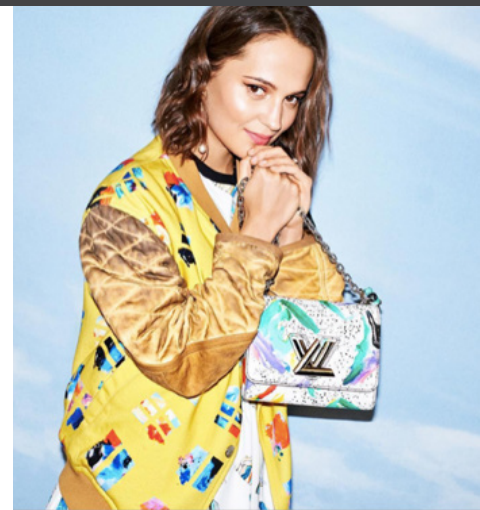


NETBASE™

2020 COMPLETE GUIDE TO INSTAGRAM LISTENING STRATEGY





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INTRODUCTION

There are several social channels vying for top billing right now—and each has its appeal. But the best place for brands to be now and into the immediate future is Instagram. This guide will cover:

- Why Instagram is such a crucial brand channel
- Instagram-specific challenges faced by marketers
- How advanced image analytics and AI technology helps brands gather better insights
- Why authenticity is the most important thing your brand can offer
- How to capture data you can count on
- How hashtags and comments impact conversations on Instagram

But marketing on Instagram is deceptive. It appears simple, but there's so much that goes in to it. As it continues to evolve, businesses need to keep pace with all that it offers or fall behind competitors. So, beyond everything detailed above, you'll also learn Advanced Marketing intel to help your brand, including how to:

- Take advantage of and understand Instagram's evolving eCommerce offerings
- Pinpoint the shifting demographics the channel attracts, and how to adapt to it
- Use Instagram 'Stories' functionality to its full potential
- Derive meaningful insight from Instagram analytics
- Identify authentic Instagram influencers who have evolved along with the platform, and those who have just learned to game it

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If your brand is on Instagram—it is *on*. As in, “game on” and you better be ready to go. Your brand will be immediately judged by your target audiences as either having a feed that's worthy of following, or not. And first impressions here, like in real life (IRL) are powerful. It's probably the only thing online that closely resembles our in-person reality.

It's no small feat to capture your audiences' attention on Instagram in the time it takes them to scroll past your imagery. You need to cause them pause, then “like” something stunning, and then



take a meaningful action (like making a purchase). With marketing success measured in moments today, every bit of data you're paying attention to must move that needle in your favor. And this isn't easy, as online is best described as "constantly evolving."

Part of what makes social media and social analytics exciting is the rate at which online changes - and the corresponding insight we're able to unlock about current and potential consumers.

And as technology and consumer preferences shift, so too, do social networks, because it's not only brands that are fighting to stay relevant and connected to online participants, social channels are as well.

Instagram has learned from its predecessors and offers exceptional insight to brands about consumers as part of its multi-pronged approach around maintaining its own relevancy. Harnessing the data it offers, particularly as it's an ever-evolving platform, requires special expertise. We offer ours freely here, with a transparent roadmap to help your brand win again!

FINDINGS

- In 2013, there were 90 million monthly active users—that number skyrocketed to 1 billion in June of 2018.
- In 2016 there were 1.6 million business profiles on Instagram, and today there are 8 million—
- More than 500 million people worldwide use Instagram every day 80% of accounts follow a business on Instagram
- 71% of US businesses use Instagram, which is nearly double the 48.8% using it in 2016.
- 32% of adults that make between \$50–\$75K use Instagram, as do 42% making over \$75K
- Instagram users are 70% more likely to make mobile purchases
- 60% of users learn about new products on Instagram via its highly trafficked "Discover" tab
- There's been a shift in marketing ad dollars from Facebook to Instagram, as well as a shift in ad dollars from Instagram's feed to Stories.
- Instagram launched IG Shopping and Checkout in March 2019 enabling eCommerce within the platform
- "Likes" may be disappearing from Instagram soon, and are already gone in some countries
- Instagram's API continues to evolve, and analytics tool providers must adapt, quickly.
- Every stage of the analytics process must be transparent and repeatable.
- AI is making entire insights suites stronger, faster, smarter, and more reliable, with predictive capabilities that let you glimpse the future, assuming your tool offers it.
- Measuring influence—and even brand engagement—is not as easy as it seems



EVOLUTION OF INSTAGRAM AS AN ECOMMERCE CONTENDER

If you follow *Time*'s chronicling of Instagram's first day back in 2010¹, it would seem that founders Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger were setting the tone for the social network they envisioned.

The story of Instagram is as uncomplicated as the app itself. It started out as a place for Bourbon and Whiskey drinkers to congregate, called Burbn.^{1B} It was a multi-faceted app that allowed users to check in, post plans and share photos.

The free app's founder, Kevin Systrom, noted that photos were its most popular features. This was surprising as the current crush of apps focused on "checking in," which Burbn also offered and was (seemingly) all the rage with users.

Fast forward a few years, after attracting some venture capitalist funding, Systrom hired his soon-to-be Instagram partner-in-crime, Mike Krieger, and they worked on making Burbn everything it could be.

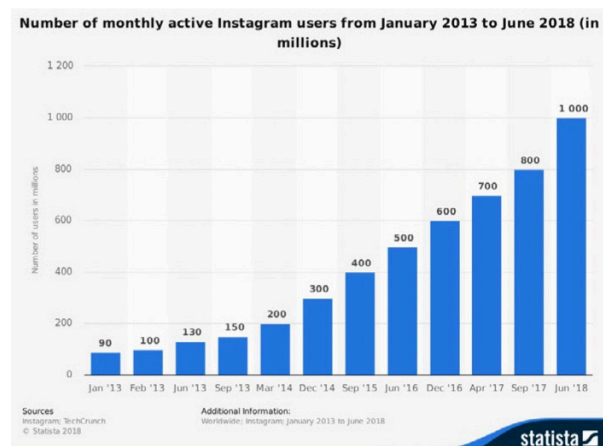
They stripped its functionalities bare, with a minimalist focus on the photo-sharing portion. They also included basic social options—only the ability to like or comment, but other photo sharing apps at the time did not have these functionalities baked in.

Its simplicity and social integration were spot on and it became an immediate hit.

The series of first snaps showcased work, food, fun, friends, cocktails and puppies. Everything you'd imagine a basic Instagram profile to contain. The app caught on and has been growing steadily ever since, as this graphic from Statista shows:²

Three years in, in 2013, we can see there were 90 million monthly active users. By June of 2019 there were 1 billion. That's serious growth for a five-year stretch.

More impressive is the growth in brands and businesses using the platform. In 2016 there were 1.6 million business profiles on Instagram, while today there are 8 million—with an estimated 71% of US businesses using the social network. That's nearly double the 48.8% that used it in 2016.³



¹A Brief History of Instagram's Fateful First Day [source: <http://time.com/4408374/instagram-anniversary/>]

²Number Of Monthly Active Instagram Users From January 2013 To June 2018 (In Millions) [source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users/>]

³18 Instagram Stats Every Marketer Should Know for 2018 [source: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/instagram-stats/>]

Since then, it has maintained this simplicity (from an end user standpoint) but has added a myriad of business user capabilities that are so seamlessly incorporated, they're genius.

Users and businesses alike have flocked to the app in record numbers,^{2B} with more than 1 billion active monthly users. And it generates conversion rates that should make any business drool.

- Instagram users are 70% more likely to make mobile purchases
- 80% of accounts follow a business on Instagram according to Instagram internal data.^{3B}

Beyond driving exceptional engagement and conversion for brands with its organic offerings, 2018 was busy for the platform. It launched IGTV,^{4B} which gave channels the option to share anywhere from 10-minute to hour long videos, depending on a channel's follower count. (The traditional app restricts videos to one minute.) Instagram has yet to lay out its monetization plan for IGTV7 though, so we'll need to stay tuned there.

It's easy to explain the interest: Instagram is influencer and engagement Nirvana. Unlike channels like Facebook and Twitter, where images aren't required, Instagram captures social audiences by keeping the focus on eye candy and storytelling.

There's no better way to bring consumers behind-the-scenes of your brand—if you do it right. We'll talk more about that later. Let's turn our attention now to how Instagram is an eCommerce game changer with shoppable posts.

^{1A} **Brief History of Instagram's Fateful First Day** [source: <http://time.com/4408374/instagram-anniversary/>]

²**Number Of Monthly Active Instagram Users From January 2013 To June 2018 (In Millions)** [source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users/>]

³¹⁸ **Instagram Stats Every Marketer Should Know for 2018** [source: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/instagram-stats/>]

^{1B} **The Story of Instagram: The Rise of the #1 Photo-Sharing App (FB)** [source: <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/102615/story-instagram-rise-1-photo0sharing-app.asp>]

^{2B} **Top 51 Instagram Stats You Need To Know In 2019** [source: <https://www.netbase.com/blog/top-51-instagram-stats-you-need-to-know-in-2019/>]

^{3B} **Instagram Business** [source: <https://business.instagram.com/>]

^{4B} **Welcome to IGTV** [source: <https://instagram-press.com/blog/2018/06/20/welcome-to-igtv/>]



FROM POST TO CART IN THREE CLICKS

Shoppable Posts is a feature allowing brands to tag products within a post. “With three clicks, a user can now go from that post to the brand’s Add to Cart section on their website.”⁵ And Shoppable Stories Stickers offers shopping directly from stories.

Instagram Shopping gives your business an immersive storefront for people to explore your best products. With Instagram Shopping, you can share featured products through your organic posts and Stories, or have people discover your products in Search & Explore.

When someone taps a product tag on your post or a product sticker in your story, they’ll be taken to a product description page where they will see:

- An image of the product from your post
- A description of the product
- How much the product costs
- A link that takes them directly to your website, where they can purchase the product^{5B}

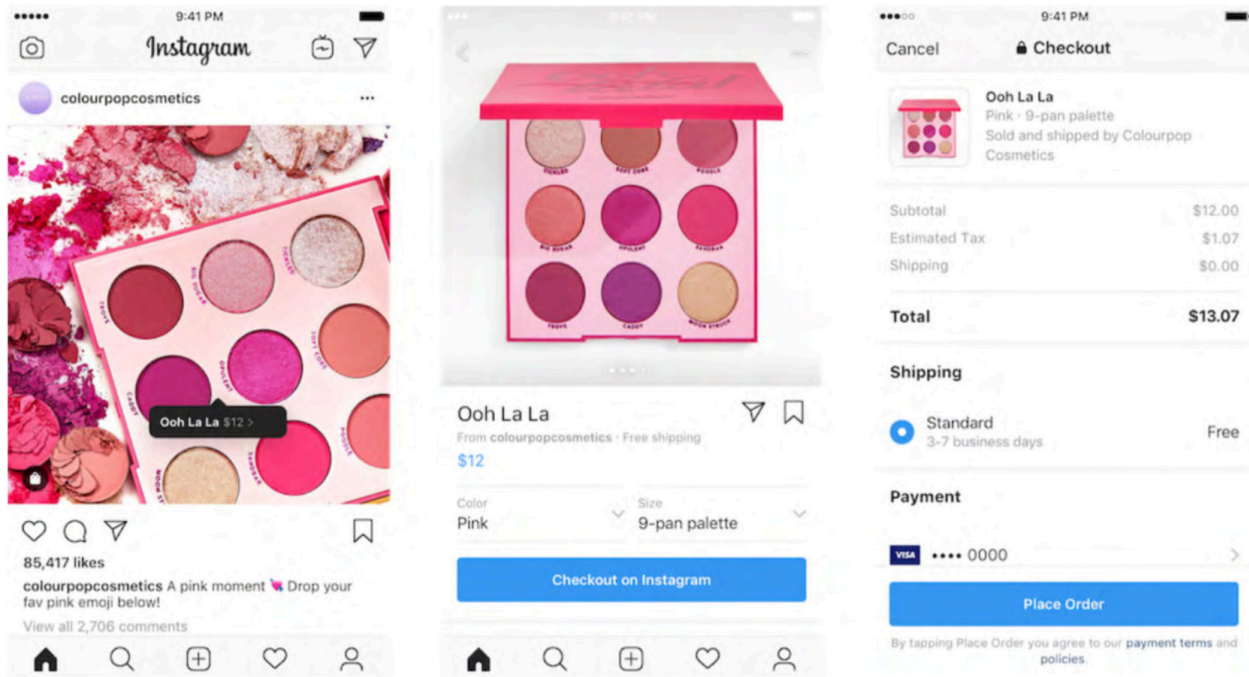
With more than 500M of its one billion monthly users interacting on the platform daily,³ you can be sure businesses with anything to sell are taking note.

