

## **Top 3 Tips for Building a Strong Following on Instagram**

*A guide to leveraging Instagram's marketing potential.*

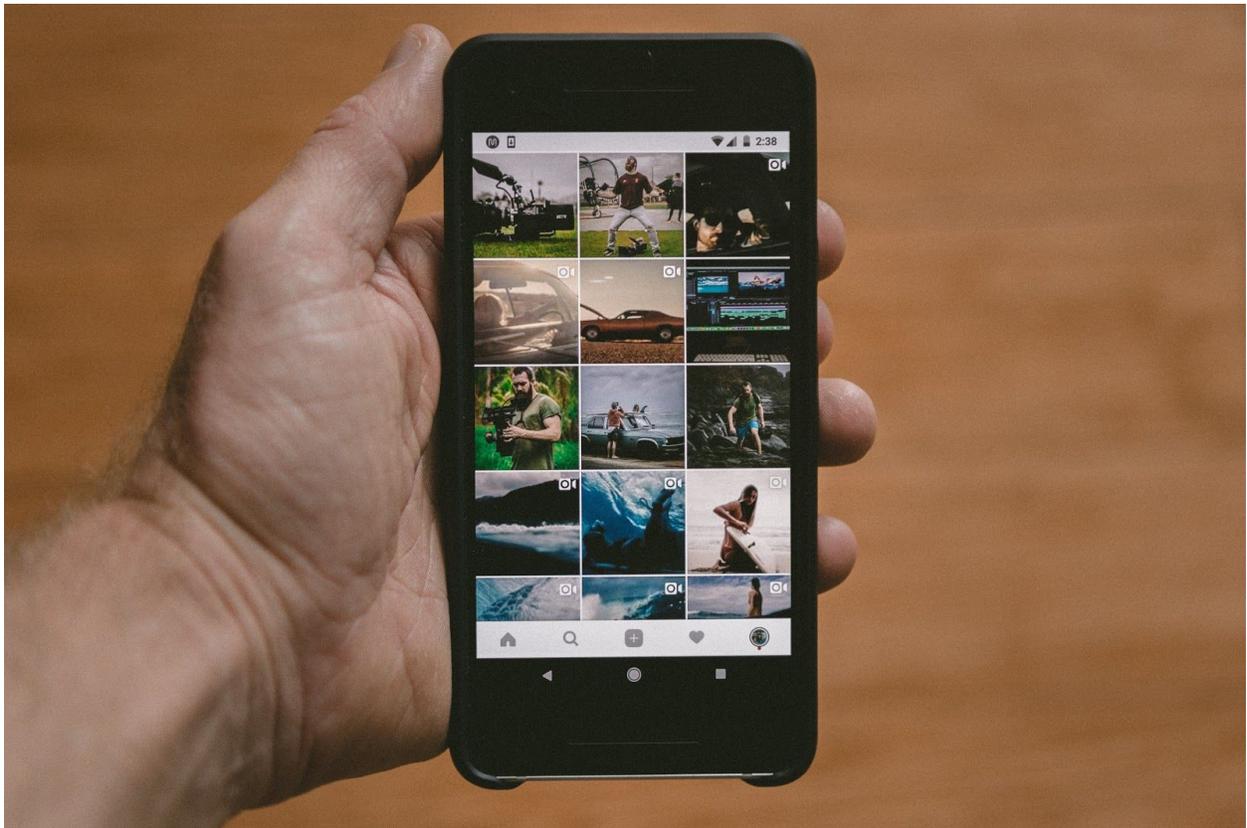
## **The Ecommerce Guide to Building a Real Following on Instagram**

*Top 3 ways your business can build an Instagram following that converts.*

## **How to Build a Real Following on Instagram**

*A how-to guide to making Instagram work for your ecommerce brand.*

Success in ecommerce today demands an Instagram presence. For one, the Instagram community is now at [400 million monthly users](#) (and rising), and users consider it to be *the* place to learn about and connect with brands. While ecommerce marketers know an Instagram presence is essential, they still struggle with building a real following of engaged users.



