

INSTAGRAM

MANAGEMENT



A Tactical Masterclass

Presented by Chloe West

Module 3

Instagram Management

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Instagram Management

By the end of this module, you should understand the following:

- Instagram Basics and Terminology
- Setting Up an Instagram Business Account
- Creating and Curating Content for Instagram
- Using Instagram Stories, Reels, and IGTV to Grow Your Account
- Building a Strong Instagram Community



3.1. Instagram Basics and Terminology

The Instagram algorithm will always be an invisible force shifting the tide of the Feed. Past social algorithm updates have rocked brands' organic reach and left marketers scrambling to both understand the changes and rethink their strategies.

But while the algorithm is a force, understanding it can help you do everything from creating successful content to gaining Instagram followers.

In this section, we'll break down the state of the Instagram algorithm as we know it.

We'll also dive into specific strategies and tactics to ensure you're maximizing your organic reach as the algorithm continues to evolve.

Feel free to skip ahead to any of these sections:

- [What is the Instagram algorithm?](#)
- [How does the Instagram algorithm work in 2024?](#)
- [Changes to the Instagram algorithm in 2024](#)
- [5 tips for using the Instagram algorithm to your advantage in 2024](#)

3.1.1. What is the Instagram algorithm?

The Instagram algorithm is the set of processes Instagram uses to understand what users like. The platform uses this information to show people more of what they enjoy by predicting what content someone will find interesting and engaging.

Contrary to popular belief, there isn't one, all-powerful algorithm.

Each section of Instagram—Reels, Stories/Feed, and Explore—has its own.

3.1.2. How does the Instagram algorithm work in 2024?

Each section of Instagram has a different algorithm that uses unique “signals”—or information about the post, person who posted or user—to predict what users will like the most, and what should be prioritized in their Feed or Explore Page.

From the time you publish a post to how often someone “likes” your content, these signals are all weighted differently on each part of the platform to rank posts. For example, when clicking through Stories, people most likely want to see content from their friends. But if they’re browsing Explore, they want to see something new.

At the end of the day, Instagram’s goal is to make users’ time on the platform worthwhile by showing them what they’ll like and what’s most relevant to them.

Let’s answer the question “How does the Instagram algorithm work?” [with help from their blog](#) by looking at how each part of the platform ranks posts.

How the Instagram Reels algorithm works

It’s no secret that Instagram Reels are crushing the reach game. Instagram famously went all-in on this format when it first launched, and so did many social media managers.

Reels are meant to entertain, so the Instagram Reels algorithm aims to prioritize entertaining, funny, and inspiring videos. For example, this [Reel by Figo](#) achieved over 3 million views—while it’s funny, it also states what their business is all about.

Here are the top signals the Instagram Reels algorithm uses to determine which Reels to show users:

1. **User engagement:** What Reels has someone engaged with recently? (I.e.: Likes, comments, shares.)
2. **Interaction history:** Have you ever interacted with the person who posted the Reel before? Reels are meant to reach new people, but past interactions suggest interest.
3. **The content:** What audio or music does it use? How's the quality?
4. **Who posted it:** How popular is the person who posted it?

What to avoid in your Reels

Just as you can win points with the algorithm, you can lose points, too. Avoid these common mistakes.

- Low-resolution Reels (blurry or low-res)
- Watermarked Reels (including the TikTok logo)
- Reels with no audio
- Too much text
- Political Reels
- Violating [Instagram's community guidelines](#)—check out Instagram's [recommendations resource](#) for more.

How the Instagram Feed and Instagram Story algorithm works

As Instagram put it on their blog, “Feed and Stories are places where people want to see content from their friends, family and those they are closest to.”

The default Home feed is still algorithmic. Knowing how it works can help you pull ahead of the competition.

Here are the top signals the Instagram Story algorithm and the Feed algorithm use to predict what a user is most interested in:

1. The content itself: How popular is it? How many likes and comments does it have? When was it posted? If it's a video, how long is it? Is it tagged with a location and, if so, which one?
2. Who posted it: How many times has a user interacted with content from the person who posted the content in previous weeks? How interesting do they find the person who posted?
3. User activity: How many posts has a user liked, and what were they about?
4. Interaction history: How interested is a user in content posted from a particular account? How often do they comment on those posts?

Pro tip: Engagement matters—the more likely Instagram thinks a user is to actually interact with a post, the higher that post will be ranked.

