

How to Master Instagram for Business in 7 Simple Steps

by [Brent Barnhart](#)



Let's begin with the elephant in the room:

No, it's not too late to get started on Instagram.

Not by a long shot.

Although the Instagram's [one billion user mark](#) is just around the corner, marketers are still hopping on the bandwagon by the masses.

And why not? As the platform continues to roll out new [business-specific features](#), there's perhaps no better time than now to build your Instagram presence from scratch.

The beauty of using Instagram for business is that the platform isn't reserved for any particular brand, by the way.

Running a brick-and-mortar business? An ecommerce empire? Or maybe you're a solo business trying to snag some clout?

Good! There's an audience on Instagram that's waiting for you.

How to Use Instagram for Business: A Quick & Comprehensive Guide

At a glance, figuring out how to use Instagram for business might seem daunting.

*"What the heck do I post? What's a **regram**, anyway? Why isn't anyone liking my stuff?"*

But despite Instagram's many moving pieces, attracting followers and winning over customers is arguably easier than ever.





It all boils down to your strategy.

We've outlined the essential Instagram for business tips to not only get you started on the platform but build an audience that falls in love your content, too.

And with that, let's dive in!

1. Fine-Tune Your Profile from the Word 'Go'

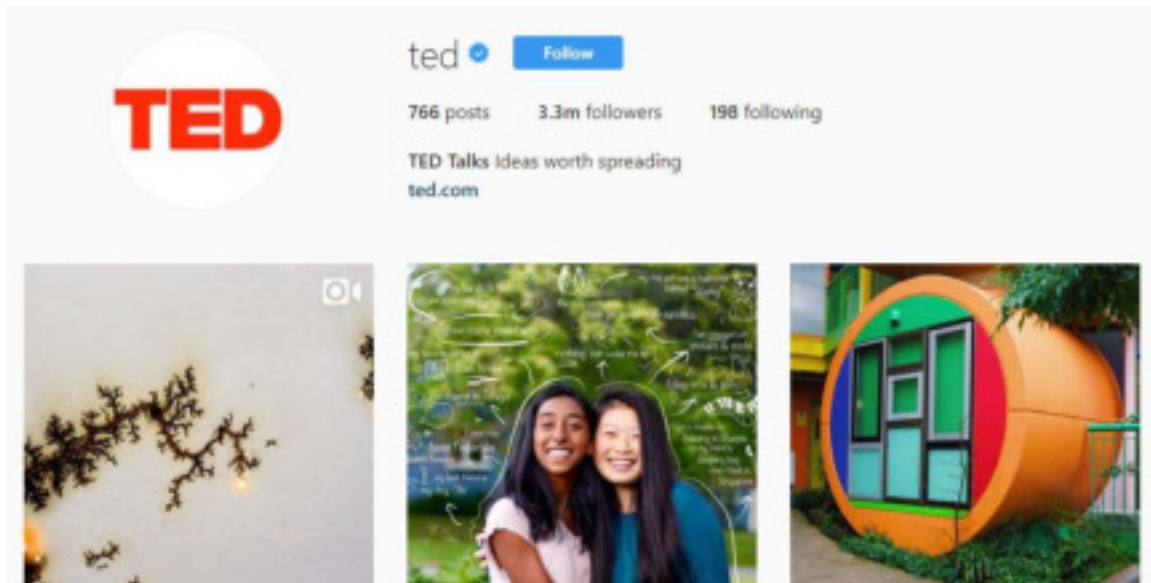
Spoiler alert: you can't do much on Instagram until you properly fill out your profile.