And Amazon should be as well. Small businesses with Amazon storefronts (which is the lion’s share of Amazon’s activity, as Jeff Bezos gushed in the latest shareholder letter)⁶ love Instagram for boosting their sales. Bezos loves seeing those sales numbers grow, undoubtedly, as Amazon makes more revenue from the marketplace due to higher margins:⁷

It might appear to be a win-win scenario for both online giants—but Instagram will soon be in direct competition with Amazon. It is working on its own standalone shopping app, IG Shopping⁸.

While it hasn’t launched the IG Shopping standalone app yet, it began testing the waters with Instagram Checkout in March of 2019. There were 20 brands originally offering consumers the ability to make purchases without leaving Instagram:⁹





And with Amazon's Prime Day experiencing astronomical sales this year, one must wonder what percentage of those sales arrived at that ecommerce endpoint by way of Instagram. And how Amazon's sales may be impacted if that funnel dries up. Time will tell!

Amazon has an edge with its lightning fast and economical last mile delivery options, but it's a thin blanket on a cold night. Instagram has the audience and has grown its ecommerce capabilities as a result. Amazon is the ecommerce ninja master, but reverse engineering a social network out of it is unlikely.

It might be (a part of) what's driving its increasingly aggressive moves toward capturing a larger brick and mortar presence.¹⁰



⁵Is Instagram the Future of E-Commerce? [source: <https://www.business.com/articles/is-instagram-future-of-ecommerce/>]

^{5B}About Instagram Shopping [source: <https://help.instagram.com/191462054687226>]

⁶Third Party Sellers are Outselling Amazon on Amazon [source: <https://www.pcmag.com/news/369675/third-party-sellers-on-amazon-are-outselling-amazon>]

⁷Amazon is chasing growth and shifting resources to third-party sellers [source: <https://digiday.com/marketing/amazon-chasing-growth-shifting-resources-third-party-sellers/>]

⁸Instagram is building a standalone app for shopping [source: <https://www.theverge.com/2018/9/4/17819766/instagram-shopping-app-e-commerce>]

⁹Instagram Checkout [source: <https://instagram-press.com/blog/2019/03/19/instagram-checkout/>]

SHOPPING MADE SIMPLE

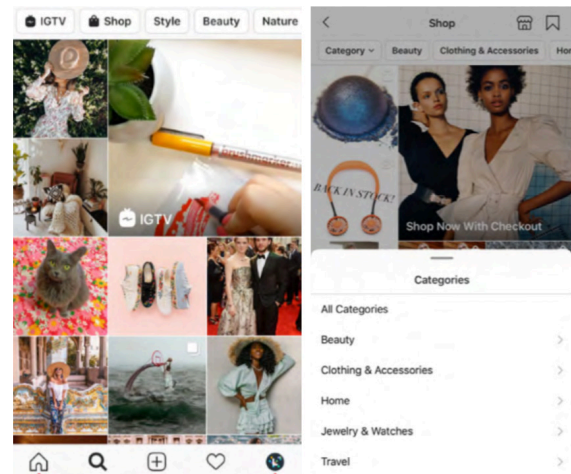
Most striking in all of this—these sophisticated shopping options that Instagram has created do nothing to spoil the intuitively simple-to-use platform for consumers. Instagram has managed to seamlessly incorporate a complex suite of ecommerce tools for businesses, while doing little to disturb the end user’s experience.

Rather, if anything it enhances the experience. 60% of users learn about new products on Instagram² via its highly trafficked “Discover” tab. That’s millions of daily users scrolling through, looking at new things on the site.

And clicking on to the “Shop” tab is alluringly easy:

Consumers don’t need to explicitly search for products to buy in the Shop though—nor is “Discover” the only way to be found. Understanding a few key things about your audience will make all the difference:

- The demographics of Instagram, in general, and of your audience, specifically
- What your target audiences are saying on Instagram and elsewhere online
- The wants and unmet needs these consumers and other potential consumers—are sharing
- Who they’re listening to and interacting with on Instagram



And then using that data to create posts, stories and highlights that support your latest campaign, product push or brand awareness effort—likely with the help of some highly targeted influencers. We’ll get to all of that soon.

But the story isn’t really that simple. As keeping pace with Instagram’s offerings can be a task in itself—one that you need to hope your social analytics tool provider is handling for you. Or better still—get your analytics directly from NetBase and rest assured that it’s happening! Let’s see how it looks and why other tools are seriously messing this up . . .



CHANGES TO INSTAGRAM'S API

Instagram's API is constantly evolving, which is a good thing. And at the end of 2018 it underwent some major changes. And these changes affected the data that's available to social analytics solution providers, and how that data can be managed. Providers that were not agile enough to roll with these changes as they happened caused a lag in insights for their brand and agency customers. And as these changes hit during the holiday season, it was quite a problem for these folks.

The new Instagram API is exciting—and our users were among the first able to take advantage of its many updates, including:

Individual Data Pools Per Client

Listening platforms were required to create individual data pools for each client, to specifically define the Instagram channels and keywords a brand planned to track. This restricted search to your own data pool, but this collected content is the most relevant to your brand regardless, so it could help cut out lots of irrelevant noise.

When using the new API, it's important to have a clear and accurate understanding of the authorizations you need, what you can get from your channels, competitor channels and influencers in a listening tool, and how to specify relevant hashtags for tracking.

User Authentications

If you plan to have a tool collecting data on your behalf, be ready to have one or more (you'll want as many as possible) Facebook users with moderator, analyst (or higher) roles on your Facebook page prepared to authenticate on your behalf. Why?

"Instagram limits the number of calls to the new API based to 200 calls per hour per user authorization. The more authorizations you have granted your social listening platform, the more frequently we can request content on your behalf. This applies to all listening platforms. If fewer than two users in your account have authorized, Instagram data collection latency will increase."

You'll also want to make sure your Facebook page is linked to your Instagram business account – and be sure it's designated as a business, not personal, account. That's important or else it won't work. This applies to influencer accounts as well! They have to be business channels.

30 Hashtags Per Business Page

With each authorized Instagram channel limited to 30 unique hashtags for any rolling seven-day period, users needed to plan ahead. But, with each authorized user account able to collect its own additional 30 hashtags, planning ahead has hurt a whole lot less than it could have.

It still requires a targeted approach, but with accurate audience understanding it just encourages good marketing habits for brand teams. It's also upped the ante for listening tools, which is something we welcome, as our Next Generation AI offers best in class analysis of social media and all forms of structured data, at scale!

www.netbase.com/blog/navigating-the-new-instagram-api-starter-guide



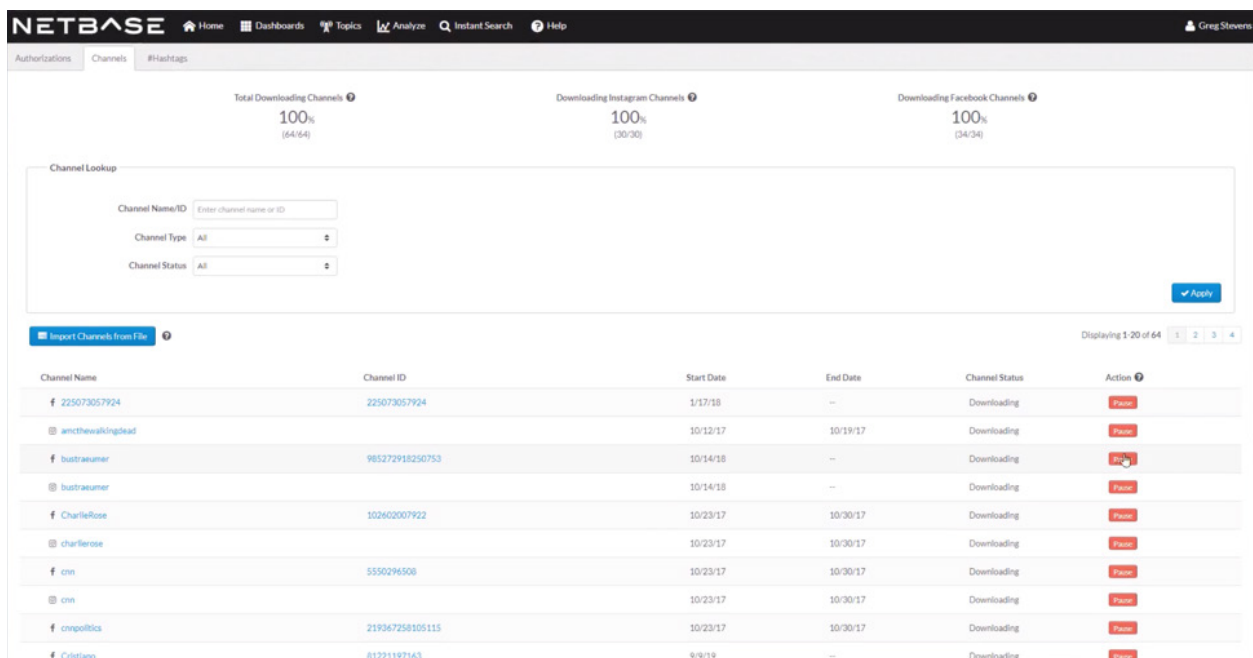
PUSHING THROUGH INSTA-OBSTACLES & IDENTIFYING BAD ACTORS

Weathering this storm without losing ground requires marketers to be cautious of false promises from other vendors—especially about what Instagram data they can capture. There are some bad actors out there making false claims around the data they can capture for clients. Be sure to understand that every social listening tool faces the same limitations detailed here and there is no such thing as a “preferred relationship” with the platform. There are no exceptions, and no analytics vendors are special—everyone has the same access and the same limitations. We’ve heard of tools promising the moon and talking it back once clients sign on with them. So, beware!

Where differentiation IS possible though, is in how quickly an analytics solutions provider can respond to these changes and deliver workable product adjustments. NetBase, for instance, releases enhancements to its product every three weeks, and supports channel coverage on the new Instagram API—so we are familiar with it and its quirks. And this works in our customers’ favor, as they’ll experience no gap in service and have access to new functionalities ahead of category competitors.

And not only that—but we have a handy Channel Manager to make accessing Instagram (and Facebook) insights even easier!

CHANNEL MANAGER AT A GLANCE



The screenshot shows the NetBase Channel Manager interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Home, Dashboards, Topics, Analyze, Instant Search, and Help. The user is logged in as Greg Stevens. Below the navigation, there are three summary cards: Total Downloading Channels (100%, 64/64), Downloading Instagram Channels (100%, 30/30), and Downloading Facebook Channels (100%, 34/34). A Channel Lookup section allows filtering by Channel Name/ID, Channel Type, and Channel Status. Below this is a table of channels with columns for Channel Name, Channel ID, Start Date, End Date, Channel Status, and Action. The table shows 10 channels, all with a status of 'Downloading' and a 'Pause' button in the Action column.

