

Social Media

Facebook and Instagram tips

Use this Guide if you have worked through [Social Media – Get set for success](#) and you have...



Identified and profiled
your Ideal Customers



Optimised your Facebook and
Instagram profiles



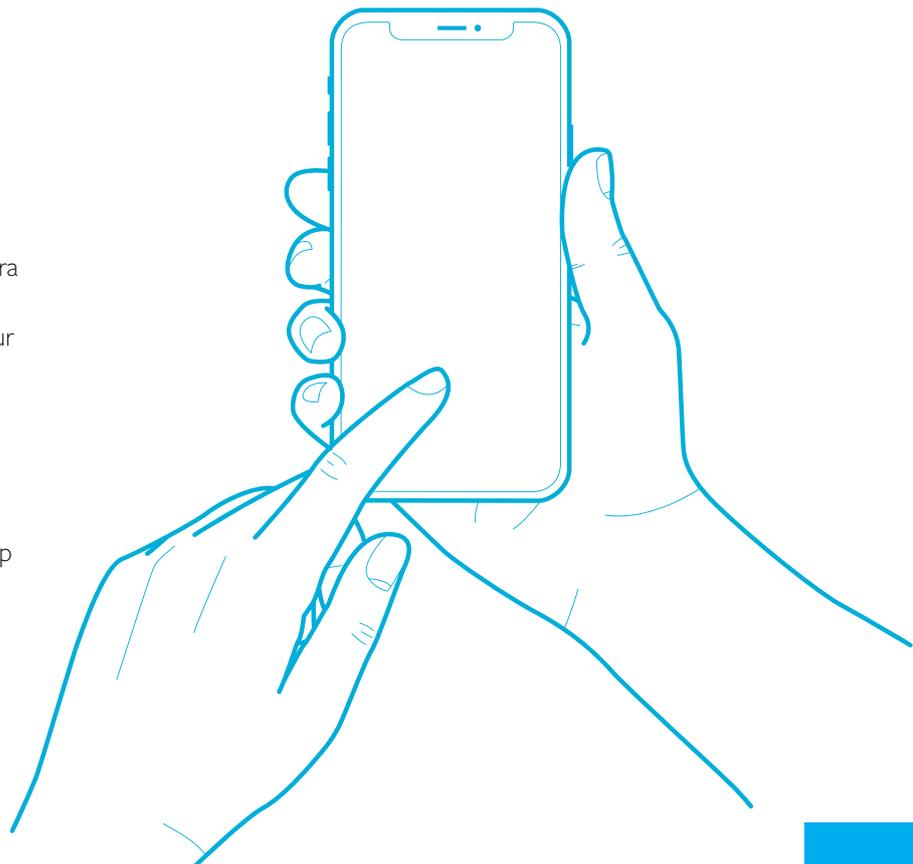
Built content and stories ready
to inspire your audience

Share better social media stories

Outlined below are some best practice and handy hints for capturing suitable social media content that you may like to consider. **Hint:** the best camera for capturing photos and videos for your social media accounts is the one that is with you and your staff - your smartphone!

Square or vertical photos and videos are key.

Hold your smartphone vertically to capture vertical photos and videos (1:1 or 4:5 ratio) for your Instagram and Facebook feed. Vertical photos take up more of the mobile screen, making it easier to catch the viewer's eye and stop them scrolling. Stories are also best shared in vertical (9:16) format.



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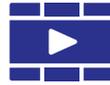
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Photo Tips

You are looking to share the most 'thumb stopping' photos for your social media communities!

- **Colorful photos get more engagement** - Look for naturally vibrant scenes. Authentic and natural images see higher engagement than overtly edited images - small adjustments to colour/saturation/exposure should be all the editing your photos require.
- **Use framing** - Get creative when capturing scenery or an outdoor view. Placing something in the foreground to draw the viewer's eye can add context to your shot. Likewise, shooting from a 'first-person' perspective can introduce a human element (e.g. legs stretched out on a kayak, hands on the bike handlebars against a great backdrop).
- **Share food or beverages with a view** - Give your food or beverage photos a strong sense of place, by placing them in the foreground against a nice backdrop of your business. Think: red wine or cake and coffee by the fire in winter, or a colourful plate of food being enjoyed 'al-fresco' in summer. Make sure the background is not too blurred out and try and keep the horizon line in frame if shooting outside. It is less about what is on the plate and more about where people are actually eating it - showcase your amazing place and local scenery! Resist the urge to take overhead plate shots and close-ups, as these tend to appear as though they could be anywhere!
- **Share your customer's photos** - Resharing photos that your customers have posted is one of the most effective ways of growing your social media presence. Request permission to reshare images from accounts that have tagged you in their photos on social media. Remember: word-of-mouth is the new word-of-mouth. Use #visitcanberra for the chance to be featured across VisitCanberra's account.
- **It is best not to share photos that are** collages, black and white, watermarked, or anything that may appear like sales or commercial material. Slick, branded imagery with too much text is a no-no on social.



