

INSTAGRAM FOR ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS



YOUTH RISE

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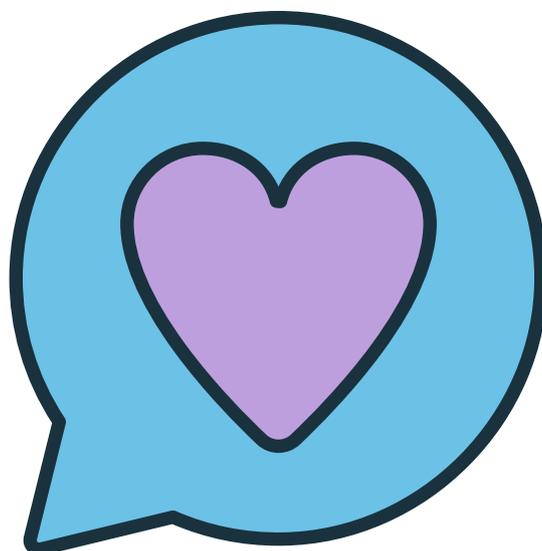
Tips and Tools

INTRODUCTION TO INSTAGRAM

Owned by Facebook, Instagram is a photo and short video sharing social network that boasts 1 billion monthly active users and 500 million daily active users. Its Stories feature alone boasts 400 million daily active users. Instagram leans towards a much younger audience than that of other social media platforms, with 72% of 13-17 year olds using Instagram, followed by 64% of 18-29 year olds, 40% of 30-49 year olds, 21% of 50-64 year olds and 10% of 65+ year olds. 51.2% of the global Instagram user base are female, 48.8% male. 73.5% of content is images, 13.7% is video, and 12.7% is carousels (collection of images and/or video). Among EU states, the UK, Germany and Italy make it in to the top 11 countries by Instagram users – with 23, 19 and 19 million users respectively.

Instagram is in the midst of a transformation – what was once the place to share photos of food and social outings is quickly becoming a hub for information and advocacy. With the global pandemic and recent movements for racial justice, we've seen our Instagram feeds flooded with activism resources, art and informative content to help drive real action.

The information ecosystems on Twitter and Facebook are well entrenched, leaving many people – particularly the younger-skewing Instagram crowd – to seek a new place to operate.



LATEST TRENDS



Caption this!

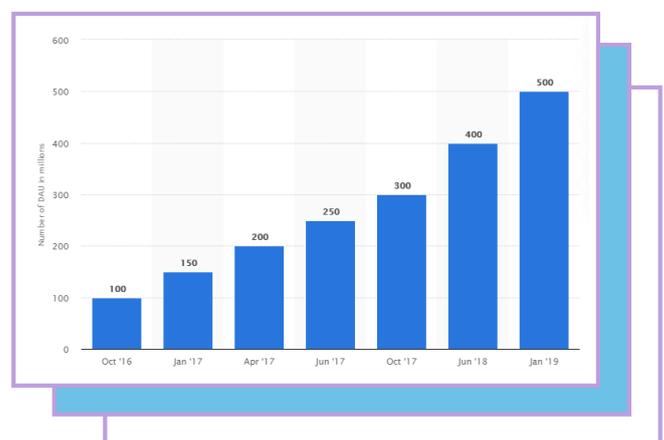
Photos and videos have always come first on Instagram but, oftentimes, it's the caption that makes or breaks a post. That's because the "story" you tell on Instagram is just as important as the images and videos you share – it provides context, adds personality, and can inspire your followers to take action.

According to [research by Fohr](#), the average caption length has more than doubled since 2016. In 2021, Instagram feeds are filled with an average caption length of 405 characters – which averages out to be 65-70 words.

As in-depth captions continue to grow in popularity - creators, influencers, and brands use the space under their posts to tell captivating, personal, and more emotive stories. For advocacy organisations in particular, this can be a really great opportunity to engage in deeper storytelling that builds a much stronger connection with Instagram audiences.

The Rise of Instagram Stories

Now with over 500 million daily users, Instagram Stories are a big deal. And ephemeral content more generally is a growing trend across social media. With engaging features, such as questions, quizzes and polls - there are plenty of opportunities to utilise Instagram Stories to engage audiences with your issues.





The Power of the Micro-Influencer

Working with micro-influencers is influencer marketing on a smaller scale: brands partner with individuals who have between 1,000 and 10,000 followers on social media. They are typically well-known in their particular area of interest and have very high rates of engagement from their audiences.

Influencer marketing has rapidly grown over the past 10 years. It is a tried and tested way of building relationships with new audiences. However, how audiences consume content and engage with influencers is evolving - and the number of followers is no longer the best metric to use when determining influence.

People relate to people, and for audiences today, authenticity and relatability is the connection that they seek towards – and this is something that micro-influencers offer. With less followers, micro-influencers have a niche audience base that is more loyal, and ultimately, highly engaged. Engaging audiences on social change issues requires real authenticity, therefore partnering with relevant, trusted micro-influencers could provide ample opportunity for your organisation to reach new, captive audiences.