Channel Name	Channel ID	Start Date	End Date	Channel Status	Action
f 225073057924	225073057924	1/17/18	--	Downloading	Pause
@anthealkingdead		10/12/17	10/19/17	Downloading	Pause
f bustraeumer	985272918250753	10/14/18	--	Downloading	Pause
@bustraeumer		10/14/18	--	Downloading	Pause
f CharlieRose	102602007922	10/23/17	10/30/17	Downloading	Pause
@charlierose		10/23/17	10/30/17	Downloading	Pause
f cm	5550296508	10/23/17	10/30/17	Downloading	Pause
@cm		10/23/17	10/30/17	Downloading	Pause
f cnpolitics	219367258105115	10/23/17	10/30/17	Downloading	Pause
f Cristiano	81221197163	9/9/19	--	Downloading	Pause

When you want to monitor and pause/resume data downloading for your company’s Facebook and Instagram channels, you’ll love this new capability.

Monitor how, exactly? And why would you want to pause/resume downloads?

It's a super handy option to have when you need to do any of the following:

- Check authorization totals against channel totals to ensure you have enough user authorizations to support the number of channels your company wants to track. This gives you a quick snapshot.
- Pause data downloading for low priority channels to allocate quota for the most important channels. This prevents data gaps and ensures optimal latency for your brand channels, campaign-related channels, or other important channels. And it's a capability that will be used by brands a *lot*.

And the Channel Manager also allows you to upload channel names directly by importing a CSV file! Importing channels this way saves time and conserves your company account's topic quota. And you can import a maximum of 50 channels at a time. Best of all? When you resume a channel, NetBase backfills the data that was not collected during the paused period. You're welcome!

But back to API challenges...Solution readiness aside, how do brands and marketers move forward through these API challenges when competitor and influencer analysis are such crucial parts of the equation?

By recognizing the truth in the old adage, "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

Perhaps you can't directly analyze comments on a competitor's post, but since when have consumers placed limits on what they talk about on social—or where? They'll certainly mention competitors in *your* comments—especially if they're disgruntled—and those are insights you can work with.

You just have to ensure your data is accurate.

HARNESSING RELIABLE DATA

You want a broad, but detailed picture—quickly.

Though we're focusing specifically on Instagram in this report, it's worth mentioning that social analytics are never about one, singular thing. Consumer insights must encompass every bit of data available—from social, to surveys, to CRM, to sale, to customer care and more—to create a comprehensive understanding of the audience you want to reach.

Instagram is part of that, of course, but it doesn't exist in a vacuum. All of your social data must be accurate, or it has no value. Every stage of the process must be transparent—meaning, you know where the data is coming from, and how it's broken down—and repeatable.

Beware the solution provider that offers up mystical product capabilities without an explanation you can follow.

It's not enough to have insights telling you consumers love your brand or product—you need to know why, how much, what else they love, where they're talking, and their preferred way of communicating.



These are the insights that sentiment analysis offers—and it's the most important information you can have, because it contextualizes everything you discover. You also need to know these things in real time—otherwise, competitors have a shot at getting wherever you're headed first.

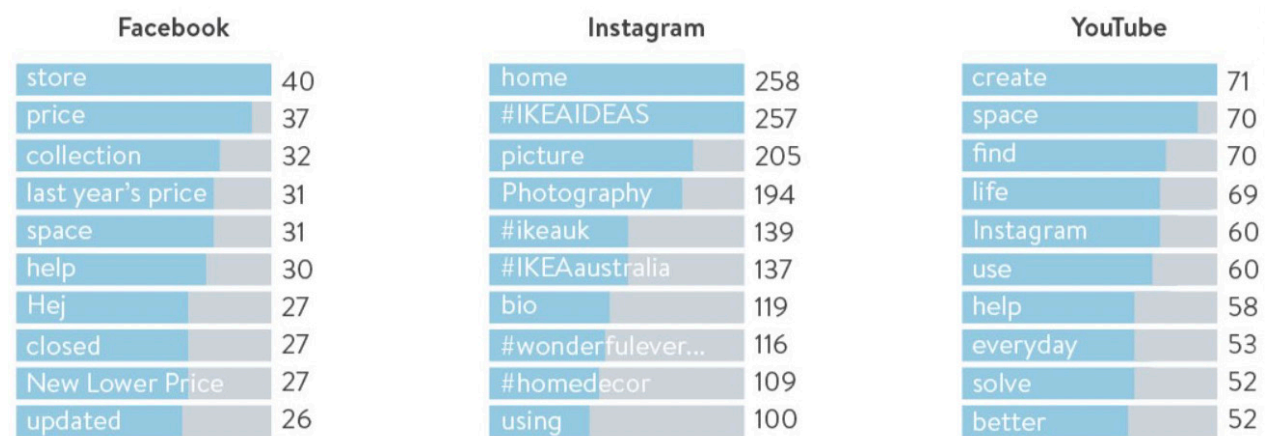
ASSUMPTIONS = RISK

It sounds dramatic, perhaps, but in a crowded, global market, moving at lightspeed, you can't survive if your pace is more akin to a Sunday stroll. Assumptions and 'maybes' cost you time you don't have, it's that's simple.

Consider this:

IKEA's campaign strategy to focus on the "simple, every-day, boring" aspects of their furniture meant tracking social insights carefully to be sure this strategy—and the self-deprecating humor behind it—was hitting its mark.¹¹

Here's a look at how owned conversation looked on their three top social channels:



IKEA owned conversation by channel

The differences in the conversation drive home the need to examine social data as a whole. You can see that Instagram and YouTube both encompass more of a creative design sensibility, while also incorporating the every-day aspect the brand wants to promote.

The Facebook conversation focuses more on price and convenience. This led to IKEA shifting their Facebook strategy to engage on their every-day affordability over promotions—in keeping with the rest of their every-day theme on other channels.

These distinctions stand out when you look at the conversation across the board—but might have been lost if they'd looked at each channel separately—or assumed they knew what consumers cared about.

The need for accurate data cannot be overstated, as you really need to have a solid understanding of comments and hashtags on your owned channels—and from a competitive standpoint.

¹¹How IKEA Measures and Optimized Campaigns [source: <https://www.netbase.com/project/how-ikea-measures-and-optimizes-campaigns/>]

THE POWER OF HASHTAGS AND COMMENTS

Apart from the images themselves—which we'll talk about more in a bit—the two things Instagram has going for it are hashtags and comments. This is the basis for determining sentiment surrounding Instagram posts, and sentiment is the most telling aspect of all social listening.

You might have a large volume of comments on Instagram, but this would not be valuable without an understanding of the sentiment coming from these comments. Luckily, NetBase can help you quickly understand social sentiment on your posts without having to dig through thousands of comments.

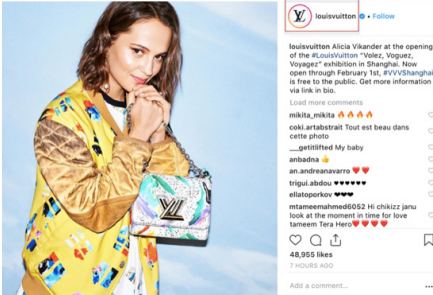
Instagram's updated API enables you to analyze comments on your owned business profiles, and on business profiles of partners who've granted you access—which is more than enough to work with. Here's a look at all you have access to:

Whether you're getting things right or wrong, social consumers will always let you know. This is why you monitor social content in the first place—to be sure you're aware of issues you might otherwise never know about.

At the same time, social listening combined with sentiment analysis leads you to the most vocal of social consumers—on both ends of the spectrum.

OWNED POSTS

Posts authored by IG business profiles you own



Fields	Available
Post Text	Yes
Media	Yes
Like Counts	Yes
Comment Counts	Yes
Permalink	Yes
Bio	Yes
Follower Counts	Yes
Interests	Yes
Professions	Yes
Potential Impressions	Yes
Comment Text	Yes
Comment Username	Yes

You're looking for passion—extremes of sentiment pointing out the people you need to lift up or shut down, so to speak, i.e., influencers and customer care issues in need of (often immediate) resolution. The latter can be anything from a product that doesn't work well to a product they wish you had.

The former could be a celebrity, or just an enthusiastic customer ready to shout-out your brand. Additionally, you can identify topics and interests that matter to your audience and offer up content that feels tailor-made.

When you look across the rest of the social landscape to see what your competitors' customers are talking about, you can compare that to the conversations happening within the comments of your owned channels.

And then a big part of the conversation on Instagram happens in hashtags, which often pepper posts in bulk. These categorical identifiers help users self-identify by interests and find others with similar interests.

Your brand can use them in the same way. You can even create your own branded hashtags for tracking specific campaigns.

As mentioned, there are limitations on the number of hashtags you can track within the new API. But that just encourages brands to take a more thoughtful approach to use hashtag tracking to its full potential. And being thoughtful is never a bad thing.

Careful tracking is especially critical if you want to know which hashtags could get traction for your brand's visibility and engagement on Instagram.

Additionally, you can use a solution like NetBase to search on terms and see which hashtags are revealed under Popular Items, then track any hashtags that matter to see if Instagram matches those results:

POPULAR ITEMS

TERMS	HASHTAGS	PEOPLE	EMOJIS
HASHTAGS	SHARE	# OF POSTS	
#christmas	17%	65.5K	
#win	7%	25.0K	
#christmasshop...	6%	24.1K	
#shopping	4%	14.5K	
#shoplocal	3%	10.3K	
#blackfriday	3%	10.3K	
#giveaway	2%	6.8K	
#competition	2%	6.4K	
#christmasgifts	2%	6.1K	
#shopsmall	2%	6.1K	
#handmade	2%	6.1K	

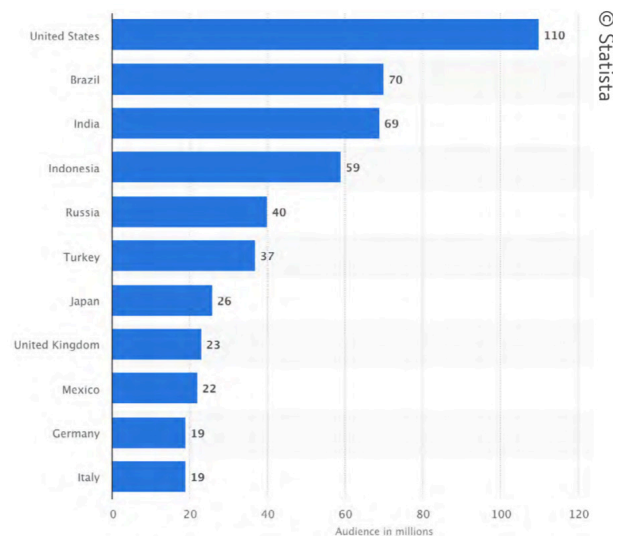


This helps you identify audience distinctions and develop a better understanding to inform your approach from channel to channel. And understanding demographics is key.

