# Instagram
## For
# Entrepreneurs

Welcome to the first lesson in the Instagram For Entrepreneurs
Crash Course.

Over the next few days you will receive, several lessons that will help you learn
the ins and outs of using
Instagram to promote your business, products and services online.

In this first lesson, we are going to talk a little about  what Instagram is and why
you should use it as a part of  your marketing plan. Just in case, you aren't familiar
with Instagram it is and extremely popular social network  that provides a fun way
for its users to take and share  photos with friends and followers online.

Unlike other social networks you can only access instant great from a mobile
application. So, to take advantage of this powerful network for your business
you'll need is a mobile device like your smartphone, iPod touch, iPad, or tablet
and an Instagram account. Then you can snap, upload and edit your photos on
the fly for sharing on multiple social media sites like Facebook, Twitter,
Flickr and Tumblr.

As I am writing this, Instagram boasts over 100 million monthly active users with
approximately 40 million photos being uploaded a day. The success of Instagram
is so massive it has images generating over 4800 likes and thousands of
comments per second.

It has taken off faster than any other app in recent years and has quickly become
the go to choice for users that want to edit and share their photos on the go.

However, not just social users are indulging in Instagram. Many businesses are
finding ways to tap in to the massive mobile traffic that it receives every day and
using it as a way to build their brands and market their products and services.

Instagram reaches out to a an extremely wide audience and allows for in depth
searches on the web. With daily updates and added features like geotagging and
hash tagging, followers can find specific products and information much faster
and easier.

Image sharing has never been so exciting and since its conception in 2010 it is fair to say that Instagram is still in its infancy and shows no signs of slowing down in terms of growth and popularity anytime soon.
If you haven't considered using Instagram as a part of your marketing strategy here are some of the main reasons why you should.

Primarily, Instagram provides instant gratification for its users. They snap, edit and upload. They can also
like, share and comment on photos that interest them which makes the viral power of Instagram virtually unstoppable.

Imagine having thousands of people comment and share photos from your business, literally within seconds. It really can be that easy!

Secondly, it offer users an easy set up so there is no need to fill in a lengthy profile like other social
networks require. You simply download the app to your mobile device create an account and get started right away.

For marketing purposes you can use it to showcase your products, services and increase the awareness and popularity of your brand online. Instagram photos and albums are extremely powerful for adding personality to brands in a way that no other network has been able to achieve successfully.

If you'd like a good example of how major brands are using Instagram, try doing a search for major brands like Starbucks, Puma or Red Bull and you can see how their utilizing simple photos to build their online presence.

Another powerful feature of Instagram that makes it appealing to businesses is that it is integrated with
the Foursquare location database, which allows users to Geotag the actual location where the photo was taken. This instantly links the photo to the location of your business.

Are you beginning to see how powerful this can be?

Instagram has always been an almost exclusively mobile platform. So to use it you must download the iPhone or Android app to your mobile device to set up your Instagram account.

Keep in mind that all accounts are public by default, but you can create a private account, but from a marketing standpoint that really isn't a good idea, because the whole point is to get your message to the massed.

If you do decide to set up a private account, only users you approve can follow you and view your photos. You can do this from your profile tab under "Privacy."

Once you are registered, you change your profile picture and edit your profile information. Be sure to take some time to include a good bio. You only have 150-characters to do this so make them count and don't forget to add a link to your website.

That's it for today's lesson. We have a lot to go over in the next few days if you want to learn how to use
Instagram for your business, so make sure you look for your next lesson soon.

Homework: Download the Instagram app, set up your account and do some exploring. In your next lesson we will talk more about how you can tap into the power of this massive social network.

It's time for your second lesson in the Instagram For Entrepreneurs crash course. I hope you found lesson one informative and now have a better understanding of what a powerful tool Instagram
can be for your business.

Today we're going to talk more about how you can tap into that power for your own business.

With millions of users, it is no wonder that more and more major brands are joining the party and using Instagram to help boost their online presence by using simple photos and effective marketing strategies.

Although formerly reserved for iPhone users, Instagram is now available on virtually any mobile device and allows users to basically snap photos of just about anything, edit them cool tools and filters then upload them to your account for instant viewing by your followers.

As we learned in your last lesson, these photos can be shared on multiple social networks almost instantaneously. They can also be potentially liked and commented on by millions of users within
mere seconds of being  uploaded, which makes Instagram an extremely powerful marketing tool when used correctly.

Therefore, the big question is; exactly how are huge companies using this incredibly easy to use mobile app to increase the awareness and popularity of their brand personality?

When it comes to a building brand awareness, the ultimate goal is gaining as much exposure for your business as possible. It was once thought that Instagram didn't really hold much value
in regards to online marketing, but recently opinions have changed and businesses big and small have begun flocking to Instagram and successfully tapping into a massive database of
users.

Huge brand names are proving to be very successful amassing huge lists of followers with thousands of likes and comments a day and the good news is that it has become equally as profitable for small businesses and sole entrepreneurs to cash in with Instagram marketing.