 Name
 Username
 Website
 Bio

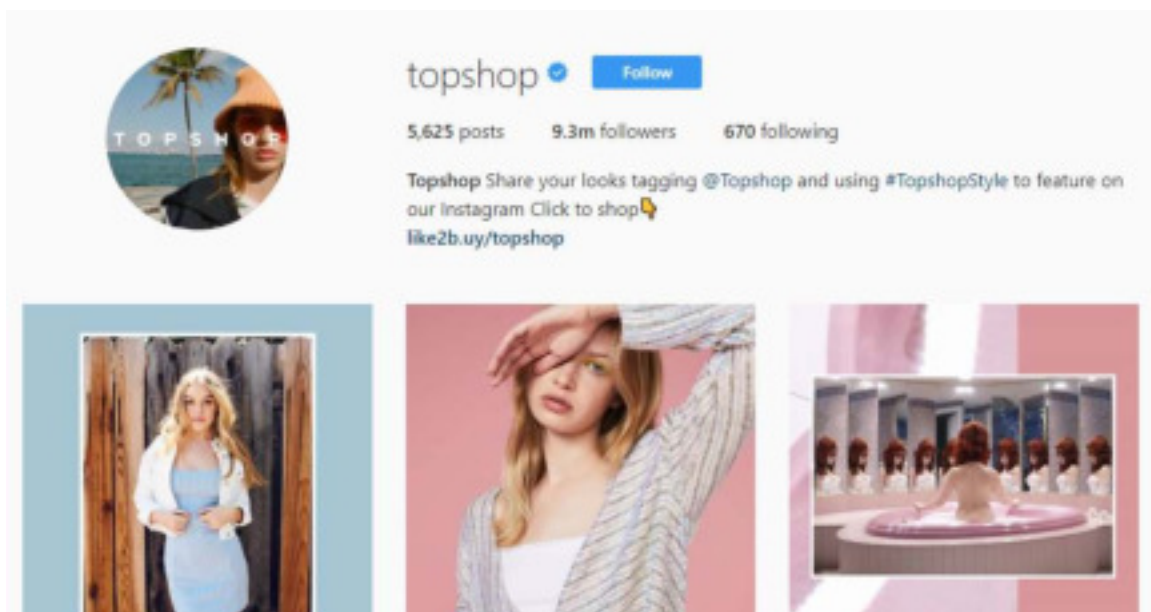
Where is no “right” way to craft your profile, these principles are a solid starting point based on Instagram’s best practices:

- **Profile photo:** It’s best to use your company logo as your profile photo so people can easily identify your brand.
- **Account name:** Make this your business name, identical to your brand’s other social profiles.
- **Username:** This should also be your business name. Note that your username cannot have any spaces.
- **Website:** This will be the only clickable URL on your Instagram page. Most businesses either use their website or link to their latest promotional page.
- **Bio:** Your bio is where you will capture the attention of other users. You can either describe what your business does, hype up your website or slap your brand’s slogan here (or all of the above, actually).

Bear in mind that you have plenty of room to get creative in terms of how you craft your profile. For example, [TED’s](#) takes a minimalist approach to its profile which goes hand in hand with their branding.