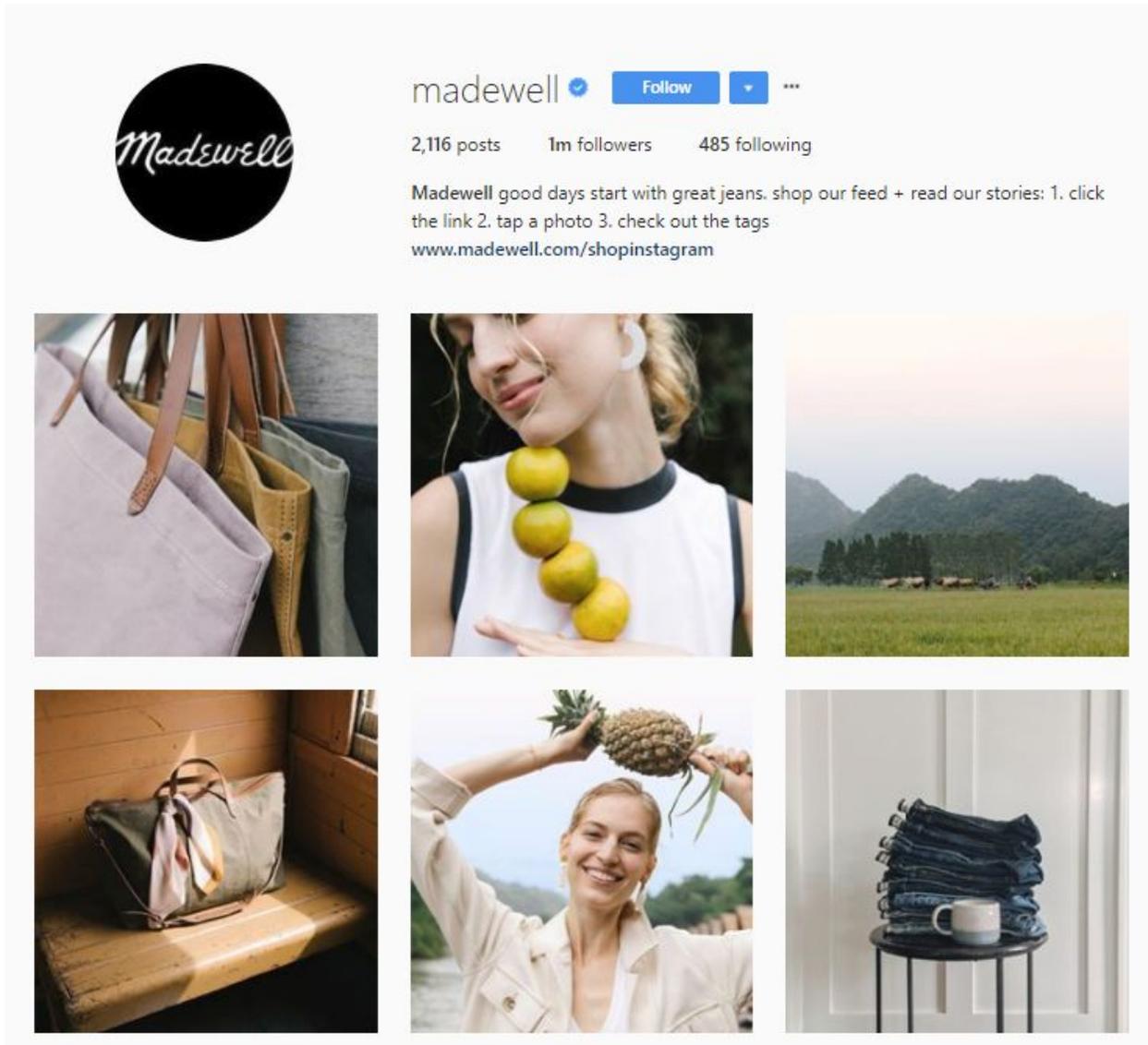
[Source](#)

If an ecommerce company wants to fully leverage Instagram's marketing potential, they must secure a base a large – and engaged – base of followers. To help get brands started, we've put together a comprehensive guide on how to create a strong brand identity and build a real following on Instagram.