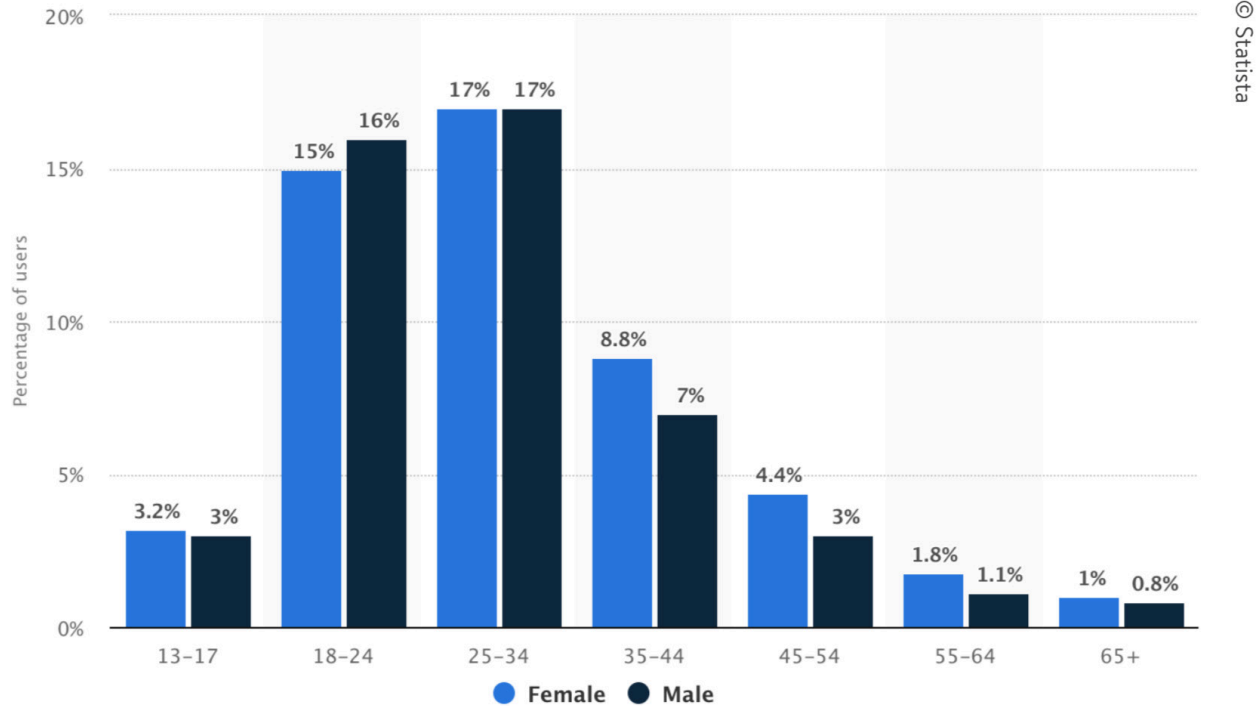
Instagram's Dynamic Demographics

"32% of adults that make between \$50,000–\$74,999 use Instagram, and 42% of adults who make over \$75,000 use the platform. In other words—Instagram users have money to spend."¹¹ But where are they from?

Everywhere. The world loves Instagram. The United States leads the pack with usage stats, but millions of users from all over the world are fans as well:



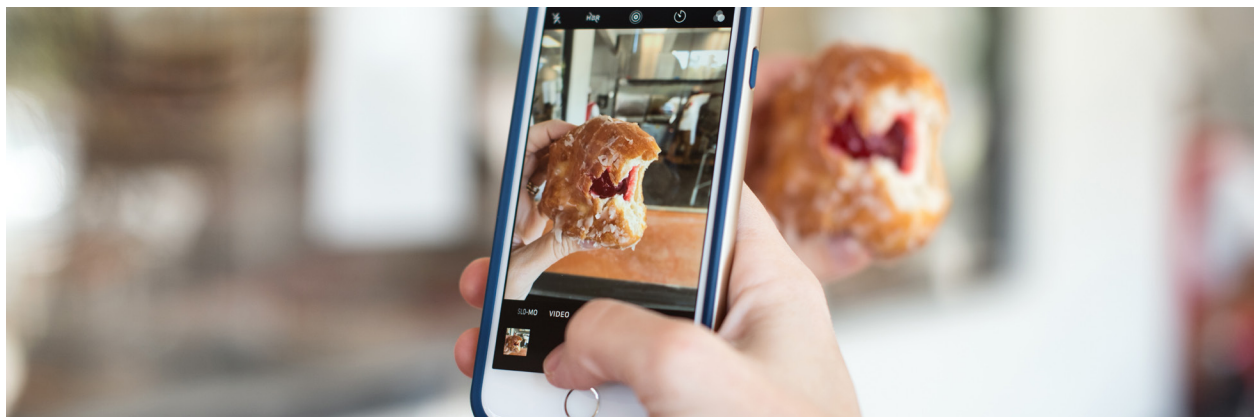
Worldwide, by age and gender, we see a youngish crowd dominating, with ages 18–44 interacting on the app each day:



And it's important to take these numbers in context, as even 1% of 500 million daily users offer a brand a decent-sized audience to vie for. “In fact, the group most likely to search out products after seeing Instagram promoted posts is those aged 65 through 74, followed by those aged 45 through 54.”¹² So, the key to capturing this demographic on Instagram is understanding which posts to promote.

What about the other age groups?

The visual imagery can be compelling in its own right, of course, but videos—and especially Stories, are where brands can truly shine.



¹⁰ Amazon Killed Brick & Mortar, So Why Is It Investing in Stores? [source: <https://www.adweek.com/digital/amazon-killed-brick-and-mortar-so-why-is-it-investing-in-stores/>]

¹¹ How to Drive Business to Your Amazon Business with Instagram [source: <https://smallbiztrends.com/2019/02/instagram-for-amazon.html>]

THE FULL INSTAGRAM STORY ON STORIES

Taking Instagram half-way, in any way, is a mistake. Yet that's precisely what many brands do, maintaining a basic presence and obtaining correspondingly lackluster results.

Those in the know are excited—and wisely secretive—about their methods. Their success with stories ranks high among them.

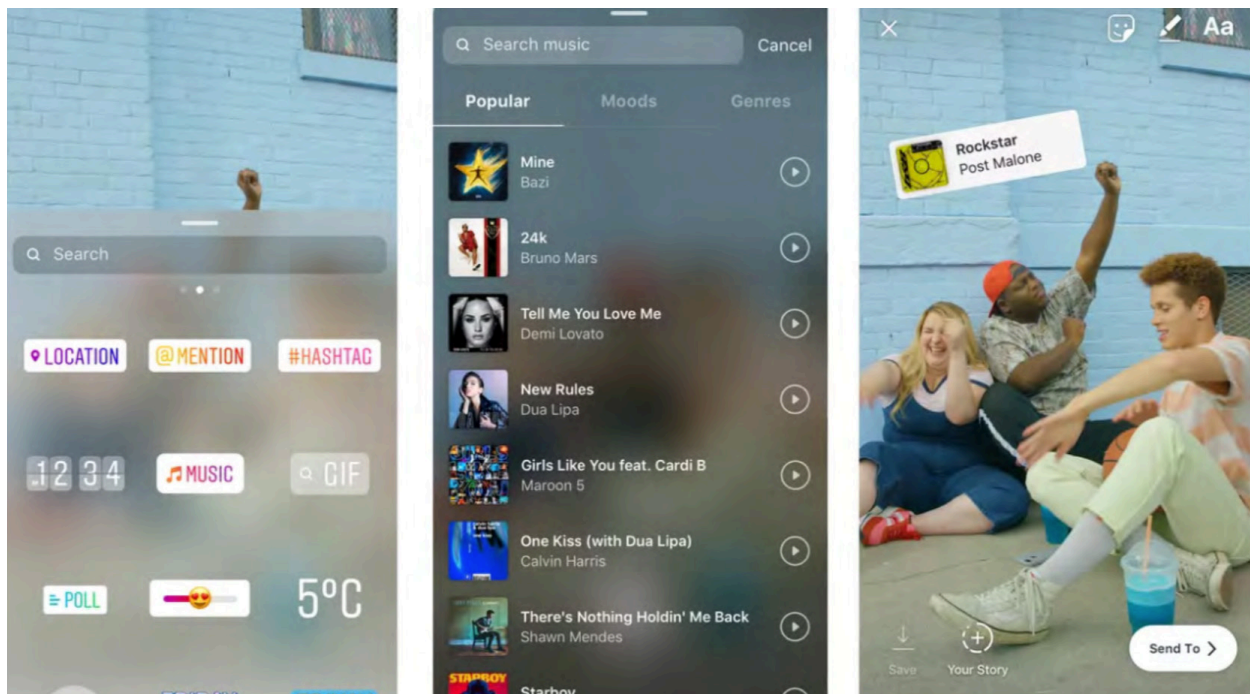
Users see stories from people they follow in a bar at the top of their feed. A red circle appears around those accounts that have new Stories to share—and users are notified when someone they follow posts a new Story.

The Stories themselves can range from fast and fun—like this laser-eyed kitty:



To amazingly meaningful events.

Brands can share multiple photos or videos (or a combination of both) in a single story and add a wide variety of affects to each. There are drawing, sticker, music and interactive options available:



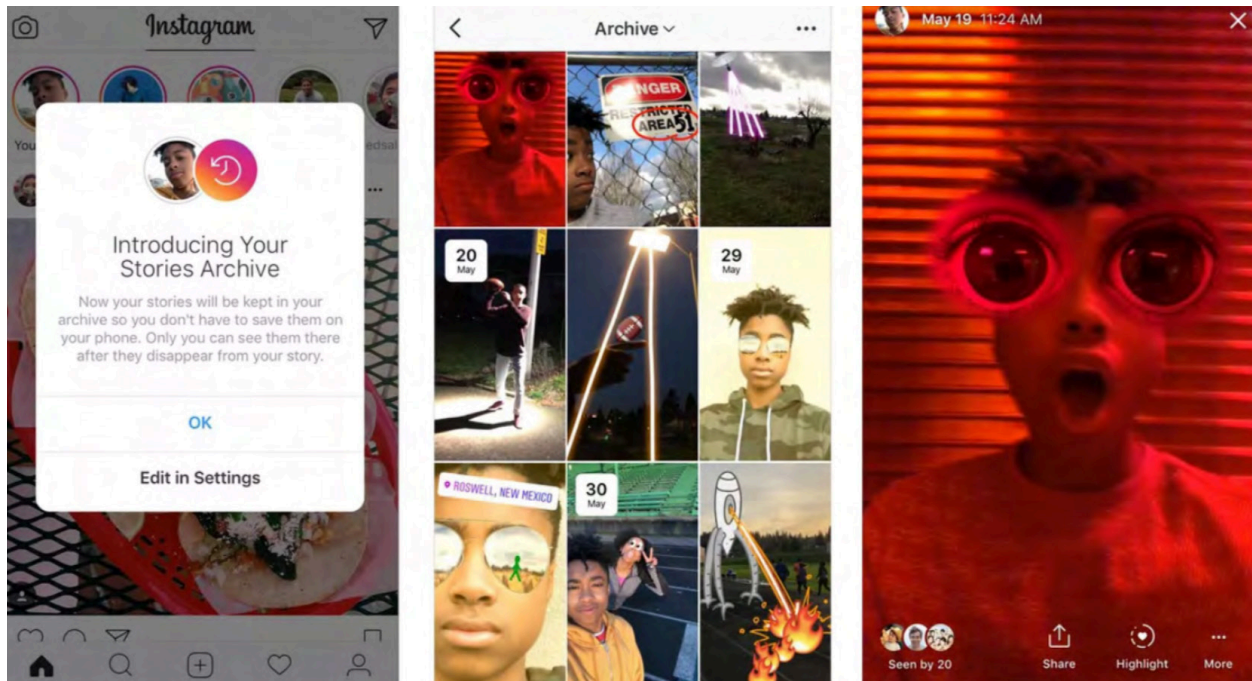
And brands can cross-post these stories to their attached Facebook page and even send the stories directly to select followers.

Many brands work backward to share stories that they can use to build Story Highlights, which are showcased at the top of an Instagram user's page.



Though brands can also create stories in stealth mode (shared only with select users, often account admins) to quietly create a robust archive to then release all at once in a stunning showcase. This is great for campaign launches that brands want to keep under wraps.

Either way, forward planning is a must, as Highlights are populated exclusively from a brand's Story Archive. And the only way to get a story in the archive is by sharing it for 24 hours as a story!



This enables brands the ability to make mini-series around products, events, promotions and any variety of options.

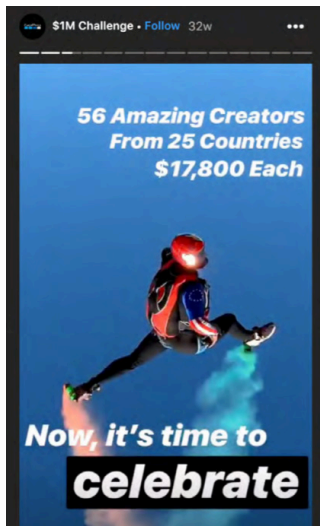
User generated content (UGC) is a huge hit here—and often used to populate stories. It not only makes consumers part of the story, it tells relatable slices of life that encourage even more engagement.

