

DEEP DIVE: INSTAGRAM

DCN Member Day

WHAT IS THE VERGE?

The Verge covers the intersection of technology, science, art, and culture. Our mission is to offer in-depth reporting and long-form feature stories, breaking news coverage, product information, and community content in a unified and cohesive manner.

WHY INSTAGRAM?



1,650,000,000
Monthly Active Users



400,000,000+
Monthly Active Users



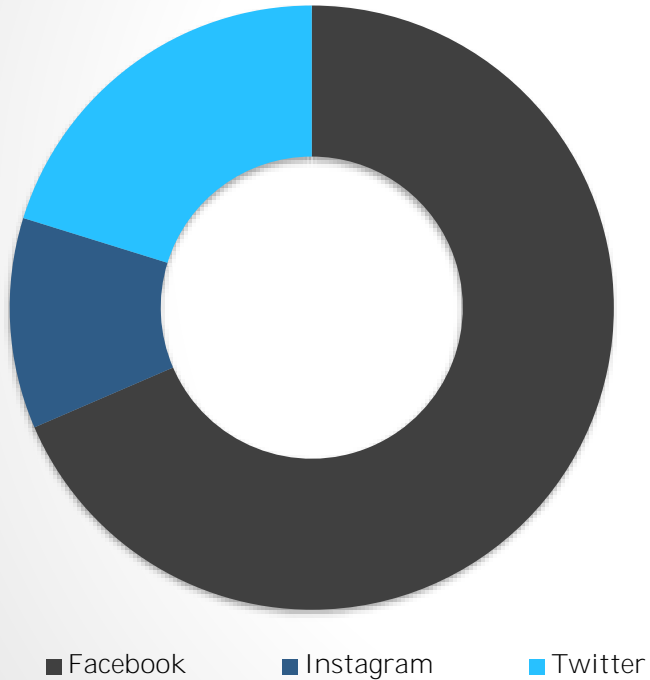
310,000,000
Monthly Active Users



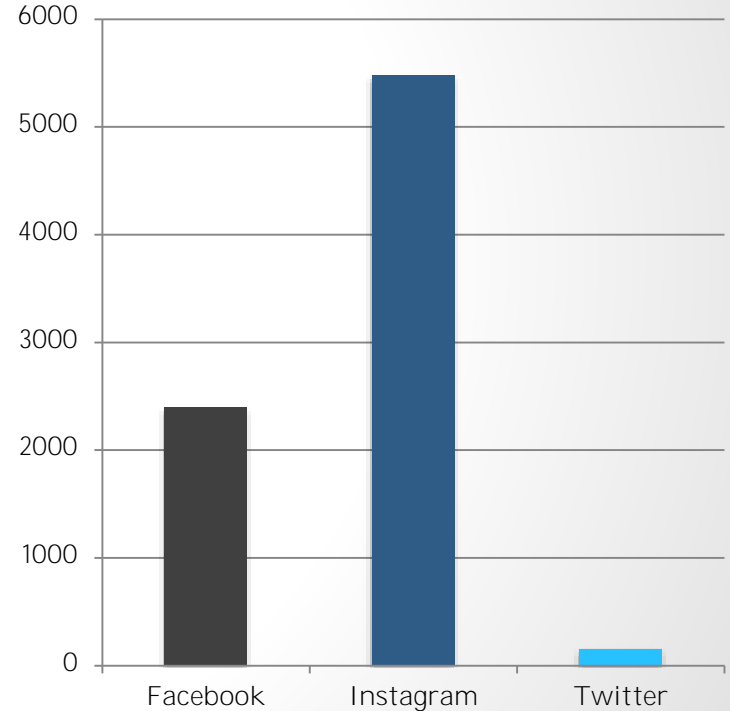
~200,000,000
Monthly Active Users

WHERE PEOPLE ARE ENGAGING

Total Engagements



Engagements Per Post



BE BEAUTIFUL, BUT NOT A STOCK PHOTO



CROP SQUARE OR VERTICAL



VS.



