could measure the reach of the hashtag using Hashttracking and Iconosquare and see the reach of what we'd done. It is also easy to engage others who have used the hashtags in deeper conversations. And the hashtags are especially useful when conducting scheduled Twitter chats.

All of our branding will inform users that THIS is the hashtag to use when talking about this brand and to connect with other users talking about it..



Jasmine Powers
Marketing Director
[J Powers Marketing & Publicity LLC](#)

Choose Carefully

An appropriate hashtag helps drive brand recognition, extend the reach of your marketing campaign and generate customer loyalty. A few insights and strategies:

Companies should choose a primary hashtag phrase that consistently signals your brand in order to increase awareness and generate impressions.

A common mistake is overusing tags. This undermines the strength of the hashtag, which could initiate a trickle-down effect of undermining your value to your followers, and thereby undermining your brand's social media reputation. Twitter recommends using only two hashtags per tweet.

Twitter chats are organized by hashtags and are a great tool for businesses that want to get in touch with their audience.

Digital marketers and social media gurus pay little attention to the opportunities to use hashtags offline. There's actually a lot to be said about the indirect strategy of using hashtags outside the Internet as well. For example, placing your primary brand hashtag in a public location or in a TV commercial or a radio ad can only help brand promotion. Though it's hard to track (which is agonizing to online analysts), it complements any advertising strategy.



Courtney Capellan
Digital Analyst
[Digital Advertising Works](#)

Build Hashtag Authority

I do a lot of work with hashtag marketing and I have a super tip for Twitter hashtags:

When most people's tweets in a hashtag go down after mere seconds, there is a way to make tweets rank highly when people browse that hashtag for hours after it has been tweeted.

The trick is to build authority within a hashtag. The way you do that is:

- 1) Use the hashtag often*
- 2) Get many retweets and favorites on the hashtag*

This will get your new tweets with that hashtag to rank higher and higher for longer. This can give brands really good authority positioning and extra exposure.

I personally used to do this for my brand @problemio by targeting hashtags like #startup #entrepreneur #businessplan and similar other ones.

Alex Genadinik
Founder
[Problemio](#)

Show Personality

We utilize hashtags to reach the general public, improve brand recognition and traffic, and to create "personalities" for each of our respective brands. Since we're always looking to attract new followers, our PR team has developed specific hashtags for each day of the week (#motivationmonday, #fridayvibes) in order to appeal to a broad spectrum of potential followers.

We also pay careful attention to trending hashtags and topics in an effort to determine if these "hot words" could be used to bring traffic or attention to a specific brand. We also utilize industry-related hashtags such as #homedecor and #homeremodel across all of our brands.

We find that humorous hashtags, such as #morningswouldbebetterif and #asoonasiget home, are a great way to indirectly promote our company and also to brighten someone's day!

Each week our PR team analyzes the click traffic for each hashtag, and determines which brought in traffic and which did not. Those that are successful are repeated, and those that are not get modified or simply removed from the rotation.

Artem Filikov
VP of Marketing & Corporate Development
[Homeyou](#)

Give an Incentive

Madame Tussauds, a global wax museum brand, wanted to increase their social media presence while creating a memorable experience while guests were in their venues. Many businesses just create a paper sign with their Twitter and Instagram hashtags, but Madame Tussauds wanted to take things further.

They added Enplug digital signage displays with a live, filtered feed of posts with their hashtags on Instagram and Twitter. Management at Madame Tussauds also wanted to get customers taking photos with staff, so they created the #MTstaffselfie hashtag. Guests who post using the hashtag automatically get entered into a \$50 gift card drawing.

The General Manager for Madame Tussauds Hollywood says the results have been exceptional: "It's better than any sales pitch we could come up with for Tussauds. The biggest value is that it gets in front of people before they even visit, giving them ideas and showing them what you can do inside."



Colin Bovet
Head of Marketing
[Enplug](#)

Promoting your brand's hashtag effectively on Instagram and Twitter doesn't have to be overly complex, but it does require creativity, thoughtful planning, careful tracking, and – above all – consistency.

Take these words of wisdom, and put your own spin on them to fit your brand's unique needs.

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