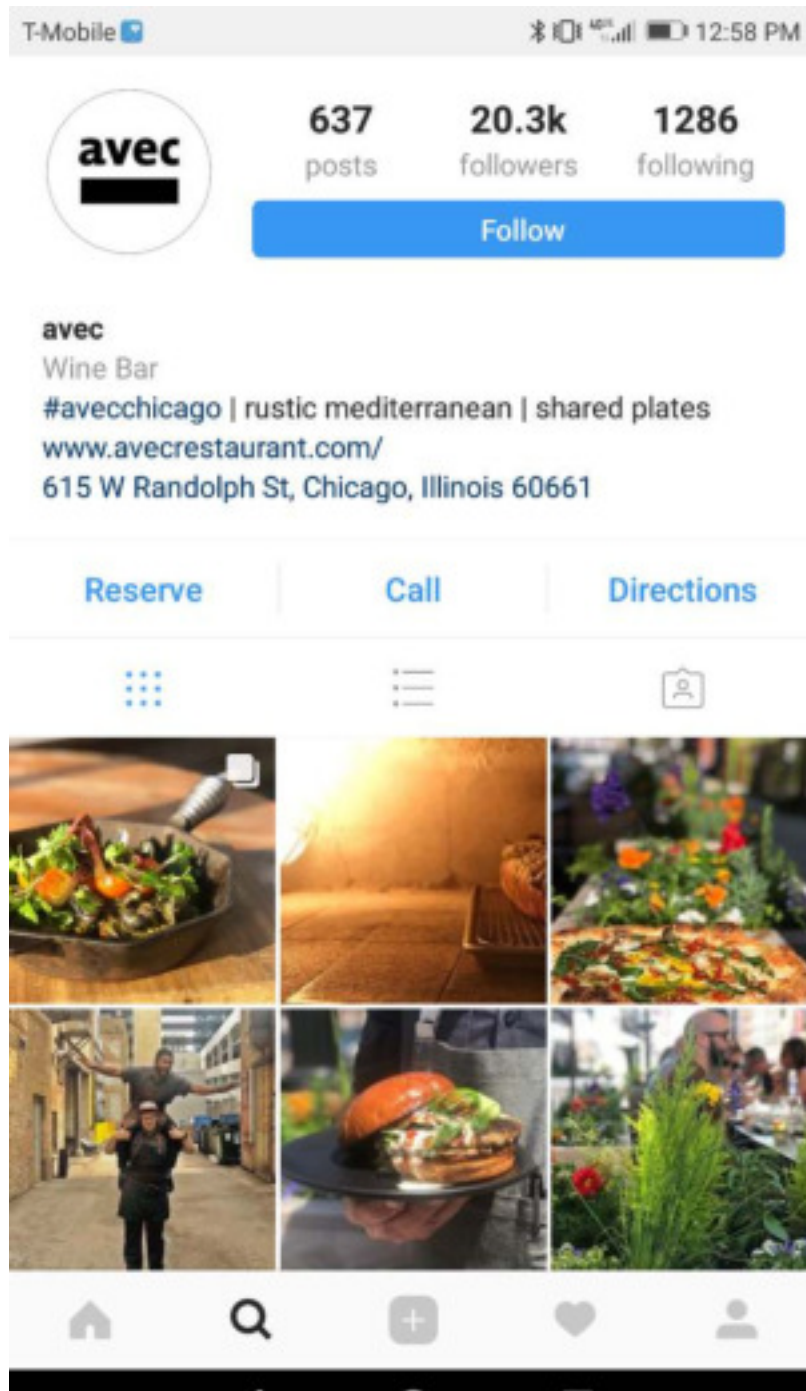


Meanwhile, ecommerce brands like [Topshop](#) boast bios that promote their store alongside their branded hashtag.



Converting your account to an [Instagram business profile](#) is a smart move, especially if your business has a physical location.

Such profiles have access to both in-depth analytics and additional contact and location information for people to get in touch with you. Here's a good example from Chicago's own [avec](#):



Rather than fall victim to analysis paralysis, simply start by ensuring the small details of your profile are in order. For more tips on setting up your profile, check out our guide on [how to write Instagram bios](#) for businesses.

2. Adopt a 'Tribe' Mentality

Related Articles

How to Get Verified on Instagram in 5 Helpful Steps

How to Create an Instagram Marketing Strategy

How to Craft the Best Instagram Bios for Businesses

Why & How to Switch to an Instagram Business Profile

With so many busy users and photos floating around on Instagram, standing out might seem like an uphill battle.

Reality check: you do not need millions of followers on Instagram to be considered a success story.

Instead of worrying about boasting big numbers, it's best to approach Instagram for business with a sort of "tribe" mentality.

Start small. Establish relationships. Engage with others one-on-one.

In short, build your own tribe.

Make no mistake: Instagram is *not* an "if you build it, they will come" platform. Businesses both big and small should focus on not only building their own followings, but tapping into niche communities where their audience is already hanging out.

How do you make it happen, though? Where can you find potential members of your tribe?

Uncover Niche Hashtags

Hashtags essentially act as a search function for Instagram to find relevant followers and brands. This rings true for users and businesses alike.

And again, tapping into your **target audience** means getting specific.

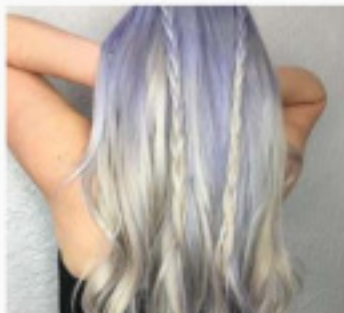
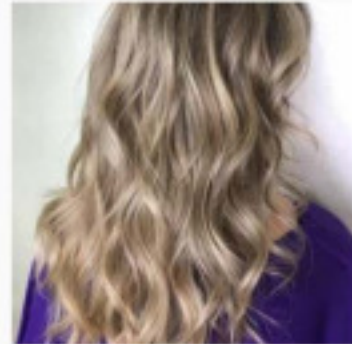
For example, the #beauty tag has literally hundreds of millions of posts behind it. Rather than tackle crowded hashtags, consider how smaller, niche hashtags such as #unicornhair, #bluehairdontcare or #coloredhairgoals exist in which a beauty brand could realistically stand out.