Carry on Carousels

Instagram's Carousels, or multi-image upload feature, enables users to upload up to ten photos or videos in the same post. Since its launch in 2017, it has become one of the most popular post formats, providing an engaging way to tell a story through your images and videos within a single post.

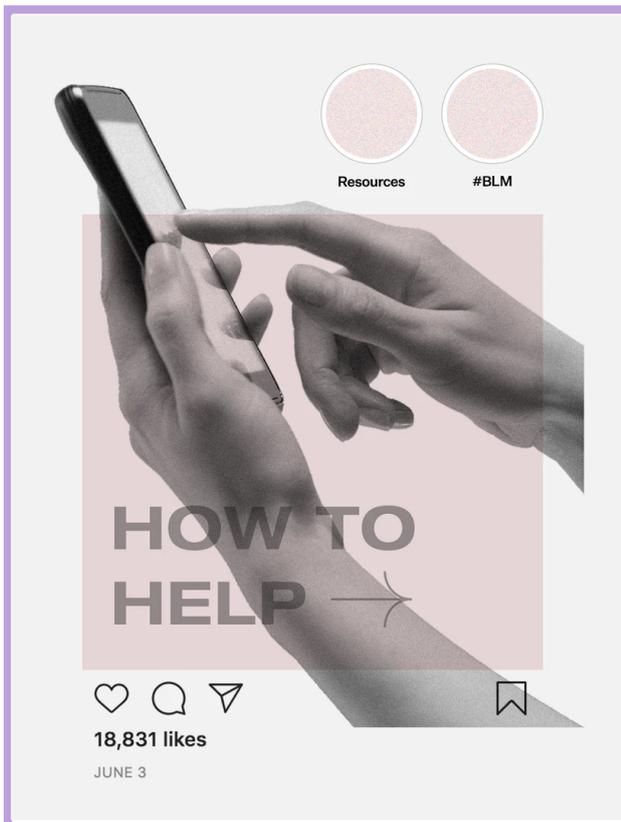


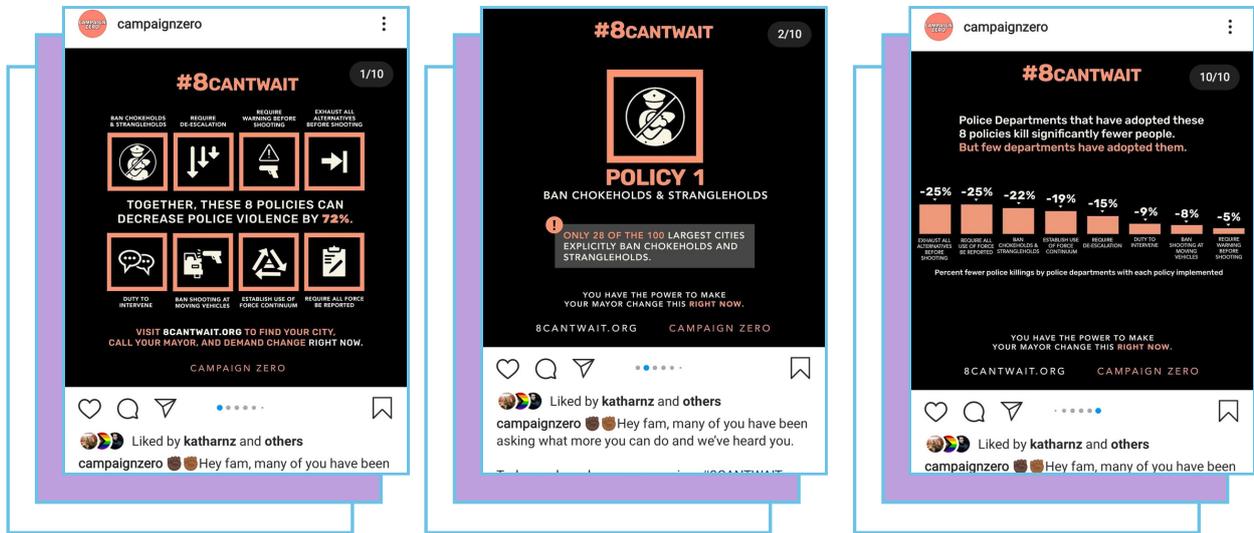
According to [Socialinsider](#), Carousels are the most engaging Instagram post format. Carousels with 8 or more slides perform better, and the average engagement rate goes over 2%. Almost 20% of all Instagram posts are Carousels - which is a significant growth since 2017.

ADVOCATING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

From reading lists to quotes by prominent progressives or illustrations relaying underreported events, our Instagram timelines become streams of resources for activism. Campaigners and activists creating these types of visual resources are aiming to educate Instagram audiences in an accessible way, hoping it will inspire others to do further reading, join progressive movements and make meaningful changes.