Video tips

People love videos and they are an extremely powerful way to capture the hearts and minds of new and existing customers. Facebook and Instagram also reward great video content with extended reach, so it has become increasingly important to make good use of them in your social media schedule. Capture videos of happenings in your business or destination that inspire or help your Ideal Customer(s).

- **Clean your lens** - Taking two seconds to clean your smartphone's lens can make the world of difference to the quality!
- **Take 'first person' videos** - This helps customers imagine themselves in your experience.
- **Keep it smooth and steady** - Hold your smartphone vertically with 2 hands. Keep your elbows to your sides to make a firm base. Pivot slowly if the video has movement.
- **Keep it real** - Don't be too hung up about taking the perfect video. Be human and have some fun! Tell your business and wider destination stories and see how they resonate with your social media community.
- **Keep it short** - Videos under one minute in length generally work best.
- **Make sure it makes sense without sound** - Many people tend to watch social media videos with sound turned off. Consider using closed captions for greater accessibility.

Posting tips for Instagram and Facebook

As a generous estimate, around 3%-5% of fans and followers see unpaid organic newsfeed posts. Consider the following tips to help improve this average.

Tips for Instagram newsfeed posts

Your Instagram newsfeed reflects your business brand. Therefore, it is considered best practice to only share your best photos or videos on the newsfeed. Leave anything less engaging for Stories which do not live on.

Do

- ✔ **Credit and thank the creator**
If using User Generated Content, always credit the original creator of the image or video to thank them and provide an incentive for others to consider tagging you in exchange for a feature as well.
- ✔ **Use the “Tag People” function**
Physically tag @visitcanberra, @australia and any other relevant media accounts to catch their attention and increase the chance of your post being shared, and thus providing an opportunity to extend your reach to new and bigger audiences.
- ✔ **Use emojis sparingly**
Emojis have become almost like punctuation online. When used sparingly, emojis can help make your captions more engaging and break up slabs of text. Consider using for detailing the location of your image, for where (online) customers can find out more information, and any seasonal/business appropriate emojis that might be relevant.
- ✔ **Create an engaging caption**
Consider being authentic, light hearted and playful where appropriate. Capture the mood of what the creator is experiencing at that very moment, and any interesting anecdotes. Do not just rely on the photo or video to tell the story.
- ✔ **Add a Location**
Add a location tag to show where the post is located geographically. Like hashtags, ‘geo-tags’ are also an important form of discovery for people searching for images in particular locations.
- ✔ **Keep mobile screens in mind**
If you are planning your social media content on your desktop, always remember that the majority of your audience is going to be seeing your content from their mobile phones. Make sure any details you want to showcase won’t be lost when scaled down to size.
- ✔ **Use Hashtags on Instagram**
Add a few hashtags, including #visitcanberra and #seeaustralia for amplification in the caption (maximum five). In the first comment under your post, consider adding additional hashtags to help with discovery. These may include any hashtags relevant to your #destination, #experiences and #location. Research potential #hashtags on Instagram to see the most relevant and most used.

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Don't

- ✗ Overlook your industry advantage**
You are blessed to be working in an industry that's about sharing beautiful places in the world. Use your social media channels as an introduction to these places by sharing the most beautiful imagery/video you can find.
- ✗ Post personal holiday snaps, conference or trade show photos**
While your audience does like to see the people and staff involved in running the business, remember these are not your personal accounts – the role of these accounts is to showcase your experience to consumers.
- ✗ Cross post an Instagram Post to Facebook**
It is okay to share the same photo or video, but it is not considered best practice to link posts. Facebook Newsfeed Posts tend not to have #hashtags, and generally need a shorter caption.
- ✗ Use lots of capitals in your caption**
Try to keep that CAPS LOCK off when writing as capitals is usually perceived as shouting or yelling at the audience.
- ✗ Push sales**
Facebook and Instagram actively penalise posts that mention 'visiting the link' or 'clicking through to book' by showing your post to fewer people. Use your posts to provide the reason why a customer should seek out more information.
- ✗ Post politically divisive or controversial material**
Remember the core purpose of your social media accounts. Posting material that may stir up comments or reactions is likely to backfire and is never a good look professionally.