The five interactions Instagram uses most to rank posts in the Feed are: how likely someone is to spend time on a post, comment, like, reshare or tap the profile picture.

What to avoid in your Feed posts and Stories

- Posting too often. Instagram tries to avoid showing too many posts from one person to users in a row.
- Violating Instagram's community guidelines: This is something you should avoid with all posts.
- Posting misinformation. Do this too many times, and Instagram might make all of your content, not just the one post, harder to find.

How the Instagram Explore page algorithm works

If you've ever liked one too many dance videos only to find your whole Explore page is full of dance content, you already have an idea of how Explore works.

Explore decides what to show you by looking at two things: your past interactions, and other accounts who like the same content you do. This helps Instagram get to know you better and surface new posts and accounts you might enjoy.

Here are the top signals the Instagram Explore page uses:

1. The content itself: How popular is a post? How quickly is it receiving likes, comments, shares and saves?
2. Interaction history: If you have interacted with anyone who shows up in your Explore page, they may show up again.
3. User activity (generally and in Explore): What kinds of posts do you like, save or comment on? And how have you historically interacted with the Explore page?
4. Info about the account that posted: How popular has their content been recently?

What to avoid showing up in Explore

The biggest tip here is to ensure your posts don't violate Instagram's Community Guidelines—i.e., avoid showing potentially sensitive content.

Doing this will prevent your content from being shared in Explore.

3.1.3. Changes to the Instagram algorithm in 2024

There isn't one big, new Instagram algorithm this year—luckily. While the algorithms have remained largely the same since around 2021, that doesn't mean the Instagram algorithm hasn't evolved.

Here are some of the biggest Instagram algorithm changes in 2024:

1. Photos are making a comeback

That's right, marketers. After leaning hard into video content after the launch of Reels, Instagram announced that they over-indexed on video, and are taking a step back. Which means photos are getting more love than they have in recent years.

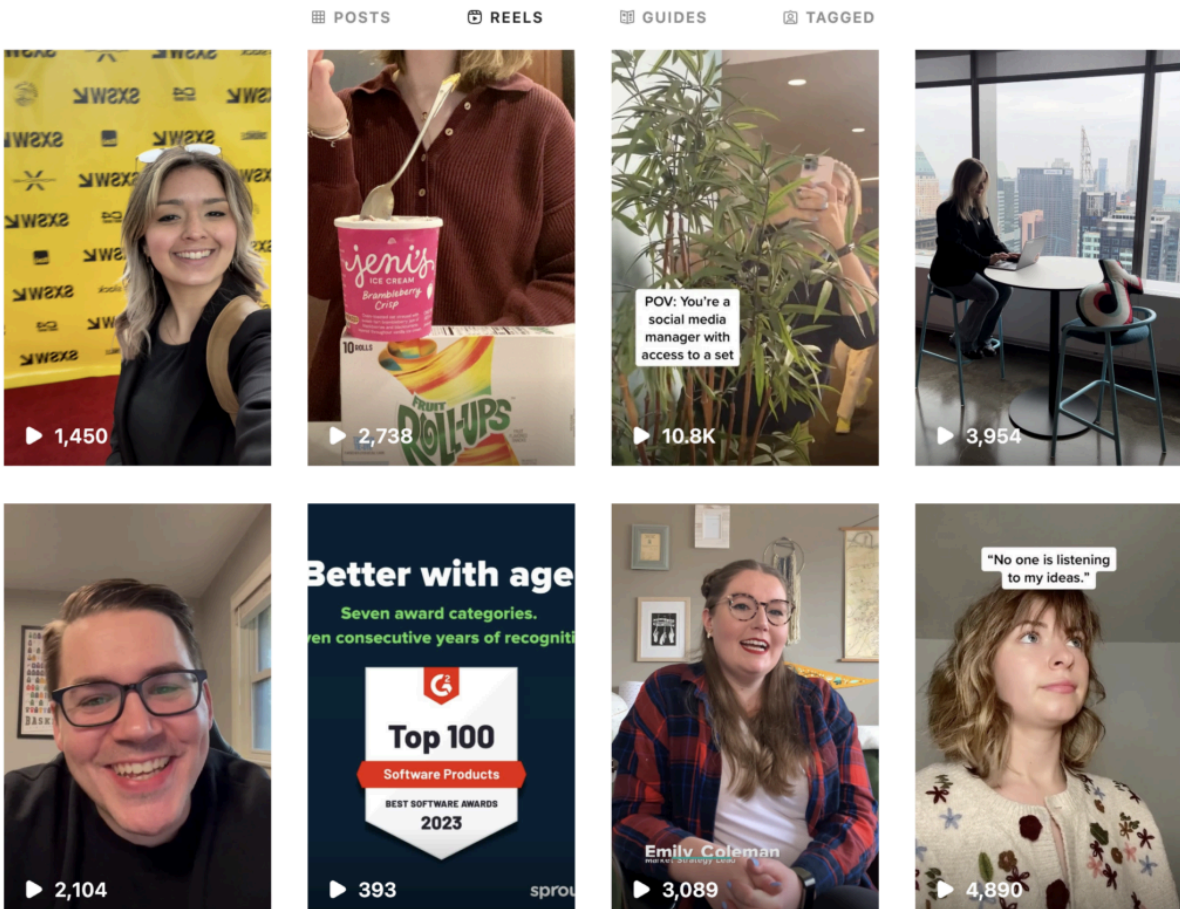
That being said, don't count Reels out. Considering Reels have the highest reach rate of any content on Instagram, video is still extremely important.