For example, your brand may not have the budget to host a \$1 million challenge, but Go Pro did and we can be pretty sure it paid off beyond the cost to implement it.

Particularly as it keeps on giving, living at the top of its page, with stunning imagery that encourages engagement—and undoubtedly drives sales:



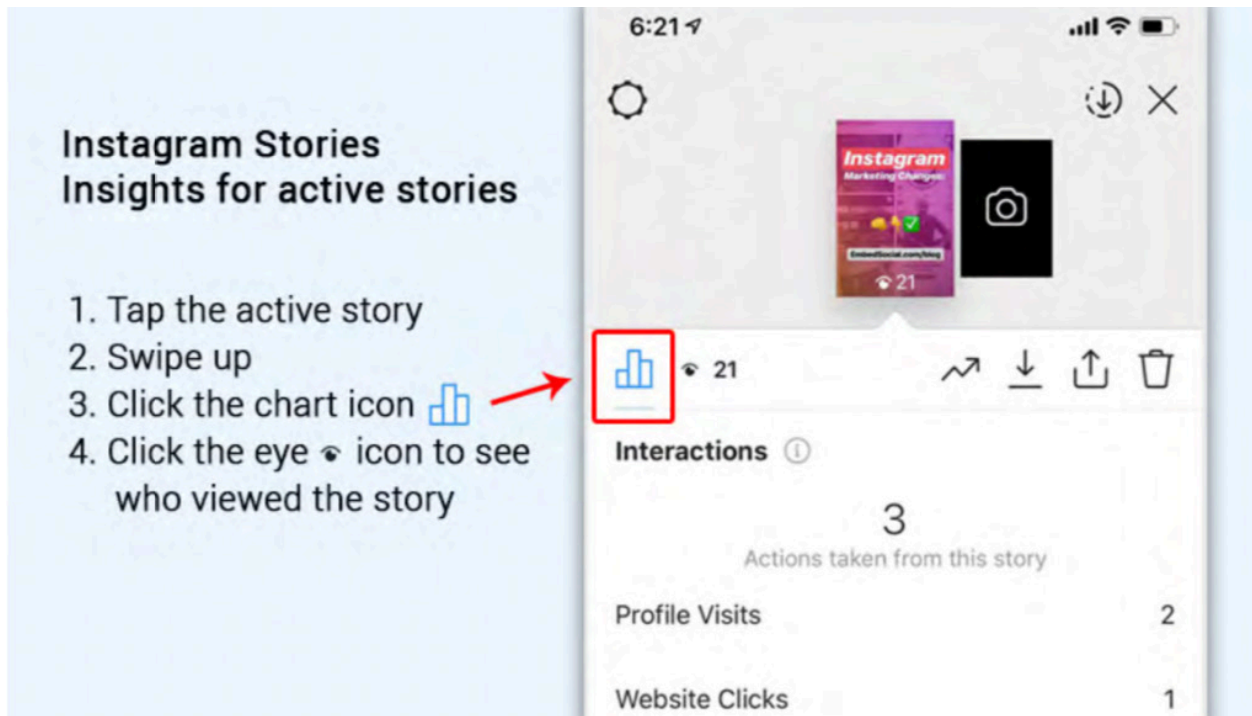
¹²Older Users Are Most Influenced by Ads on Instagram (Report) [source: <https://www.adweek.com/digital/older-users-are-most-influenced-by-ads-on-instagram-report/>]



Because it's not only a compelling story to share/watch, it captures folks using Go Pros as they share these experiences. So, it's a bit of promotional marketing *as an aside*. Perfect.

And all the interaction that happens here is tracked via Instagram Analytics when users click or scroll past, as even quick impressions count today. Considering audiences nearly non-existent attention spans, marketing in moments is essential.

To look at who has seen a story, brands just need to open their current story and swipe up on the screen. The number as well as the usernames of the people who have seen each photo or video in a story will be listed there. And only the brand is able to look at who's seen its story.



That's the beauty of stories (beyond the other exceptional Instagram engagement)—brands are able to see more specific data around viewers. Though the intel Instagram captures for users on its videos and other overall engagement is amazing as well. We'll get to that next!

But first, a quick word about its newest offering: Creator Accounts.

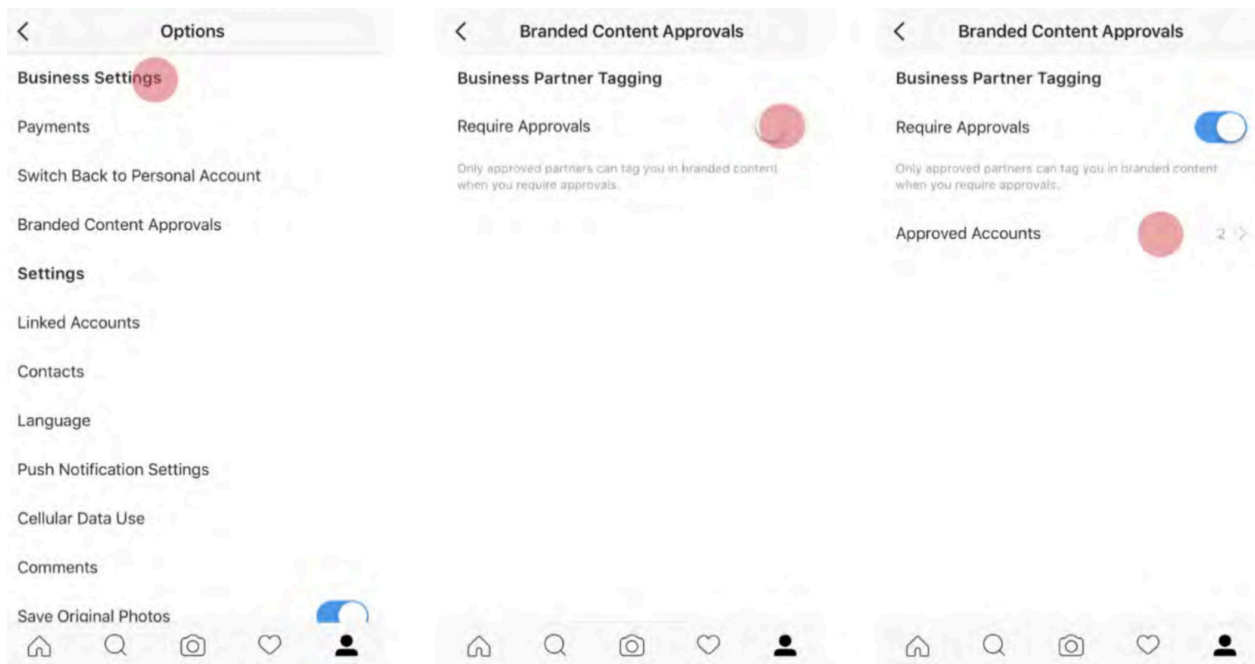
CREATOR ACCOUNTS FOR ADVANCED STORY STATS

Offering “makes it easier to control your online presence, understand your growth and manage your messages,”¹³ Instagram’s Creator accounts are geared toward influential/busy users. It has advanced capabilities, including:¹³

- Growth insights such as data around follows and unfollows.
- Direct messaging tools that enable users to filter notes from relevant people, e.g., they can filter notes from brand partners and friends. Creators will be able to rank their pending requests by relevance or time to make sure they don’t miss important requests.
- Flexible labels that enable users to designate their preferred method of contact.

And to make it easier for brands to prevent fake influencers from tagging them in posts. Inflaters (fake influencers) do this to up their credibility with potential sponsors. By pretending they’ve engaged with big name brands to promote their products, other brands sign on. We’ll touch on that in our Influencer section.

This functionality is also helpful from a business standpoint for advertising compliance concerns, and ultimately for Instagram, should it choose to change how these relationships work on its platform at any point:



So, how do brands and influencers know what to share, as you can’t just slap anything up on a page and expect engagement? Even laser-eyed kitties get old.

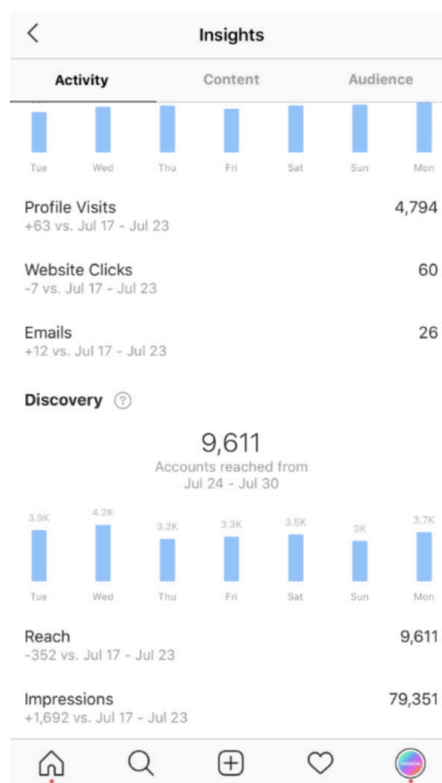
As mentioned, Instagram offers some detailed analytics, and then there are partner solutions, like NetBase, to help you create captivating consumer content that brings your target audience back again and again.

IN-DEPTH INSTAGRAM ANALYTICS

Instagram offers lots of baked-in analytics for its business users beyond Story and Highlights metrics. And they're essential to review, or you risk messing up a lot, like:¹⁴

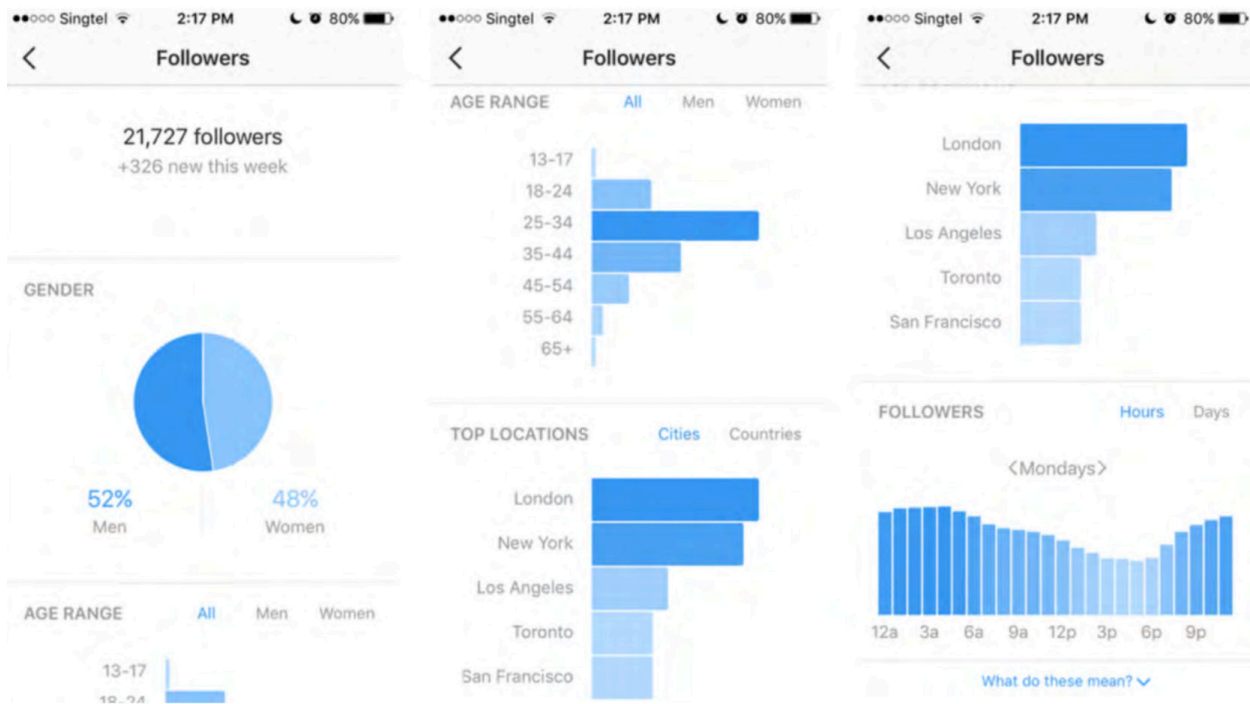
- Targeting the wrong audience.
- Posting too frequently (or not frequently enough).
- Driving irrelevant visitors to your website.
- Driving calls from an ad type that you only used once!
- Ignoring mentions that could be leading to future partnerships.
- Posting during non-optimal hours of the day or days of the week.
- Missing opportunities for brand engagement in your comments or stories.