Tips for Instagram Stories

Since Instagram Stories were introduced, they have received excellent engagement and reach on the platform. While they only last 24 hours from the feed (and longer if pinned to a 'Highlight'), they are viewed by a large proportion of Instagram's users, and are a fantastic way to showcase your 'behind the scenes' and authentic day-to-day happenings.

- Post as often as fits in your business. Timing is less important - share at a time of day that suits you.
- Share vertical photos or videos to make full use of the mobile viewing space.
- Share what is happening in and around your business that is relevant to your Ideal Customers.
- Show what's on, show a process or show behind the scenes.
- Use the sticker functionality to mention @visitcanberra, add hashtags and location tags.
- Have a play with other features to tell an engaging story (e.g. add an animated GIF or voting poll).
- Trial sharing multiple Stories in one go – video frames are a maximum of 15 seconds each.
- Curate and categorise your best stories into 'Highlights' on your profile to extend their life beyond 24hrs.
- Make use of the link click (formerly swipe up) feature to drive traffic to your website.
- Use the VisitCanberra GIFs to decorate your Instagram Stories. Click the grey 'GIF' search and type 'visitcanberra' to see a range of fun illustrations you can use to bring some colour and movement to your Instagram Stories.

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Tips for Facebook newsfeed

Facebook is a key channel to reach your Ideal Customer(s). However, given the platform's algorithm dictates 'which users see what content', posts with the most engagement (reactions, comments, shares) are the most likely to be seen by your community.

- Use engaging, colourful vertical photos and videos which tell a helpful, inspiring or everyday unusual stories that are of interest to your Ideal Customer(s).
- Use shorter captions – one brief sentence is usually fine.
- Use www.bitly.com to shorten and tailor links when sending people to your website.
- Credit and thank the original creator (if not your own photo or video).
- Make sure your business information ('About' section) is up-to-date. Facebook is being used more and more as a directory, and appears high in search engine results when looking for opening hours and contact information.
- Respond to comments and messages. Treat your Facebook as an extension of your customer service – but instead of speaking to one person, you are potentially speaking to the world; always be polite, courteous, and use it as an opportunity to create great relationships with customers.
- Create 'Events'. This is an opportunity to share the word and drive visitors to events you may have coming up.

Get more engagement on Facebook and Instagram

Share posts when people are online

- Social media posts gain most traction within two to three hours of posting, with reach and engagement significantly dropping thereafter. Consider posting at a time your Ideal Customer(s) are online, to give your content the best chance of being seen, such as early evening or morning (when your audience are scrolling on their smartphones).
- Use scheduling tools such as Facebook Creator Studio (free) for Facebook and Instagram to schedule out your posts. Other paid third-party schedulers and analytics tools like Iconosquare are also worth consideration.
- Set aside an hour or so a week to plan a few engaging photo or video posts that inspire, help or let your customers get to better know your business, its people and your local destination.

Seasonality is key

- Your channel should reflect what is happening right now. Showing autumn colours in spring, or red wine by the fire in summer doesn't make too much sense. Where possible, prioritise content that is recent, relevant and timely (e.g. post about koalas during joey season, snowy experiences during winter etc).

Engage with your community

- Social is all about two-way communication and building of trust and engagement with your community.
- Set your social media notifications so you are alerted to comments and direct messages and can respond to them promptly.
- Build relationships on social with other local tourism businesses by following and interacting authentically with their posts.
- Delete or hide any spam comments if your posts receive them.
- Make heroes of your content contributors – people love seeing their photos used with permission and credit.

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Social Media tools



Creator Studio app

Facebook Creator Studio (free)

business.facebook.com/creatorstudio/home - allows you to schedule posts for both Facebook and Instagram.



ICONOSQUARE

Iconosquare (paid)

pro.iconosquare.com/ - is worth considering if you are serious about using Instagram for your business. It provides more detailed insights, reporting, and more sophisticated scheduling.

Canva

Canva (free)

canva.com drag and drop graphic design templates. Great for creating Facebook Page cover images and Facebook Ads.



grammarly

Grammarly (free)

grammarly.com/ a spell check for your browser.



Emoji Keyboard (free)

emojikeyboard.org/ to insert emojis into your posts when scheduling from your desktop.

Learn more

- Get involved with VisitCanberra on Social Media: tourism.act.gov.au/marketing/visitcanberra-on-social-media/
- Read Tourism Australia's – Building your Business Using Social Media: tourism.australia.com/en/events-and-tools/industry-resources/building-your-tourism-business/using-social-media.html