## Top 3 Ways to Build a Following on Instagram

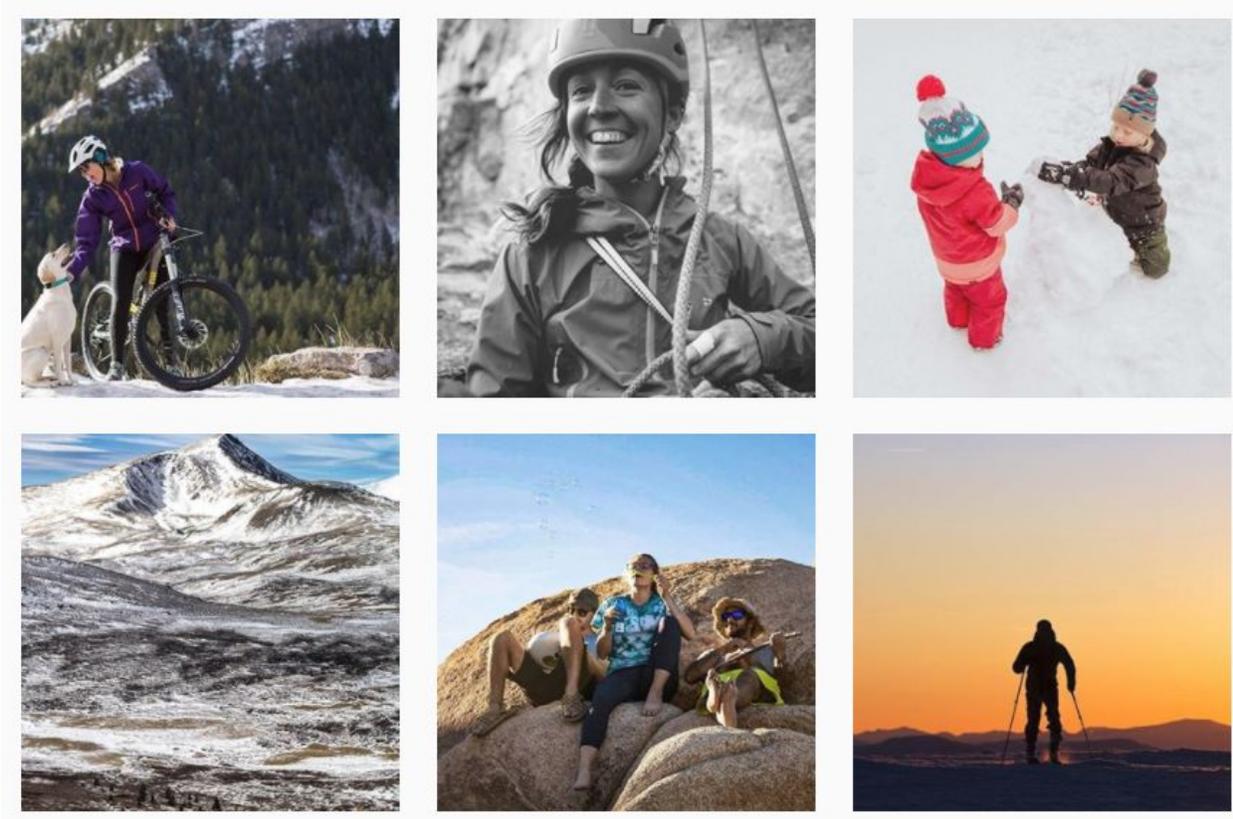
### 1. Establish Brand Identity

A company's brand identity needs to be both consistent and authentic in order to amass a big following. Establishing a brand identity makes a company a living, breathing entity and demonstrates influence and personality. To help achieve a branded identity on Instagram, businesses should first [define their aesthetic](#). Followers should be able to see a post and recognize that it belongs to a particular brand without even seeing the logo. A brand can achieve this by creating their own color palette, deciding upon a photography style, and [using the same filter](#) for all their images. Madewell, an apparel brand, does a great job of maintaining their aesthetic, which is relaxed, classic, and cheerful.



[Source](#)

Instagram is a visual platform – potential followers are looking for compelling imagery, engaging texts, and share-worthy captions. Brands should use images that tell a story and [elicit emotion](#) in the viewer. This drives users not just to like a post, but also to comment and follow. [REI](#), a popular outdoor apparel and supply retailer, does a great job of this on Instagram (see image below). Not only do their posts elicit a strong emotional response; they are in-line with their mission, which is displayed in their profile: “We believe a life outdoors is a life well lived.”