In addition to story analytics, which we've already spoken to, you can capture profile analytics and individual post analytics:



As well as Audience analytics:





It provides a fantastic snapshot of what's happening on your page and tells you when your audience is most active. It also tells you which posts they're appreciating the most!

Beyond that, to experience exceptional Instagram success, smart brands seek out social analytics solutions to help them capture the most relevant, real-time data possible about not only those interacting, but the rest of the billion monthly users that could be. There's more than one target audience for your brand on Instagram and social analytics helps you find them all before your competitors do.

But what about the insight from the images themselves?

As we mentioned earlier, there's a lot of information to be gleaned even without relevant text—if your solution is up to speed on recent changes—and technologically ready to accommodate evolving capabilities!

HOW ADVANCED IMAGE ANALYTICS ENHANCES INSTAGRAM ANALYTICS

Text is one thing, but it's not the only part of social media that needs analyzing. Images are a huge part of the equation—and not all contain accompanying text. But if there's no text—or brand mentions—how are those posts being counted?

Sadly, with many analytics solutions they just aren't. State-of-the-art must now include image analytics capabilities—and if it's powered by next generation artificial intelligence (AI) technology, all the better.

What does image analysis add to your arsenal? Quite a lot:

- Scene recognition—i.e., indoors, outdoors, a mall, a movie theater
- Object recognition—i.e., a car, a boat, a baseball cap
- Facial recognition—i.e., gender, age, smiles, frowns and more
- Geographic recognition—i.e., the mountains, the desert, the ocean, Paris, San Francisco
- Logo recognition—i.e., your brand's logo, spoofs of your logo, other brands' logos



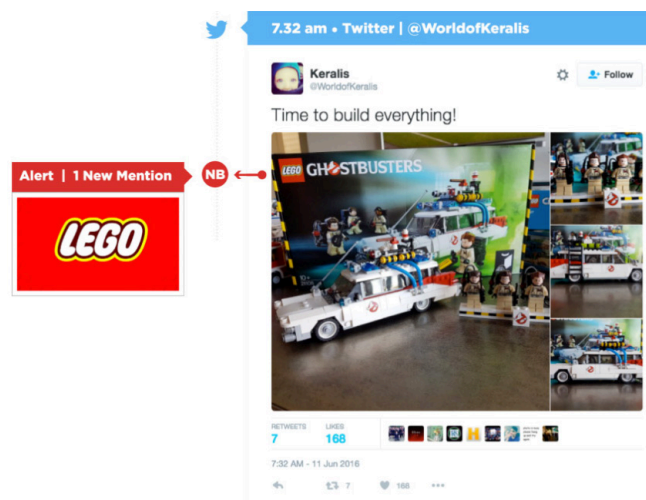
Visual mentions are critical to your brand—missing just one post can be costly. Our pre-trained logo library includes 2000+ logos of global brands across CPG, Luxury, Retail, Food and Beverage, Travel and Hospitality, Media and Entertainment, Sports, Financial Services and Technology.

It's the largest library of pre-trained logos in the social listening category. And it gives our customers ready-to-use out-of-the-box logo recognition, eliminating both time and cost associated with training logos that other social listening platforms require.

www.netbase.com/image-analytics-logos

And enhanced precision recognition features detect partial, hidden, rotated, and even modified logos to measure brand awareness, drive content ideation, track sponsorship impact.

For example, searching for Coke imagery that also has Starbucks logos, we set our precision filter to low:



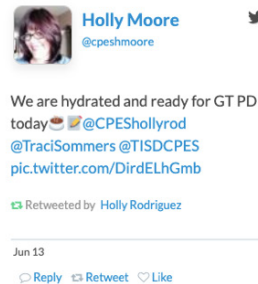
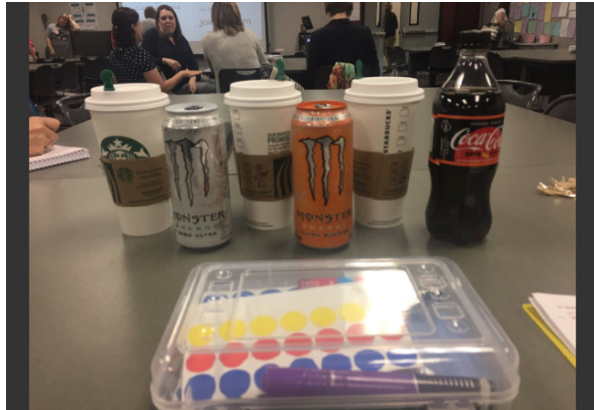
Analyze > Popular Media

Topics **Coke - Image Dem...**

Date Range **1H** 1D 1W **1M** 3M 6M 1Y 2Y 27M MAX Custom

Logos **Starbucks**

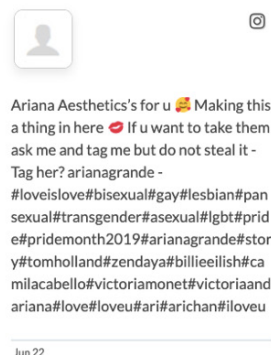
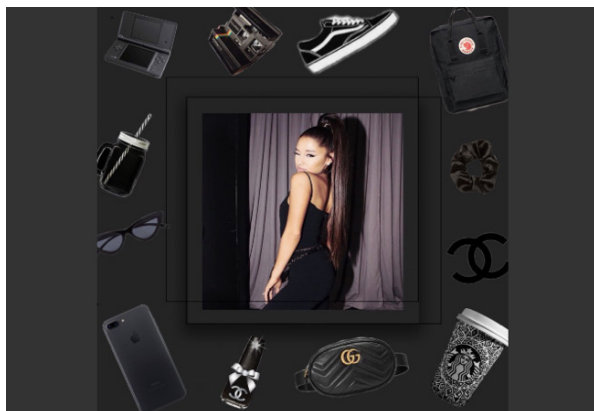
Precision **Low** Medium High



And capture
partial logos



Rotated logos

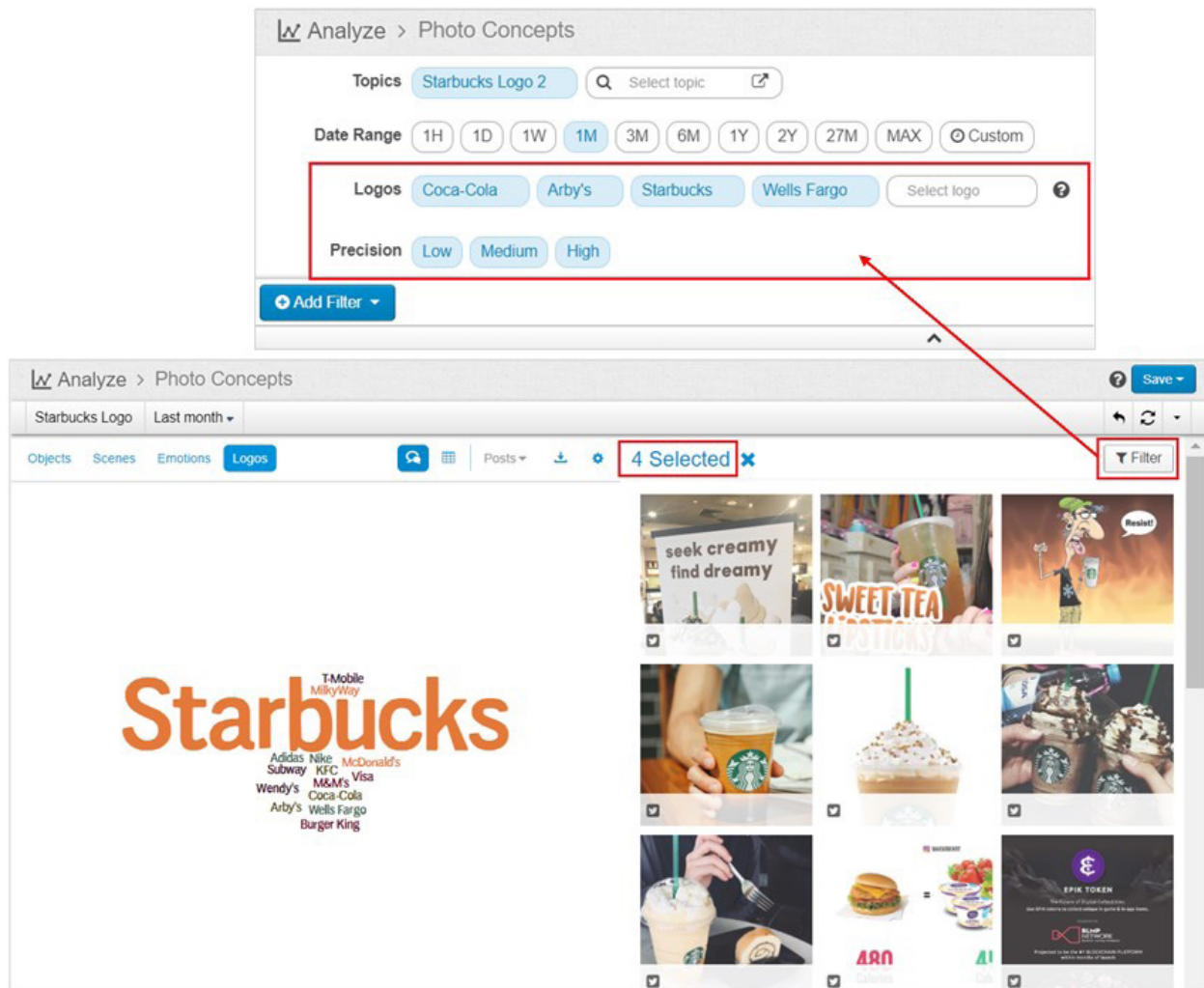


And modified logos

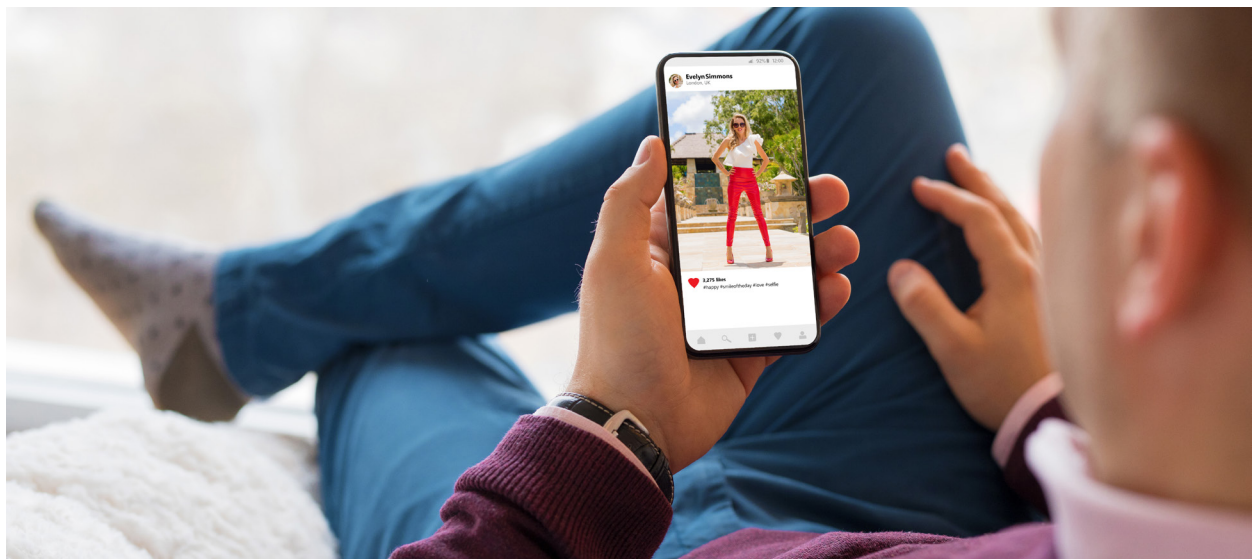
NetBase gives users the flexibility to adjust the precision of our image analytics logo recognition to return images that aren't an exact match. This is good for identifying trademark infringement and modified or defaced brand logos on social media.



