
Create Your
Lifestyle Business
Using Instagram
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Introduction

What is a Lifestyle Business?

Starting any business is an exciting journey, but a lifestyle business is different to a traditional startup. Instead of focusing on growth and high revenue, you'll be creating a business that allows you to live your chosen lifestyle, often making money remotely using new-age techniques. If your goal is to build a business that creates freedom, allows you to travel and provides financial security, you're on the right track.



Why Instagram?

With over one billion active users, it's no surprise that most businesses are turning to Instagram to showcase their products, reach new audiences and set up collaborations.

Of all the popular social media platforms, Instagram has the highest engagement rate. You've probably seen a huge number of users, with millions of followers, travelling the world. But you don't need millions of followers to get your business off the ground. In fact, all you actually need is the *right* followers.

More and more brands are turning to microinfluencers to promote their products, because they often have high engagement and a targeted audience.

Now it's time for you to use the platform to create your own lifestyle business.

Setting Up Your Profile

The first step to creating a business using Instagram is creating a business profile. If you already have an existing account, making the change is very simple. Just go to your account settings and select *Switch to Business Profile*. At this point you can choose to either connect your profile to a Facebook page, or continue without one. If you continue without, you'll need to choose the type of business you run.

Profile Photo and Bio

Your profile photo should be a clear image of yourself. Try to avoid dark, grainy images or group selfies. If you can't get a professional photo taken, you can take your own. Use natural light, a clean backdrop and set a timer on your camera or phone.

When entering your details on your profile, you should think like your target audience. Your name is searchable, so you can include keywords here. For example, which do you think would rank higher in searches?

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Your bio creates the first impression when someone lands on your profile. You can use it to captivate your target audience and let them know who you are and what you do. Try using bullet points, rather than a large block of text. This is easier to read, so people are more likely to take in the information.

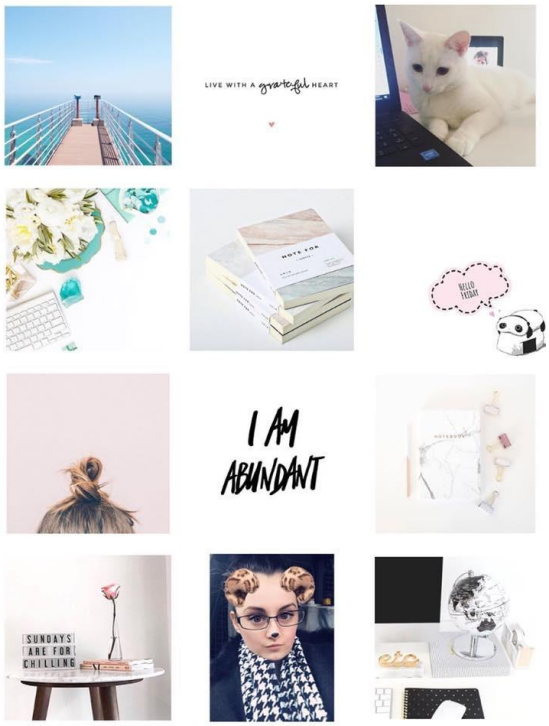
Your Content

Instagram is a visual platform – the images you share should make people want to hit the 'follow' button. Your photos should be aesthetically pleasing both individually and with your other content. Users will see your content in two places: their feed and your profile.

Try to find one or two themes for your feed. Do you travel a lot? Are you interested in fashion or beauty? Sticking to these will help you to attract a targeted audience, which is exactly what you need to grow your lifestyle business.

Finally, try to make sure that your feed is cohesive. Consider your brand image and use a colour scheme that fits. You could also try using the same filter for your images, to bring them together.

Posting Your Content



There is a simple posting system that you can use on Instagram, to ensure that you're attracting the right people.

- High quality content
- Relevant caption
- Location
- Tag accounts
- Hashtags
- Timing

With the competition on Instagram, simply posting pretty pictures isn't going to cut it. To successfully grow your business, you will need to be strategic with your use of the platform.

Insights should become your new favourite tool. You'll be able to see how your content is performing, how people are finding your profile and when your followers are online.

Content

No one is going to hit that follow button if your images aren't high quality and appealing. Upon landing on your profile, the first thing a user will do is look to your first few images. If they don't like the look of your feed, they're going to leave. Your images need to attract them enough to look further into your profile and join your tribe.

Try to avoid dark, grainy photos where it is hard to pick out the subject at first glance. Instead, use natural light and ensure that the photos you post are clear. Think about your ideal audience and the type of content that will interest them enough to follow you.

Captions

Writing a relevant Instagram caption can be hard. Sometimes we take the perfect photo, but just can't caption it in a way that we actually like. Telling a story through your content, including the captions, can help to entice your audience. As they begin to see more of your content, they will become interested in what you're up to and how your story is progressing.

Research has shown that captions with emojis included tend to get more interaction. You could also try to encourage engagement by asking your followers a question, or asking them to respond to something.

Location

When a social media site adds a feature, it's because they want you to use it – work the platform the best way you can. The location feature allows you to tag where you are, or where the photo was taken, and have it seen in an entirely new feed. When you click on the location on any Instagram photo, you'll be able to see all of the other images tagged in this place, sorted by top posts and most recent.