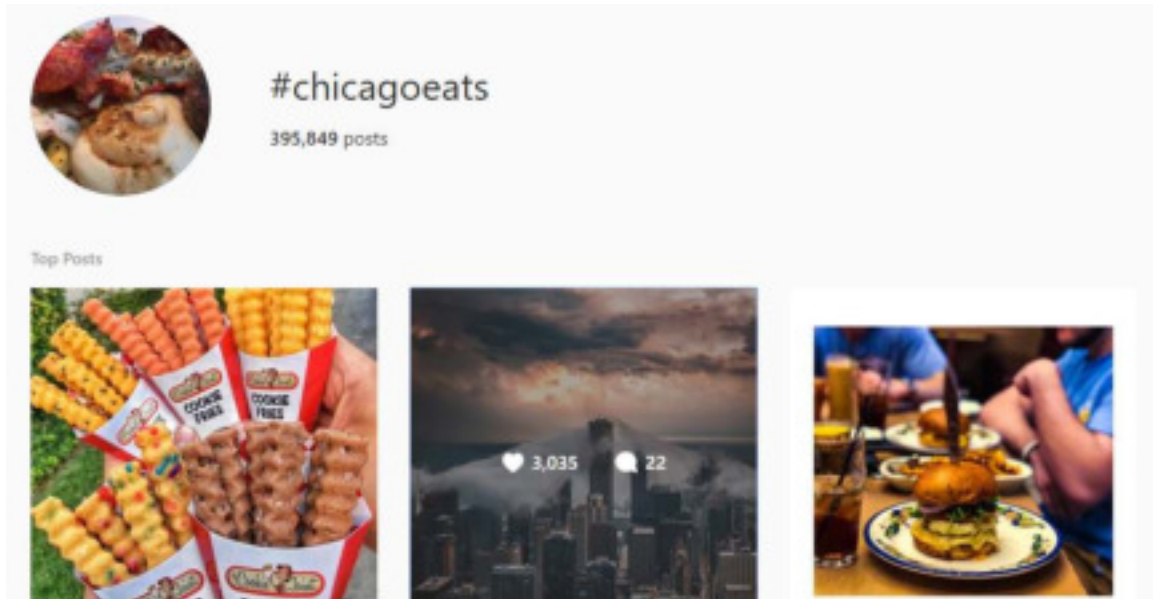
#coloredhairgoals

24,309 posts

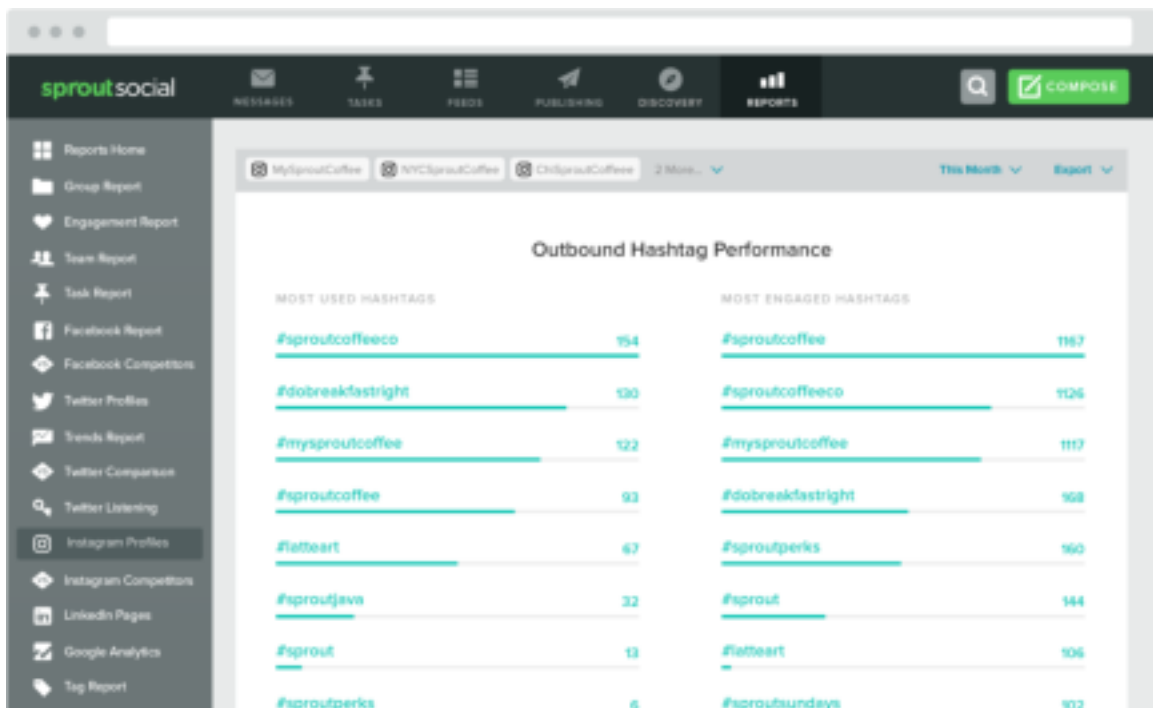
Top Posts



Similarly, location-specific hashtags are perfect for zeroing in on an audience in your own neighborhood.