This is because users quickly recognize their favorite brands and gladly express their loyalty when it comes to clicking on an image and sharing it with their own friends and followers.

There is no doubt that almost everyone loves strong visual images. Therefore, it only stands to reason that businesses that use powerful images to express the quality of their products and services, or simply to share photos of themselves, how their business operates or happy employees doing their jobs can have great success on Instagram.

The reason this works is that strong visuals likely attract attention and can have a huge impact on building brand awareness. Keep in mind, you don't have to just upload photos, they can be drawn images, collages, etc.

As I mentioned in your last lesson, to get a good sense of how you can use Instagram, try searching for well-known brands such as Puma, Red Bull, Coca Cola, etc. You should also look for businesses closely related to your own target market and observe how they are using it to get their
message across.

-TIP: You can do this by simply typing Instagram, plus any topic into any search engine.  For instance if you want to know about golf you would type in "Instagram golf". If you want to spy on a big name brand, like Red Bull you would type in "Instagram Redbull".

This will return a full list of results, which typically includes a link to the company's profile page so you can get a good idea of the type of images they use as well as which ones there followers like and comment on.

Make sure you jot down any ideas and inspiration you get from the brands that are closely related to the products and services you are selling, because odds are

they hired social media consultants to manage their brand image and by mimicking (not copying) their campaigns it will help you see results much faster.

That's it for today's lesson. In your next lesson we will be talking more about how Instagram works, so you can start using it to your advantage right away.

Third Lesson - Instagram For Entrepreneurs

As we know, Instagram now has over 100 million active users sharing millions of photos every day. With that type of popularity people take notice, particularly those who understand the power of social media and how it can affect their business.

Any business owner from solo entrepreneurs to fortune 500 companies realize the power of content and video but, as we are discovering photo sharing is fast becoming a dominant force in the marketplace.

We all know the value of a good picture, but before the dawn of social marketing photos of our products and services are reserved strictly for print advertising catalogs and more recently webpage's.

Not anymore! By incorporating image sharing sites like Instagram into your marketing campaign you can actually reach out to more consumers and establish a solid brand following faster than any other type of media. This is because images are visually appealing and easily consumed.

Have you ever heard that phrase a picture is worth 1000 words?

Well it's true, by using specifically targeted images you can literally launch an entire advertising campaign that has the ability to yield far better results than many other forms of advertising including print, radio and sometimes even video.

One of the things that makes Instagram popular is that it's easy to use and has built in editing tools, so you don't have to spend hours trying to get your photos to look good.

- Adding photos

When it comes to adding photo's there are a few ways you can go about it. You can click the blue camera button in the center of your Instagram navigation panel and it will automatically  activate your device's camera, so you can simply snap a photo.

One nice thing about using the camera from within your Instagram navigation panel is that it will already be perfectly sized and ready for sharing.

You can also add photos that you already have saved on your device by clicking the square button in the lower left-hand of  camera screen. This will pull any photo you choose on to your navigation panel for editing and uploading.

When it comes to adding photos from your computer, you have to get a little bit more creative. Since Instagram was designed as a mobile app there is no upload interface. To work around that the easiest solution is to use a service like Dropbox, upload your photos there and then share them on Instagram.

-  Editing photos

When it comes to editing your photos, Instagram makes it a breeze, with several built-in filters you can make your photos look like they were taken by a professional. Once you have taken or selected an image you want to use the filters will appear beneath it.

Take some time to scroll through and explore the different filters. By experimenting with each of the filters, you will soon get a good feel for which ones work best with certain photos.

You'll also notice a small sun icon in the lower corner of your editing panel. This auto enhances your photos instantly. The little teardrop icon adds a soft blur, and the curved arrow rotates your image.

For more tips on taking, editing and sharing your photos, you should definitely take some time and visit the Instagram help Center: http://help.instagram.com/365080703569355

- Sharing

Once your photo is ready to go click on the green button at the top of your screen. This will bring you to the social sharing screen. From there you can add a caption, include your hashtags and choose all of the social networks you want to share your photo on.

If you have location services enabled you will also be able to tag where you took the photo and choose whether or not you want to add it to your photo map. This is an extremely powerful tool if you have an off-line business because it directly links the photo to your place of business.

Fourth Lesson - Instagram For Entrepreneurs

If you know even a little bit about SEO (search engine optimization), you know how important it is to integrate social media in your marketing plans. Actually, it's not just about search engines but using sites like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc. to gain exposure, build a following, etc.

Social media is extremely powerful and if used correctly, can make a huge difference to your business.

Something that many business owners don't realize is that words are not the only way people can find their website. In fact, you can get visitors from many different places including, YouTube, social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and others. Another great way to attract visitors is through Google images.

- This is where Instagram comes into play.

Many people don't realize how images effect their search engine rankings and don't take the time to properly name and tag their images. When in fact, images attract attention faster than almost any other type of media.

SEO professionals and online marketers understand this and are flocking to Instagram, because they know that the massive traffic this powerful network receives every day won't go unnoticed by the search engine and they're cashing in by posting relevant keyword targeted images that not only
increase their search engine rankings may also attract the attention of consumers.