Tagging Brands & Other Accounts

When preparing your posts, you can tag other accounts in your photos. This also allows your posts to be seen by new audiences. For example, if you post a photo of a branded product and tag their account, your content will be shown on their profile. By doing this, you could be exposing your content to thousands, or even millions, of new people.

Remember, your aim should be to build a targeted audience, to help you grow your lifestyle business. Therefore, you should only be tagging relevant accounts. For example, if your passion is beauty and you are aiming to build a business around this, tagging a travel account won't be putting your content in front of the right people.

Hashtags

Hashtags are searchable tags, that allow users to find your images among similar content. You can use up to 30 hashtags per post, which is 30 new opportunities to get your content seen by the right people.

When choosing your hashtags, keep them relevant to your post and your brand. You should also avoid over-saturated and under-used hashtags – try to aim for tags which have between 2,000 and 500,000 posts associated with them. If you use hashtags with more posts than this, your content will quickly drop down in the feed and is less likely to be seen. Similarly, if the tag has fewer posts associated with it, less people are likely to be searching it.

Timing

As with any social media platform, the time that you post on Instagram is very important. There is no right or wrong time to post; it all depends on your audience and the people you are trying to reach. This is why Insights will become a huge feature for your business.

Insights is currently broken down into three parts: Content, Activity and Audience. Content allows you to see how your posts and stories are performing on the platform. Activity shows the recent interactions on your account and its content, including how many people your content has reached. Audience will allow you to see your demographics, as well as the days and times when your followers are online.

Content is King

How many times have you heard this saying? Posting on Instagram consistently is a key way to grow your following. The more you use the platform, the more you will begin to see trends for your own account. This will allow you to change your strategy to give you the best results.

Before you hit the *share* button, check the following:
[ ] Is your image high quality?
[ ] Have you included a caption?
[ ] Have you tagged relevant brands and/or accounts?
[ ] Have you included a location?



Interaction

If you're serious about growing your lifestyle business, you should get into the habit of interacting with other Instagram users. Posting high quality content is great but showing the personality behind the brand is an authentic way to grow your following.

Posts in Your Feed

Spend some time every day interacting with the content in your feed. This is where you will see content from the accounts and hashtags that you follow. Staying active on Instagram and engaging with other users' content will help you to stay high in the algorithm. Liking posts is very simple, but leaving a meaningful message can help to start a conversation and really make people take notice of you.

Hashtags

Do your research to find out what hashtags are target audience are likely to use. You should interact with posts associated with these hashtags on a regular basis. This is also a great way to find new accounts to follow. When you come across an account that you're drawn to, like some of your favourite posts on their account and be sure to leave them a nice comment or two.



Comments

Whenever someone leaves a comment on one of your posts, make sure you respond. Not only does this show other users that you appreciate them taking the time to talk to you, it can also help you to get to know your audience. Take note of the kind of things they say, particularly if you have asked a question in your caption.

When a user interacts with your content, and you engage in conversation, you're more likely to see each other's content in your feeds and the explore feature. You will also start to see similar content to theirs, which can help expose you to more potential clients and followers.

Monetisation

Setting up your Instagram account and getting into the swing of creating great content is a fantastic place to start, but I know what you're thinking…



How do I make money?

As mentioned in the beginning of this e-book, lifestyle business owners often make money remotely, using new-age techniques. This can be done in a number of ways, and it all depends on what works best for you.

Many business owners will have multiple streams of income and Instagram is a great place to bring all of these streams together.

Here are some of the things you can try…

Affiliate Marketing
This is the process of earning a commission by promoting another company's products or services. You can choose what you promote, when and how, and will earn a percentage of the profit for every sale made. There are affiliate programmes available in a number of niches, so you can guarantee you'll find something that works for you.

Brand Collaborations & Sponsorship
When you grow a targeted, engaged following, you will open up a number of opportunities to work with brands. You may find that they approach you, but you can also approach other businesses to work with. Some will pay you to advertise their products and some will offer free products in return for promotion. Remember that you should only approach brands whose products are geared towards your audience.

Network Marketing
This is a lucrative business model whereby you sell products manufactured by a particular company and earn a profit on each sale. You can also recruit a team of direct sellers, who you will coach to grow a business, and earn a commission on each sale they make.

Sell Your Own Products or Services
Do you make your own products or have a service to offer? Instagram is a great place to promote these. Whether you offer handmade products or create personalised fitness programmes, you will be able to reach your ideal clients through the platform.

Drop Shipping
This is a method of selling where you don't actually handle any stock. Instead, you transfer your customers' orders to either the manufacturer or a wholesaler. You set your prices, take payment for the product and then place the order on your customer's behalf. The goods will be sent directly to them and you keep the profit.

Sell Stock Photography
Are you great at taking photos? Many sites and businesses will pay you for your original images. Instagram is the perfect place to showcase your work. You can refer people to the link in your bio and transfer them to an external site where they can make a purchase.

Now go and create your own lifestyle business.
Best of luck!