GO FOR ENGAGEMENT, NOT TRAFFIC

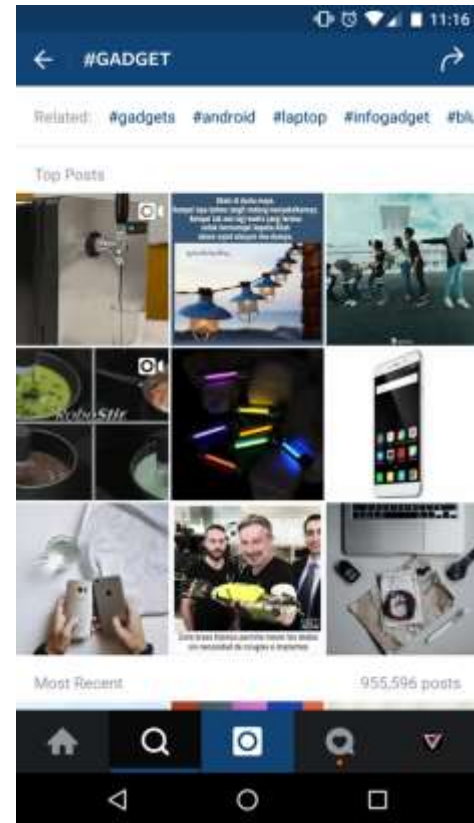
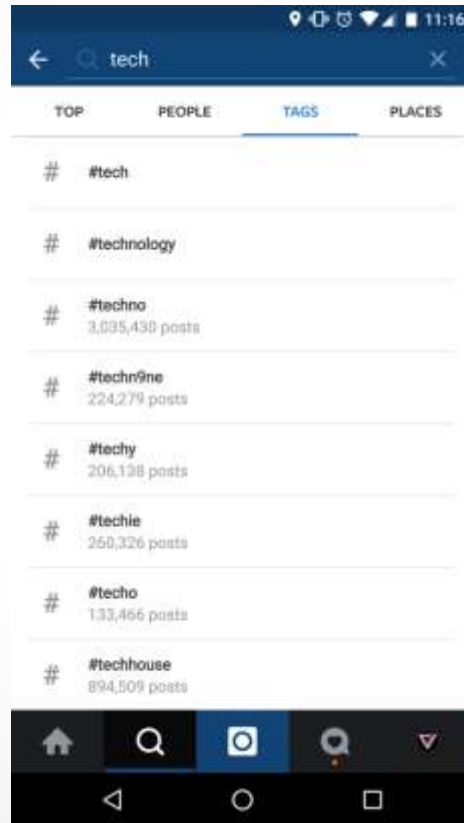
Instagram does not support hyperlinks, so when you promote something out of the app it has to tell the full story. Conversion rates **for the “link in bio”** strategy are very low.



Your post has to feel Instagram native and deliver enough news & information in the caption that you **don't** annoy users by bullying them onto another platform.

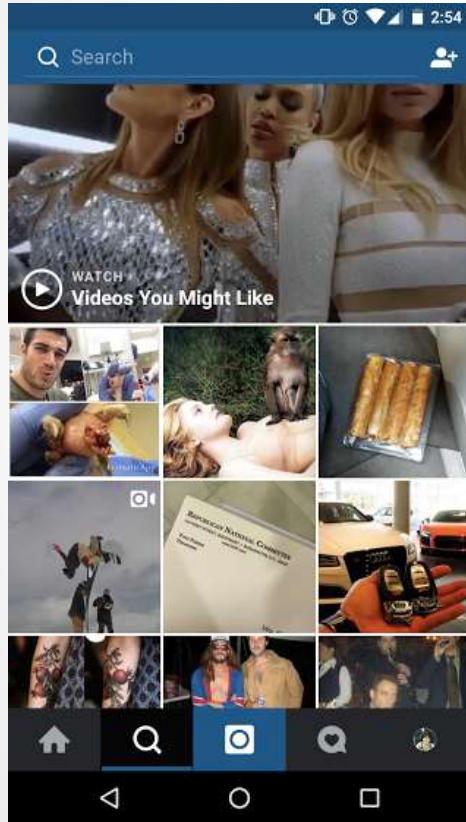
USE HASHTAGS FOR DISCOVERY

Instagram is very transparent with popular hashtags. Include in your post copy to get discovered by specific audiences.



But choose hashtags you can win. **If you're a small page that can't win #tech**, try smaller tags like #gadgetinfo or #android to get into the featured Top Posts section.