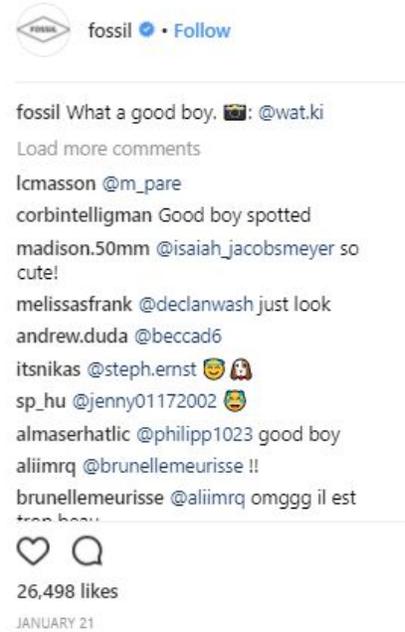


[Source](#)

And of course, the use of [well-researched hashtags](#) can be a boon to reaching potential followers. Hashtags expose your posts to a highly-targeted audience that's more likely to follow and convert. Not using hashtags can severely hurt a post's visibility. However, more hashtags isn't always better – best practices recommend using [5-10 hashtags per post](#), and there is a wide variety of tools such as [Hashtagify](#), [Focal Mark](#), and [Top-Hashtags](#) that can help companies find the hashtags most relevant to their particular niche.

## 2. Post Consistently, at the Right Time

The more consistently a brand posts, the more followers it will attract. A [study by Tailwind](#) found that the more brands posted, the more likes and followers they received. The recommendation is at least one post per day. And if all else fails, [Fashionista recommends](#) posting *something* – photos of food, flowers, and animals are always good performers that can endear more followers to your company. Just be sure you keep all the images on-brand and within your aesthetic. Note how Fossil uses a repost of an adorable furry creature, which ended up being one of their better performing posts.



### [Source](#)

Consistent posting of engaging and compelling images is moot if your target audience does not see them. Timing is everything with ecommerce, and if you want to drive conversions, you need to post when your desired audience is awake and engaging with social media. With regards to the U.S., [experts recommend](#) posting during the weekdays around 8-9 a.m. EST (when East Coasters are heading into work), between 12-2 p.m. (when West Coasters catch up, and East Coasters are at lunch). As for weekends, 11 a.m and 7-9 p.m. on Sunday evenings are usually when people are relaxing and unwinding. If you want to find trends about where and when your specific audience spends time on Instagram, there are a plethora of [analytic tools](#) you can use.

### 3. Reach Out to Followers

A more aggressive way to gain followers is to reach out to them through strategic partnerships. This can be achieved by leveraging Instagram influencers, who are personality-driven brands with large numbers of engaged followers. Using influencers works as a type of paid shout-out, where the influencer promotes the brand, product, or service on their profile. Note how style influencer [Emma Hill](#) promotes the sleek shoe brand [Kurt Geiger](#) below (while also seamlessly incorporating KG's #notfortheygym hashtag).



emmahill • Follow

Paid partnership with kurtgeiger  
London, United Kingdom

emmahill TGIF 🙌 @kurtgeiger  
#notforthegym  
Find all the outfit details in today's post on  
EJSTYLE.CO.UK

Load more comments

sarachrg Chic

cinthiadnl 😂😂

samischecht Great look! Amazing!

nyasmin15 Chic

hel.enw ❤️❤️

emmahill @yannnn.c all details of the  
outfit are in today's blog post 👍

isabelaisabelaaa Looking great  
@michaelavreja

neda.zhdi Wow love your bag hun ❤️👜  
🐱



10,020 likes

6 DAYS AGO

### [Source](#)

This practice has shown to be a key way to gain followers and is utilized by some of the best in ecommerce. In fact, according to an [L2 report published on Retail Dive](#), 91% of luxury brands use influencers, followed by 84% of activewear brands, and 83% of beauty brands. According to that same report, “Brands that saw the highest engagement rates on their own social media accounts all had strong influencer strategies, indicating that influencers may have a halo effect on brand account engagement as well.”

However, it’s important to note that different influencers are more impactful depending on what you use them for. [Some studies](#) have indicated that micro-influencers (10k-100k followers) are the way to go for optimal engagement, but [more recent studies](#) have shown that they aren’t actually worth the cost. So which is best? The [current recommendation](#) is that marketers mix and match. Large influencers are particularly useful for product launches and tentpole campaigns, whereas micro-influencers may be better suited for increasing brand awareness and engagement with new consumers.

## Ecommerce Instagram Strategy

Instagram has tremendous potential for almost any industry, but it is [especially promising for those in retail, apparel, and fashion](#). The more a brand learns about (and incorporates) [Instagram best practices](#), like the ones mentioned above, the more significant impact they will see in their reach, awareness, engagement, and ultimately, the revenue of their company.

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