Instagram

Q Search

Log In

Sign Up



2. In-Feed suggestions have increased

You may have noticed more “suggested” posts from accounts you don’t follow in your Feed lately.

The Feed is getting a dash of the Explore page treatment. Suggested posts aren’t ads, but rather posts similar to those from accounts you follow that Instagram thinks you might be interested in.

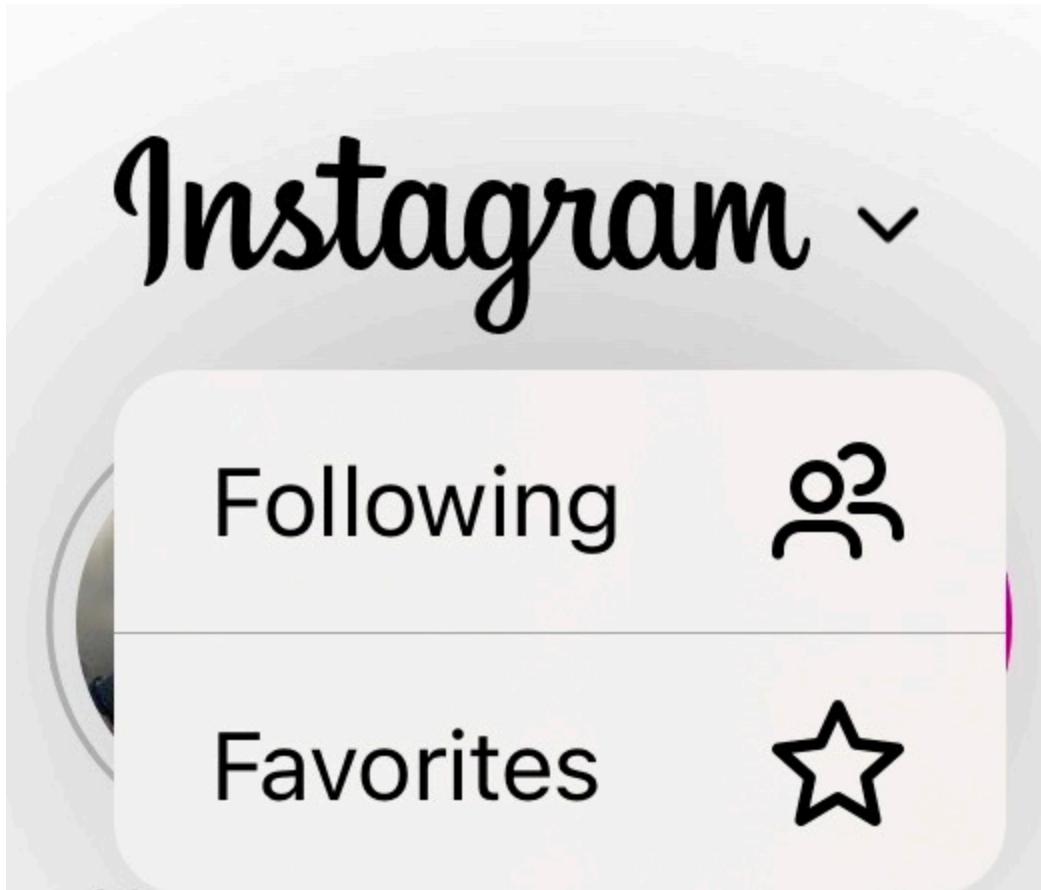
While suggested posts have been around for a while, last spring Adam Mosseri announced on Twitter that the platform would be testing more frequent post recommendations.