And brands can filter by up to five logos, which is great for tracking collaborations and/or sponsorships:



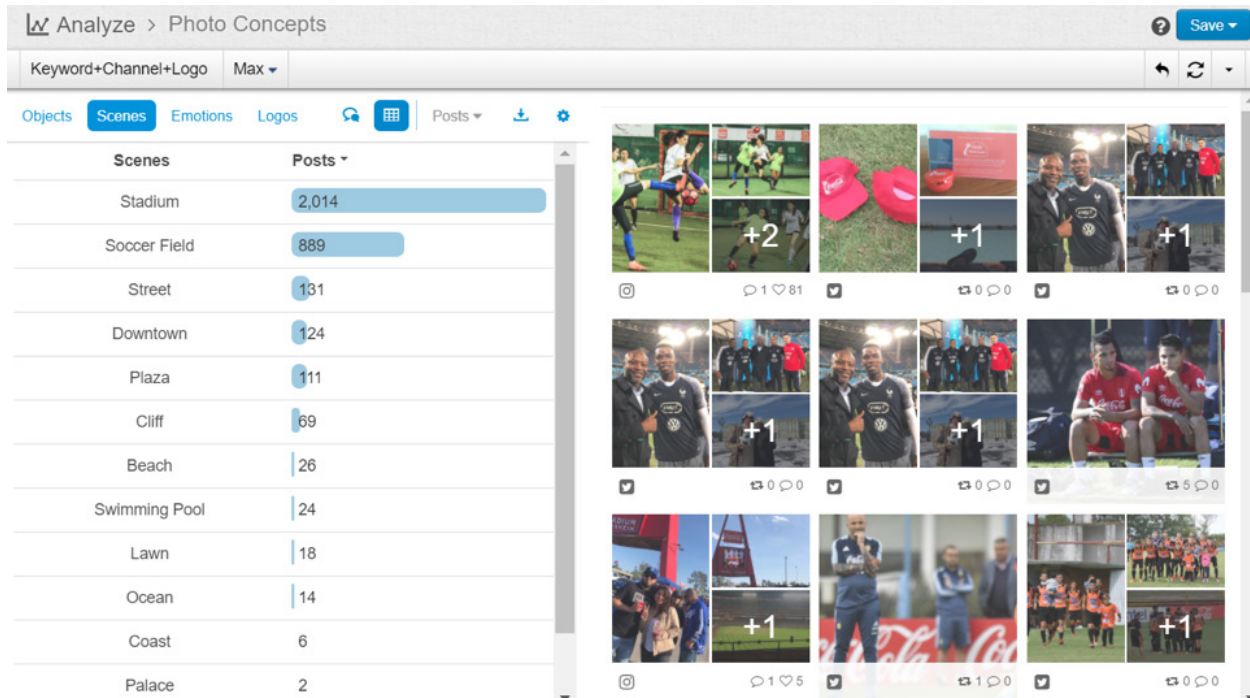
Filter by up to five logos—this is great for tracking co-branded content and sponsorships.



But image analysis isn't just for logos, of course.

Not Just for Logos

The Photo Concepts Widget is available for non-logo topics too:



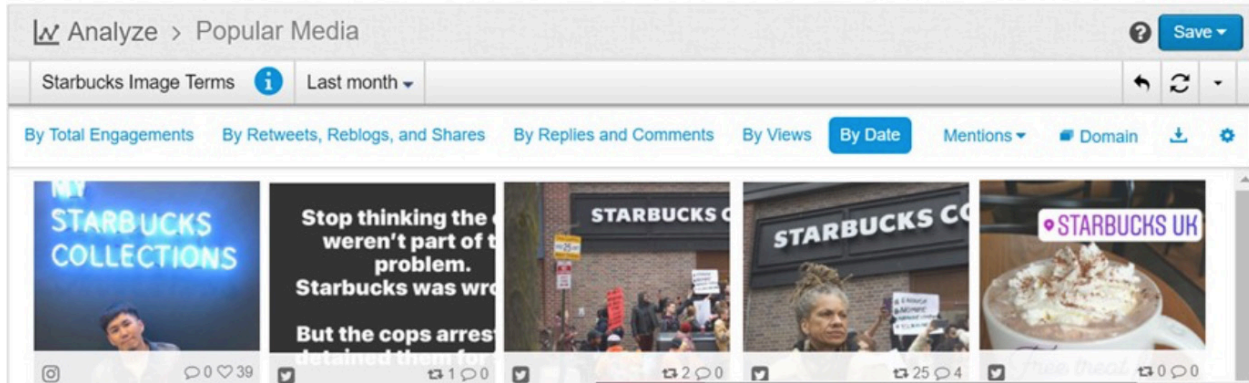
Let's say you're a brand that wants to capture the breakfast market. You might analyze images of biscuits being shared by potential customers to see what they like—or by/on behalf of, your competition. And you don't want to be limited to image posts with only the word biscuit in the written description. *Voilà!*



No mention of biscuits here, but there they are...

Being able to identify images based on an object opens up a whole new level of insights you couldn't access before.

And where text is present, it becomes part of your analytics, which is important as visual mentions aren't always logo and object/scene based. Identifying image text is equally important. With it, you can find mentions of your brand that aren't logo or post mentions. For example, below we see instances where the term **"Starbucks"** appears in a post image but not in the post text:



This is just another example of information you'd miss without Image Analytics logo capabilities in the mix.

When combined with sentiment analysis, image analysis extends your data and insights, making your analytics that much more accurate.

And what about AI? How does that factor in—and why does it matter?

REAL-TIME AI-POWERED SOCIAL ANALYTICS

Next Generation artificial intelligence (AI) powered analytics offers insight around a bevy of consumer behaviors, loves, unmet needs, lookalike audiences and competitor intel. Consumers seeing stories informed by social analytics feel connected and known, and often amazed, as the imagery is so compelling and relevant to who they are.

The key to winning on Instagram is that brands are not selling a product or service, but a lifestyle. And the only way to become essential to fickle consumers in this fast-paced digital age is by knowing them and speaking to who they are beyond the buzzwords.

For example, instead of stopping with the knowledge that a particular post got a lot of engagement, brands can analyze insight from comment text and hashtags to increase the precision and value of the data.



Keywords ?
Switch to Boolean
Add Filter +

Primary Terms ?

#disney ✕

#disneyworld ✕

#disneyland ✕

#waltdisneyworld ✕

#disneylife ✕

#disneyparks ✕

#disneygram ✕

Enter primary term +

Authorizations
#Hashtags

Instagram Business Profile/#Hashtags Lookup

Business Profile Name

Business Profile Status
All

Tracked #Hashtags in NetBase

Apply

Modify #Hashtags for Selected Profile
Displaying 1-20 of 34
1 2

Business Profile Name	Business Profile Status	Tracked #Hashtags in NetBase
☐ disney	Authorized	Actively collecting data in NetBase: ? #disneyworld #disney #disneyland #waltdisneyworld #disneylife #disneyparks #disneygram

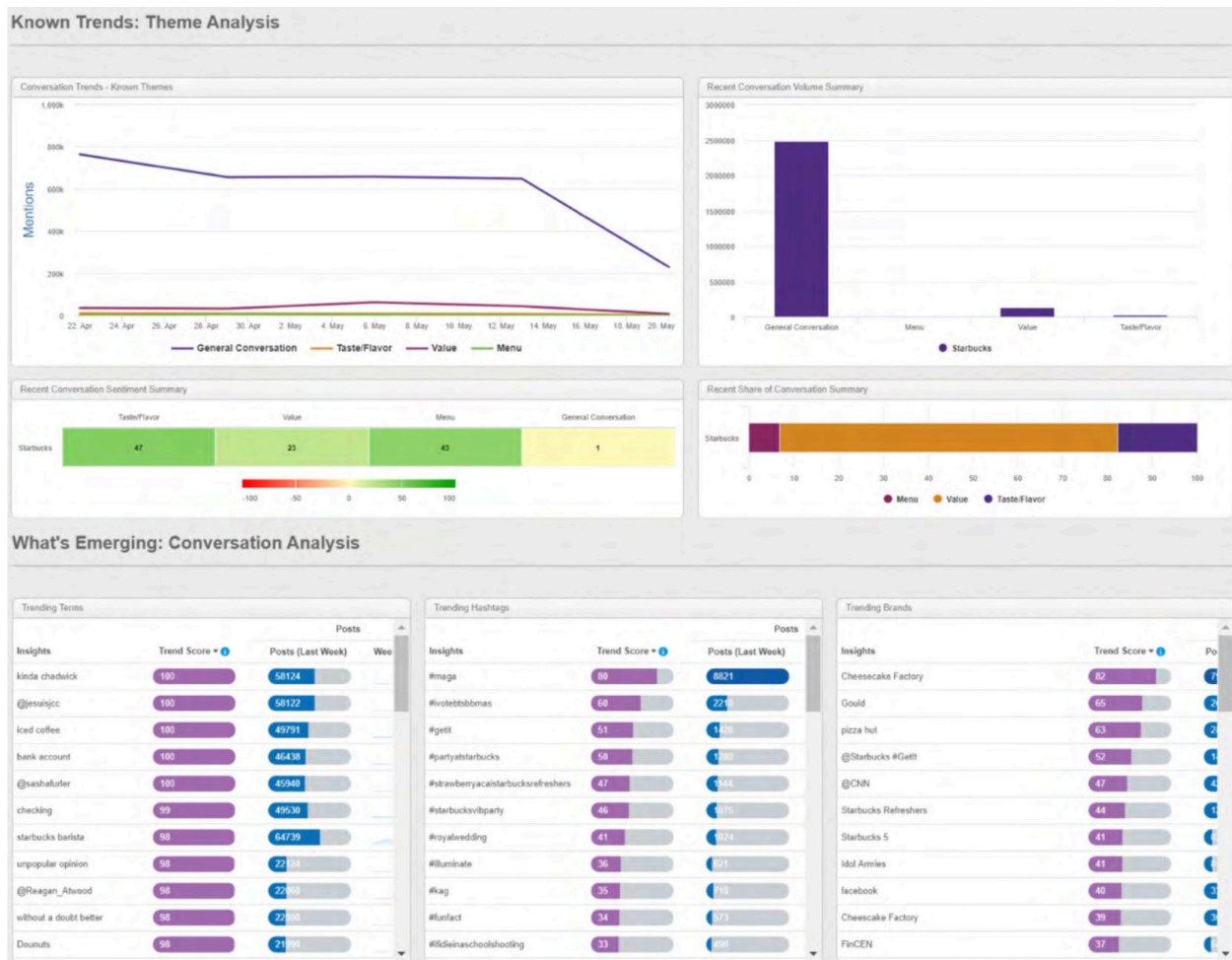
When consumers interact with your brand, you want those interactions to count for something. So, understanding that data beyond surface insights is extremely important. Otherwise you're stabbing in the dark anytime you make changes—hoping to delight your audience, when you could know for sure what they actually want.

Bio text offers an additional level of intel—especially in situations where you lose access to comment text, like with competitor profiles.

Social listening enables you to discover, segment, track and measure your engagement, to derive maximum impact for your efforts.

In the Discover phase, you form an overall understanding of conversation around your brand. Discovering how much people talk, whether the conversation is primarily positive or negative, what emotions people express, who talks most, and other general metrics establishes the foundation from which further analysis, segmentation, and tracking proceeds.