“Think small” is smart advice for brands trying to attract a dedicated following versus swinging for the fences. Oh, and Sprout can help you figure out [how to get your hashtags right](#) if you’re totally stuck on how to tag your photos.



Look Toward Your Own Customers

If your fans and customers are already on Instagram, using them as your billboards is a brilliant move given the popularity of [user-generated content](#).

Incentivizing followers to tag you in their photos does double duty of showing off your products and signaling yourself as a brand that listens to its customers.

Shouting out your followers creates a sense of brand loyalty that most businesses would die for. The more you can show off your satisfied customers, the better.

Make Your Activity Count

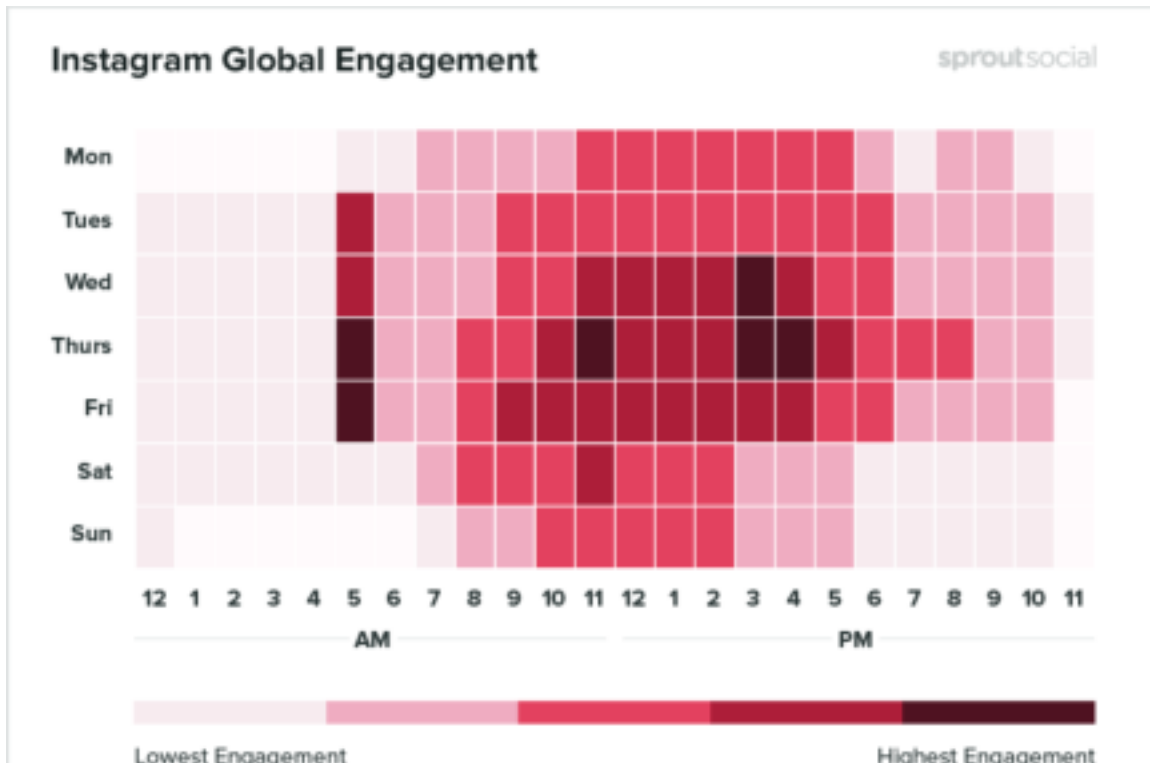
Running your Instagram for business doesn't have to be a total time-sink.

Efficiency counts on any social media platform and Instagram is no different.

Serially liking posts. Replying to comments. Following relevant users.

Between these actions as well as your own content calendar, it certainly pays to streamline your activity to save time.