As we have discussed before Instagram can be a very powerful tool when it comes building a fan base for your  brand. With the constant algorithm changes from Google and other search engines it has become much harder to keep your website ranked high in the search engine results.

Ask anyone who had their site wiped out by one of the recent changes and they'll tell you how it hurt or even killed their business. Therefore, it only makes sense

that people are paying closer attention to what works when it comes to optimizing their content.

While, content is still king, it has never been more important to consider images when optimizing your content so that it will rank well in the search engines. When it comes to using Instagram to drive traffic to your website, it is more about social media optimization, so it is important to post images that capture and engage your audience, because the more like and comments your photos receive the better the search engines will rank them.

Before you begin posting images, think about how your photos can enhance and emphasize your products or services. The same basic rules of selling apply. You want to stand out from your competition, so be creative and don't be afraid to experiment with different types of images.

Try using funny, creative, intriguing, emotional and even controversial (not offensive) images and then pay close attention to how your viewers react. This will help you see which type of image works best for your business.

Here are a few other quick things you should keep in mind when posting your images to achieve better search engine rankings:

- Be consistent

Be sure to post on a regular basis. If you've been doing business online for any length of time you already know that the search engine's like consistency, so just like posting content to your blog it's important to regularly update your Instagram feed with relevant and engaging photos.

- Use hashtags

The symbol # called a hashtag is used to mark keywords or topics to your images. Adding tags to your photos will make them visible on public tag pages and also make it easier for people to find your content.

- Link it up

It's also a good idea to link your Instagram account with your Facebook page, so that your Facebook fans can like and comment on your Instagram photos. This way you can increase the amount of attention in your photos receive, without taking the time to post them on each individual site separately.


Fifth Lesson - Instagram For Entrepreneurs


In this final lesson were going to go over some quick tips that will help you achieve the best results possible from your Instagram marketing campaigns.

There is no doubt that the Internet is an extremely visual place, with millions of images uploaded daily. Much more so, than a few short years ago when textual content ruled the world. Now, I'm not saying that providing your visitors with informative content isn't still important. However strong captivating images have the ability to reach far more people than plain text and it is for this very reason that businesses are using Instagram to promote their products, services and build their brand presence online.

Instagram is effective because it allows you to upload and use images to paint a visual story about your business. The right picture can captivate, entertain and ignite consumer interest in your products and services, so that they will follow you and ultimately make a purchase from you.

When it comes to getting the best results from your Instagram marketing campaigns there are a few things you should keep in mind:

 - The perfect username

It's a good idea to use your business or brand name as your Instagram username. This way when people search for your products and services it will be easier for them to find you. Don't worry if you've already set up your Instagram account

under a different name, you can simply log in and edit your profile. Keep in mind that it may take some time for your new username to display.

- Share well

As we have discussed before it's important to share compelling and engaging photos, so that your followers will be inclined to like and share them with others. It's also important to make sure you share frequently. Just like with any other type of social marketing consistency is key because your followers will leave you in the dust if you don't keep them entertained.

- Experiment

Don't be afraid to experiment with different types of photo's. As we discussed in a previous lesson, try posting funny, emotional, thought evoking images and then keep an eye on which type of photo receives the most attention. This will help you develop a better understanding of what visually stimulates your consumers to take action.

- Ask

One sure way of finding out what your followers want is to ask for their feedback. Don't be shy and trying to make the process as fun and engaging as possible for them. You can do this by offering them something in return for their honest opinions or by running a little contest to see who can post the most thought-provoking comment or idea. Remember, social marketing is all about engagement.

- Tell a story

Make sure your photos tell a story about your business. You can do this by posting images your products or services while they're in development, so that your consumers can see each step of the process. You can also share images of happy employees and customers enjoying your products. The bottom line is be as creative as possible so that your followers will look forward to seeing what you post next.

- Don't forget your Hashtags

I know we've discussed this before, but hashtags are an extremely important part of your Instagram marketing campaign, because they help consumers quickly find images that interest them. They will also get your images listed on Instagram's public tag pages, and in the search engine results, which can help send your likes and comments through the roof. Another good idea is to create a unique hash tag for your business and encourage your followers to use it when sharing your photos. A good example of this is Coca-Cola. Not only did they create a hash tag for their main brand they've also created hash tags for their other products like #DietCoke and even for some of their promotions.

- Geo-tagging

As we've discussed before, Instagram's location services are an extremely powerful way to drive customers to your business. By geo-tagging your photos you can get consumers in your local
community more involved with your business.  A quick way to do this is by adding photos to your photomap. You'll find this option on your Instagram share panel.

- Get connected

Finally make sure that you connect all of your business related social media accounts like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Flickr. By synchronizing all of your accounts, you will have a much better chance of expanding and engaging your audience on multiple platforms.

Instagram is extremely simple to use, but don't let that fool you because it is also an extremely powerful tool.  With a little time testing and creativity there is no reason that you can't use it to market your business, products and services in a way that is fun, engaging and extremely effective.