Then brands segment and drill down into conversations for deeper analysis to find insights. This is where you find trends and understand context around what is being said.



From there, brands can track, or monitor, all of the insights, trends, brand advocates/detractors, and geographic areas you pinpointed in the first two phases over time. And can set alerts around same

And then, combine your Instagram data with additional structured and unstructured data sources, including other business intelligence tools, sales data, or customer reviews along with other NetBase social web insight (from other social channels, news, forums, review sites, and more) to create a complete picture of your wider audience online.

Alert Configuration: Coca Cola

Alert Definition Subscribers

Enable Alerts ☒

Alert Configuration

Type: Triggered Alerts

Condition: Detect Unusual Volume Events

NetBase uses only real-time Twitter content to detect unusual volume changes. If your saved analysis excludes Twitter content, you will not receive any alerts.

Event Stamina: 1 Hour 2 Hours 4 Hours 8 Hours Event lasts for 1hr or more

Event Strength: Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Level 5 Level 6 Level 7 Level 8 Level 9 Level 10 Event is Level 5 or above

Test Cancel Save

All of this data will help you create more productive partnerships with influencers—as they increasingly make up an important piece of any brand's Instagram presence.

AI makes your entire insight package stronger, faster, smarter, and more reliable. Part of this is simply the speed at which AI can process and categorized data. AI interprets social analytics as humans would, but with a speed that humans do not, and cannot, possess.

And with machine learning, AI has predictive capabilities that let you glimpse the future in ways less sophisticated analytics solutions do not. Add AI Studio to that mix, and you have automated theme discovery at your fingertips. It eliminates user bias and offers insight around related themes you'd be unlikely to surface otherwise:



And this is where you gain a huge advantage over your competitors—some of whom are still stuck on assumptions.

Meanwhile, you're following the data at every turn and adjusting as needed. That's agility. And it's a game changer.

INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER EVOLUTION

Influencers have been a part of Instagram since its early days and continue to be a vital and productive part of its community. Users love, and love to be jealous of, the Instagram influencer lifestyle, and follow these folks for many reasons.

Partnering with an influencer is a choice each brand needs to carefully evaluate and NetBase makes that process manageable with Channel access and analysis.

But isn't it easy to find influencers? Hardly. It's easy to find just any "influencer" but it's quite challenging to find influencers who are actually influential in a way that's relevant to your brand—or that are even genuinely influential at all!



There are many influencers who've purchased followers, you likely know that—but did you know that many credible (looking) influencers are just masters of influence. More akin to magicians than culturally relevant change agents. The only conversation they direct revolve around ads and influence, and they often have very little real influence over real people—which is your target audience. They're liked and commented on by other influencers playing the same lucrative game.

So, to find influencers, you need to create an Influencer Identification Dashboard. Here, depending on the criteria you select, you can find trending conversations and engaging content and identify influencers by category (area of interest, expertise, cultural, or digital presence). Or by follower counts and engagement:

Influencer Identification			
Top Influencers by Followers/Visitors			
	Mentions	Followers/Visitors	Engagements
 @ Emily Jackson // Ivory Lane emilyjackson	1	354,095	418
 Ocado	1	321,121	13
 @ Lindsey Bonnice livesweet	1	139,882	1,427
 @ Joanna Go outandchicvintage	1	72,141	142
 @ Nidhi Uttam nidhiuttam	2	67,233	246
© A Mom! A Influencer! A			
Top Influencers by Mentions			
 Helen @mimstymum	50	2,820	
 crybaby dustin @crybabydustin	50	1,033	10
 Lacrosse Columbus @laxcolumbus	50	921	
 Goodie Goodie Yum Yum @KateAnderson71	50	600	
 rusthawk @rusthawk	40	1,498	

You can also see where else they're influential, which is also great to know in case you'd like to cross-promote to other sites. Having an influencer with access to engaged audiences on more than one platform is gravy.

And, as mentioned, monitoring those conversations over time will be very important. You'll want to be sure your influencer is maintaining his/her part of the agreement and that engagement is where you expect it to be.

You'll need access to your influencers' content, which can be managed in the tool:

Topics > Dior

Partnered **Beta**

Twitter

@nhanna @Enter Twitter account

Facebook

http://facebook.com/nhanna http://facebook.com/Enter Facebook fan page

Instagram

http://instagram.com/nhannadaily http://instagram.com/nhannadiva

http://instagram.com/Enter Instagram account

YouTube

http://www.youtube.com/user/Rihanna http://www.youtube.com/user/Enter YouTube channel

Tumblr

nhanna Enter Tumblr blog name

Other Domains

nhannanow.com Enter domain URL

Cancel Save

And then you can create a variety of reports to track the data—and track influencers' engagement against each other and against activity on other platforms:

Instagram Checkout¹⁵ will help brands see more clearly which influencers are having a direct impact

on sales, of course—but not every meaningful interaction will lead to a sale. And those touchpoints are just as important to a brand's bottom line, but they just aren't as flashy.

Having solid sentiment analysis to tell you which influencers are driving the conversation ahead of a sale will separate the brands capturing long-term engagement from those finding themselves constantly reinventing the wheel. Quick sales generated by an influencer are amazing, of course, but capturing—and speaking to—that lifestyle that consumers crave is where the real long-term ROI potential lives.

And someday soon, Instagram “likes” may disappear, as they have in other locations already.¹⁶

What will brands short on social analytics do then? There will still be hidden metrics for brands to consider, of course, but it will make that underlying conversational context, the thoughts and feelings that aren't so neatly quantified, all the more critical to a brand's business intelligence.

We're busy keeping our clients ahead of pending changes on every social site, including Instagram. Be sure to reach out to continue this conversation ahead of updates, so we can help you transition to changes at the speed of social, so you don't miss a beat, or fall back on laser-eyed kitties as an interim measure.

For now, let's look at some brands to learn from . . .

The screenshot shows a configuration window for Instagram analytics. It has two main sections: 'Display' and 'Measures'. In the 'Display' section, 'By Network Type' and 'Aggregate Rows' are checked, while '%Share' is unchecked. The 'Measures' section lists various metrics with checkboxes: 'Followers' (unchecked), 'Brand Posts' (checked), 'Engagements' (checked), 'Comments' (unchecked), 'Shares' (unchecked), 'Likes' (unchecked), 'Followers X Posts' (unchecked), 'Engagements / Post' (checked), 'Comments / Post' (unchecked), 'Shares / Post' (checked), 'Likes / Post' (unchecked), 'Engagements / Post / 10K Followers' (checked), 'Comments / Post / 10K Followers' (unchecked), 'Shares / Post / 10K Followers' (unchecked), and 'Likes / Post / 10K Followers' (unchecked). At the bottom right, there are 'Cancel' and 'OK' buttons.

Section	Metric	Checked
Display	By Network Type	Yes
	%Share	No
	Aggregate Rows	Yes
Measures	Followers	No
	Brand Posts	Yes
	Engagements	Yes
	Comments	No
	Shares	No
	Likes	No
	Followers X Posts	No
	Engagements / Post	Yes
	Comments / Post	No
	Shares / Post	Yes
	Likes / Post	No
	Engagements / Post / 10K Followers	Yes
	Comments / Post / 10K Followers	No
	Shares / Post / 10K Followers	No
Likes / Post / 10K Followers	No	

BRANDS TO LEARN FROM

Another point to consider is that brands are using AI in their marketing already—so it only makes sense to apply that same technology to their analytics.

For example, Nike uses AI to power their “Nike On Demand” feature, “to encourage people to lead a healthier life and exercise more by sending motivational messages.”¹² Nike certainly uses social analytics to their advantage as well. The brand's #BeTrue campaign won the sneaker race during Pride month¹³—and is a great example of the kind of hashtag you can track on Instagram.

And what is that one thing that keeps consumers on the hook? In a world run by social media, that “thing” is authenticity.

FINAL WORD ON AUTHENTICITY: JUST KEEP IT REAL

Social consumers don't respond to old-school marketing tactics that push brands and products at them blindly. The approach now has to be human-to-human, which requires deep audience understanding.

You need a solution capable of discerning every nuance of consumer emotion, and separating out what your audience is truly passionate about, versus simply interested in. There's a huge difference there.

But it's not as simply as knowing they love an aspect of your brand, or product, or relative topic. You've got to know how they want to communicate—from the channel, to the media type, to the language that moves them—and why. This is why sentiment analysis is such a critical component of your social analytics solution.

Consider Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. As a top-grossing action movie star, he's a brand unto himself. With 124 million followers, his Instagram account would be enviable by any brand.

Why do people love following him? Because he's the real deal—living his life, posting about it, and speaking to the needs and passions of his followers. They're inspired by his fitness posts, identify with his cheat-day posts, live vicariously through his behind-the-scenes posts, and more.

Everything The Rock posts is dripping with his unique personality, shared from that authentic place that can't be faked. And that's why people love him—because he's just a guy, crushing goals, and living an amazing life as a result.

At the same time, The Rock posts about brands he represents—like Under Armour—bringing them massive engagement. But because it's just part of his larger social presence, it never feels like a sales pitch.



The Rock's Instagram profile is like a master class on how to be an influencer. His brilliance on this front is likely why he now commands a 7-figure social media fee as part of his movie deals.¹⁵

But don't discount the brilliance of the Under Armour's of the world who understand how to leverage such influence. This is something particularly important on Instagram, where the human side of your brand must be shown in order to have an impact. Influencers are one of the best ways to achieve this.

This is true whether your brand ambassadors are owned or inspired. As long as they are authentic your audience will respond. If they come across as brand mouthpieces, they won't help you succeed.

This is why social analytics must be used to find the right influencers for your brand—something we discuss in the report, *The 2020 Complete Guide to Influencer Marketing*. For now, if you follow the strategies in this report, you'll be on your way to mastering Instagram. Then partnering with influencers will only make things better. And be sure to reach out with any questions about either, as we're happy to show you how these analytics look in action!



¹²**Top 28 brands that use AI to enhance marketing [Infographic]** [source: <https://bigdata-madesimple.com/28-brands-that-use-ai-to-enhance-marketing-infographic/>]

^{13A}**Tale Of Two Sneakers—Who Wins Social Sentiment For LGBT Pride Month?** [source: <https://www.netbase.com/blog/a-tale-of-two-sneakers-who-wins-social-sentiment-for-pride-month/>]

¹⁴**How Birchbox Founders Cold-Emailed Their Way to Success** [source: <https://www.racked.com/2014/3/11/7613463/birch-box-ladies-who-launch>]

¹⁵**The Power Of Social Analytics Is Solid As A 'Rock'** [source: <https://www.netbase.com/blog/the-power-of-social-analytics-is-solid-as-a-rock/>]

¹³**Instagram Creator Accounts—Features, Benefits and Advantages** [source: <https://influencermarketinghub.com/instagram-creator-accounts/>]

¹⁴**The Complete Guide to Instagram Analytics** [source: <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2018/11/01/instagram-analytics>]

¹⁵**What does Instagram Checkout mean for ecommerce? We ask the experts** [source: <https://econsultancy.com/what-does-instagram-checkout-mean-for-ecommerce-experts/>]

¹⁶**Instagram Removes 'Like' Counts In Several Countries** [Source: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/instagram-likes-removed-hidden-not-showing-where-why-a9010331.html>]



NETBASE™

NetBase is the next generation artificial intelligence powered social analytics platform that global companies use to run brands, build businesses, and connect with consumers every second. Its platform processes hundreds of millions of social media and other data sources daily for actionable business insights for marketing, research, customer service, sales, PR and product innovation.

NetBase is recognized by industry analysts and customers as the leader in Social Analytics. NetBase was ranked a category leader by Forrester in the “Forrester Wave: Enterprise Social Listening Platforms, Q3 2018” report.

NetBase was also named a top-rated social media management platform by software users on TrustRadius and a market leader by G2 Crowd.

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Trusted by the World's Top Brands