The way Instagram determines which posts to suggest is not far off from the Explore page algorithm. The platform uses posts you've interacted with, your history of interacting with an account or similar accounts, and the popularity of a post to determine whether or not to suggest it.

3. Changes to the Feed

As of 2024, Instagram users can now choose between three different kinds of Feeds:

- Chronological (the “Following” Feed), where you see content in order of recency. You won't see any suggested posts from accounts you do not follow in this Feed.
- Algorithmic (the “Home” Feed), which is based more heavily on the Feed algorithm we discussed. You'll see a mix of suggested posts and posts from accounts you follow—but not necessarily in order of recency.
- Favorites, where you'll see content from a specific list of accounts you've chosen. Content from these accounts will also appear higher in the algorithmic “Home” Feed.



You can't control what kind of feed your followers use. But the algorithmic "Home" feed is still the default. And there are many ways for your content to appear higher in this feed.

3.1.4. Five Tips for Using the Instagram Algorithm to your advantage in 2024

If you can't beat it, use it. Come up with a content strategy that gives the Instagram algorithm exactly what it wants. One way to do this is to create consistently high-quality posts that can stand up to future algorithm changes.

When you notice your Instagram engagement is down, it may not always be attributable to the algorithm alone. However, these tips will help you future-proof and prepare for Instagram algorithm updates with outstanding content and a deeper understanding of how the platform works.

Here are five tips to add to your social strategy to conquer the Instagram algorithm in 2024.

1. Post content consistently—with a focus on video

Remember—the Feed algorithm won't show too many posts from one account in a row.

But it also heavily weights how often people have interacted with an account in the past few weeks—post too infrequently, you slip under the radar.

The key is consistency.

In terms of how often to post, start with the average 1-2 times a day benchmark.

Then, see if posting more or less works better for you.

Experiment to find the right mix of content types. For example, carousels are a secret superpower for engagement—they encourage people to linger on content longer and engage.

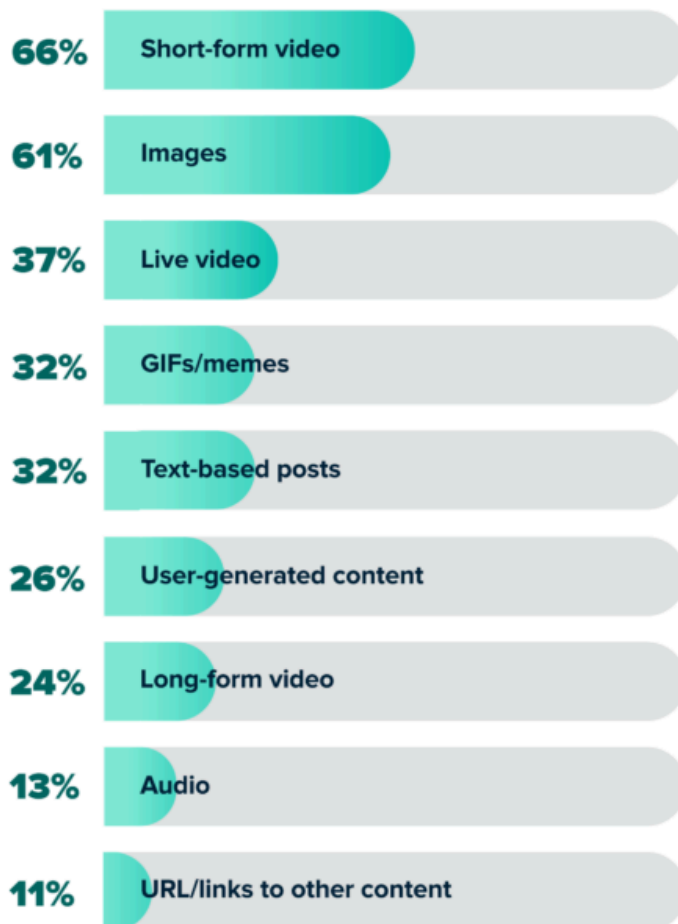
Reels remain a superpower for reach.