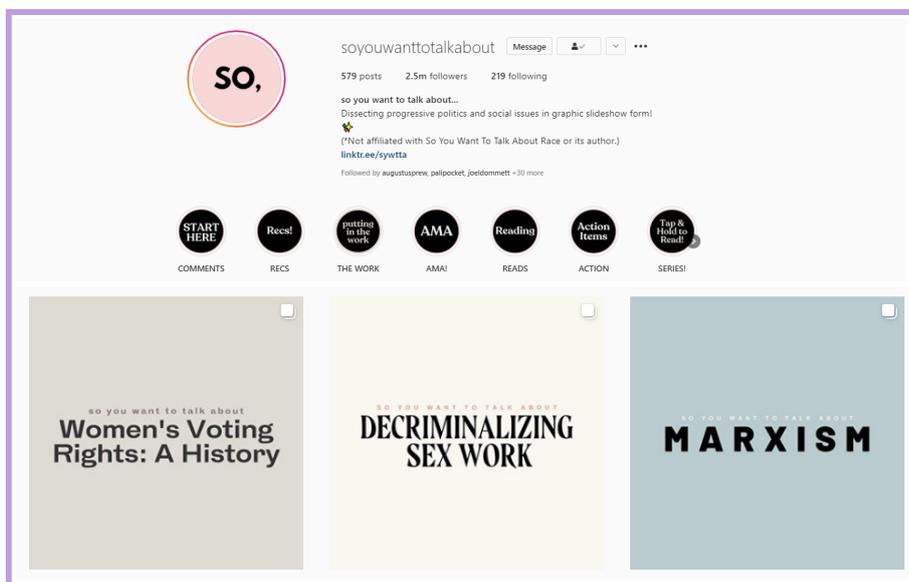
Like with anything else, some are successful, some are not. But this type of Instagram activism does have the power to capture the attention of Instagrammers.





Campaign Zero, an organisation working to end police violence in America, started this initiative asking people to call and email their mayors and tell them to adopt these 8 life-saving policies which they say that together, can reduce police violence by 72%. This type of content, in the carousel format, is not only powerful, but very effective in getting the message across in an accessible and engaging manner. The post has almost 290k likes and over 4,600 comments.

Instagram accounts that have leaned into this trend have seen their growth skyrocket. The account [@soyouwanttotalkabout](#), which exclusively posts info-carousels on progressive topics, has seen its following grow to over 2.5 million followers in a year.



TIPS AND TRICKS

With the rise in Instagram activism and the popularity of resources such as 'protest guides', now is the time to recognise, resource and realise the opportunities Instagram can yield for Youth RISE's advocacy and communications.

Here are some tips and tricks to help get you started:

What to post: Strong, engaging visuals – Instagram is also an excellent platform for storytelling. Longer pieces of text in the captions also engages audiences on Instagram more when compared to other platforms. Instagram Stories will become even more popular, and more features for brands and organisations to engage audiences through Stories will be introduced. Note: the limit for video Instagram in-feed is currently 60 seconds and Stories are 15 seconds in duration.

Using hashtags: explore and identify which hashtags are regularly being used by other Instagram accounts that are sharing content on the same topics as Youth RISE. Utilize these hashtags in an effort to be discovered by new audiences. If Instagram and younger audiences are a key target for Youth RISE, consider creating your own hashtag to establish a social media community that can share their own stories using the Youth RISE owned hashtag. This is known as 'user generated content' and can be incorporated into your social media content strategy.

Influencer marketing: brands and organisations using Influencers will undoubtedly continue, and probably grow throughout 2020. This is a tried strategy that works, especially on Instagram. However, authenticity is crucial and will be a key feature in the use of influencers in 2021. It is also important to note that micro-influencers – those with less than 25k followers – actually tend to receive higher engagement rates than influencers with a larger following, and should be kept in mind if considering working with influencers.

What to measure: use Instagram's own analytics and 3rd party tools (Analisa) to measure: community growth, engagements (likes, comments and engagement rates) and reach.

TIPS AND TOOLS

- Understand the audiences you are trying to target - who are they, what are their interests, how can you speak in a way that engages them with your issue?
- Do some research. What organisations in your sector, or similar, are using Instagram effectively? What's working well for them?
- Hashtags: Which existing hashtags are your community using? Incorporate the most relevant, engaging ones into your communications.
- Stakeholder mapping: which young activists and relevant influencers are active on Instagram? Engage with them on projects and campaigns.
- Display your focus areas / key campaigns in your profile's 'Highlights' section
- Repurpose existing material into engaging, relevant, on-trend Instagram content. E.g. "So you want to talk about harm reduction and young people"
- Ensure that you content is varied, consistent and action-orientated. It is important to engage users and to facilitate their action.
- Tell more stories. Use strong visuals of real people (where possible) and tell their story in long-form format in the post caption.
- Utilise engaging features in Instagram Stories, such as Questions, Quizzes and Polls.

SCHEDULING, ANALYTICS AND INSIGHTS

- [Later](#)
- [Hootsuite](#)
- [Analisa](#)

CREATING CONTENT

- [Canva](#)
- [Kapwing](#)
- [Invideo](#)