For example, you should have a keen understanding of [how often to post on Instagram](#) to maximize engagement and when your followers are going to be online. Similarly, you should stick to a schedule to keep yourself from scrolling through Instagram 24/7.



In short, anything and everything you do related to Instagram for business should be laser-focused on your brand's goals for the sake of your valuable time.

3. Publish Goal-Driven Content

Speaking of goals, ask yourself: *why* are you investing in Instagram for business in the first place?

This isn't a trick question, either. The answer directly influences your entire content strategy.

And with so much diversity in terms of what you can post, pretty much any goal is fair game.

- Are you trying your hand at social selling?
- Just trying to build some much-needed brand awareness?
- Have killer product photos that you're itching to show off?

Awesome. Just make sure that you post content that speaks to those goals.

Because Instagram is about so much more than random selfies and snapshots, especially given its status the go-to platform to research products.

Posts like this one from [GoPro](#) are shining examples of goal-driven content in action:

Eye-popping imagery? Check.

Showing off their product and a satisfied customer as well? Double check.

Providing a specific call-to-action for viewers? Yep, that too.

Haphazardly posting is not a viable strategy when it comes to Instagram for business. Once you define what it is your brand wants to do, you can begin to better speak the language of your followers.

4. Craft Your Brand's Narrative

What better way to captivate followers than by telling a story?

The common thread between the biggest brands on Instagram is that they have some sort of narrative.

Through imagery, they're able to speak to the interests and desires of their audience, receiving tons of love in the form of comments and likes.

You don't need to be a master storyteller to create a narrative: you just need to let your pictures and captions do the talking.

For example, check out [Airbnb](#) captivates its audience through adventure-driven, motivational content:

The takeaway here is that people should be able to glance at your feed and have a defined sense of what you're all about. Having a defined narrative makes it easier to craft captions and choose between photos, all the while reinforcing your identity to people who might not be familiar with you.

5. Show Off Your Products

At the end of the day, mastering Instagram for business is ultimately about, well, *business*.

That is, promoting whatever it is that you have to sell.

As evidenced by the brands above, there are a ton of ways to show off your products without totally shoving them in your followers' faces.

Creativity counts on Instagram unlike any other platform. Diversifying your content strategy while also promoting your products should be your endgame, and below we've highlighted some awesome ways to make it happen.

Of course, straight-up promo posts to announce your latest launch, contest or giveaway are staples of [modern Instagram marketing](#).

Video content is insanely popular on Instagram right now. With the help of the wealth of [Instagram apps](#) out there, you can bring your products to life minus a massive budget.



Instagram for business doesn't have to be a total suit and tie affair, either. Brands like [Chubbies](#) rely on memes and off-the-cuff videos to put their products on display.





As noted earlier, user-generated content in the form of customer photos can be some of your strongest marketing firepower.

From authenticity to connecting with your audience, there's a reason why even some of the biggest brands on Instagram regularly regram photos from their followers' feeds.

And again, not every Instagram photo needs to be meticulously planned and edited. Showing products "in the wild" is more than enough to people over.

The key to consistency is never running out of content ideas to [keep your feed fresh](#) to keep your followers engaged and entertained.

6. Engage With Influencers

By far one of the quickest ways to rise up in the Instagram ranks is to establish relationships with [influencers](#) in your industry that already have a massive following. Getting a shout-out from the right influencer can give your page instant credibility.

Power users get approached by companies on a regular basis because of the value they can provide with a single post. As a result, some influencers offer [paid shoutouts](#) while others do so organically.

The good news is there are plenty of free ways to connect with power users and have them mention your company. You can start by commenting on their photos, or tagging them in your posts. When you tag or @mention someone on Instagram, they'll receive a notification. After seeing your company's name pop up in their mentions a few times, they'll become more familiar with you and be more likely to connect.

You can also connect with them on other social media platforms. A lot of Instagram users are also on Twitter, which can be a better option to start conversations. Don't be afraid to reach out to influencers and introduce yourself with a Tweet. Let them know you're a fan of what they do and you'd like to connect with them.

Another technique that's not completely free is to offer free samples of your products or services. This approach is effective because you're offering value instead of just asking for something. Most of the time, you won't have to ask for a product placement or shout out. If they try your product and dig it, influencers will more than likely post about it on their own.

That said, be selective about who you send offers to. Look for users who have a history of getting their followers to take action. Also, their audience should also obviously match your target demographic.