Static photos have been reprioritized in the Feed.

Stories help you stay at the top of the Feed all day, without over-posting and spamming your followers.

And while photos are making a comeback on Instagram, don't abandon video. According to The Sprout Social Index, 66% of consumers think short-form video content is the most engaging type of content. So continue using Reels to appeal to consumer preference.

The most engaging types of in-feed social content



Pro tip: Repost Reels to your Story to beat the Feed, and rack up more views. That's right—Story views count toward your total Reels views.

How to do it:

Keep a content calendar to maintain a balanced publishing and format cadence. Better yet, schedule your posts ahead of time.

2. Craft compelling captions with keywords and hashtags

Don't wait for the algorithm to serve your content to new followers—use keywords to bring your content to them.

Keywords are now searchable on Instagram, which means you can make your content easier for future audience members to find.


How to do it:

Craft Instagram copy with an SEO twist. Include relevant keywords in these areas to make yourself more discoverable:

- Captions: Your captions should be compelling as it is. Add natural keywords and terms that will help searchers find your post.
- Alt text: Alt text is given for social media accessibility. Add relevant keywords to make your content more likely to appear in Explore.
- Hashtags: Remember, Instagram hashtags are searchable, too.
- Your bio: Your handle helps people find your brand. But your Instagram bio can help people find your account when they search by industry, or when they don't know your handle. Notice that Figo uses "FigoPet" as their handle. But their name, Figo Pet Insurance, includes "pet insurance" as a keyword.

< → **figopet** ✓

🔔 ...



1,385
Posts

14.1K
Followers

1,043
Following


Figo Pet Insurance ←


Product/service


Taking a totally new approach to pet insurance.
We work hard so pets can play harder 🐾
To be featured, tag us [#yesfigopets](#)
Chicago, Illinois


sprout.link/figopet


Following ▾ Message Contact +

 Gift Guides

 Figo Wrapp...

 FAQ

 FigoFam

 Blog

3. Spark conversation and engagement

It cannot be overstated: Engagement is a big deal on Instagram.

From likes and comments to the overall popularity of a post, engagement can make or break your content's ranking on the platform.

And while engagement may seem like a code to crack, there are ways to encourage it to appeal to the algorithms.

How to do it:

Here are a few creative ways to spark conversations and encourage engagement:

- Ask your audience questions: Create a post or caption that encourages audience members to comment with their takes. For example: What are your goals for the year? What do you want to see from us more? What are your biggest questions about...?
- Post trivia: Use your caption or post to quiz your audience and encourage them to comment with their guesses.
- “Tag a friend:” Use your caption to encourage fans to tag a friend that the post reminds them of.
- Use Story stickers: Encouraging engagement in your Story wins you points with the algorithm. Use stickers to encourage people to tap through, test their knowledge with a quiz, comment with questions or react.
- React with an emoji: Ritz recently created a viral trend doing this on Twitter.

4. Post when your followers are active

Timing matters in every feed.

The importance of timing in the chronological feed is a given.

But in the Home feed, the more your followers are active when you post, the more early engagements you’ll rack up. This will signal to the algorithm that your content is popular.

Post when your audience is already scrolling and most likely to see your new content.

How to do it:

Instagram’s native analytics provide data on when your followers are active on different days of the week. Simply open the app > go to your profile > tap “professional dashboard” > tap “See all” next to Account insights > tap “total followers” > scroll down to “Most Active Times”.

Most Active Times**5. Lead with your audience**

To truly make the algorithm work in your favor, you need to create content that will inspire your audience to engage.

At the end of the day, your content is for your audience. Design it with them in mind.

How to do it:

Your audience is already telling you what topics, content types and posts they like and want to see more of.

To uncover those answers, you need to dig into your data.

Instagram's native analytics provide a basic overview of who your audience is, and your top posts from the past 90 days.

3.1.5. Use the Instagram algorithm to your advantage

When it comes to the Instagram algorithm, the only certainty is uncertainty and inevitable change. Who knows when the next new Instagram algorithm will hit. But for now, you know how to tackle it.

Hopefully, it no longer seems like an elusive creature you're endlessly chasing. Rather, it's a tool you can use to better understand the platform and inform your content.

One action item that will always help you stay ahead of the algorithm and ahead in the Feed is staying organized.