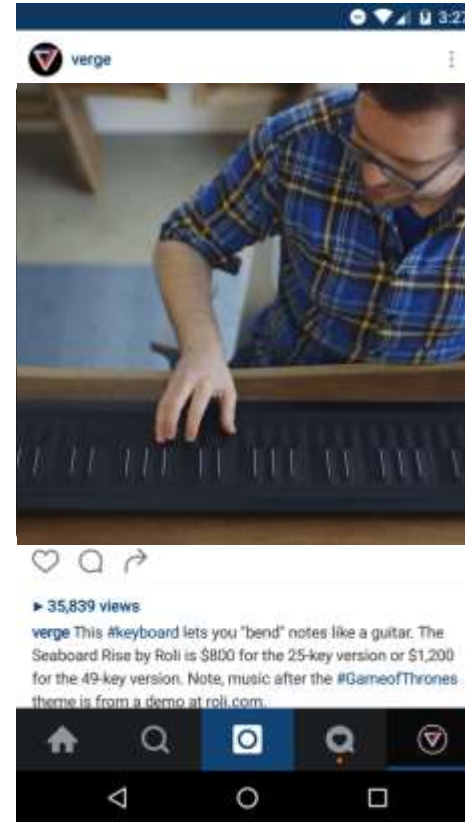
INVEST IN VIDEO



In mid-April, Instagram added videos to its Explore tab, meaning more prominent placement and more organic discovery for video content. And with the introduction of an algorithmic timeline, expect video to play a bigger and bigger role.

MAKE INSTAGRAM-NATIVE CUTS

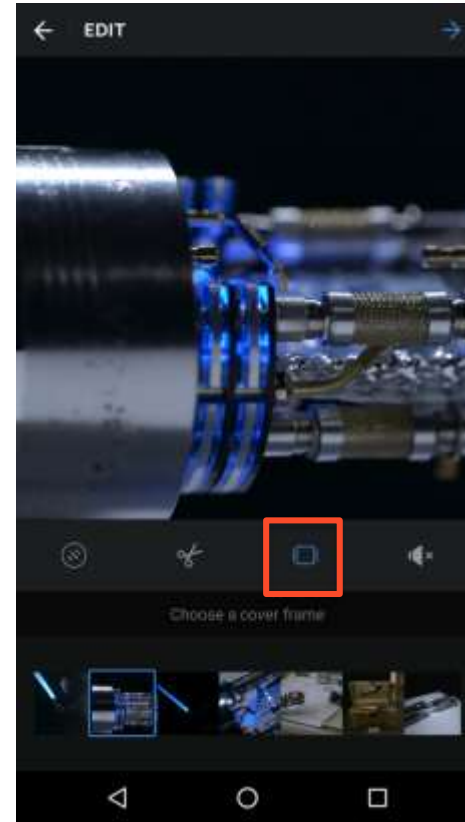
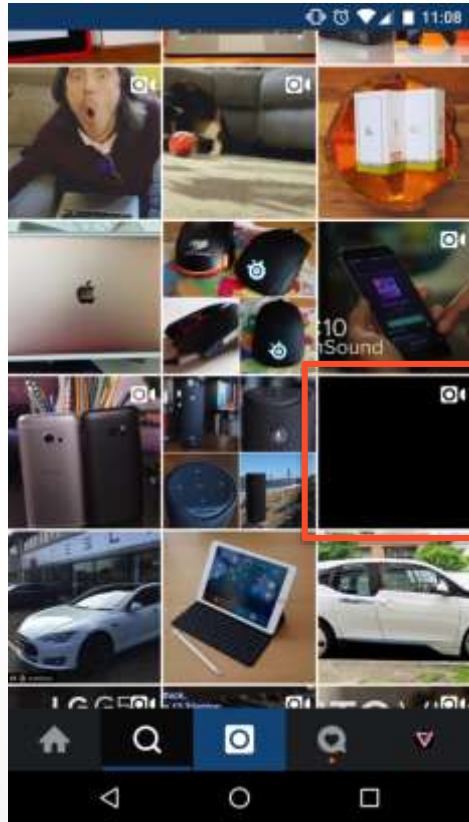
Instagram video should be short, visually stunning, and easy to understand on silent scroll-by on mobile. Square or vertical uses the most screen real estate.



As of March, Instagram now supports up to 60 seconds of video, meaning you have more time tell stories or show products.

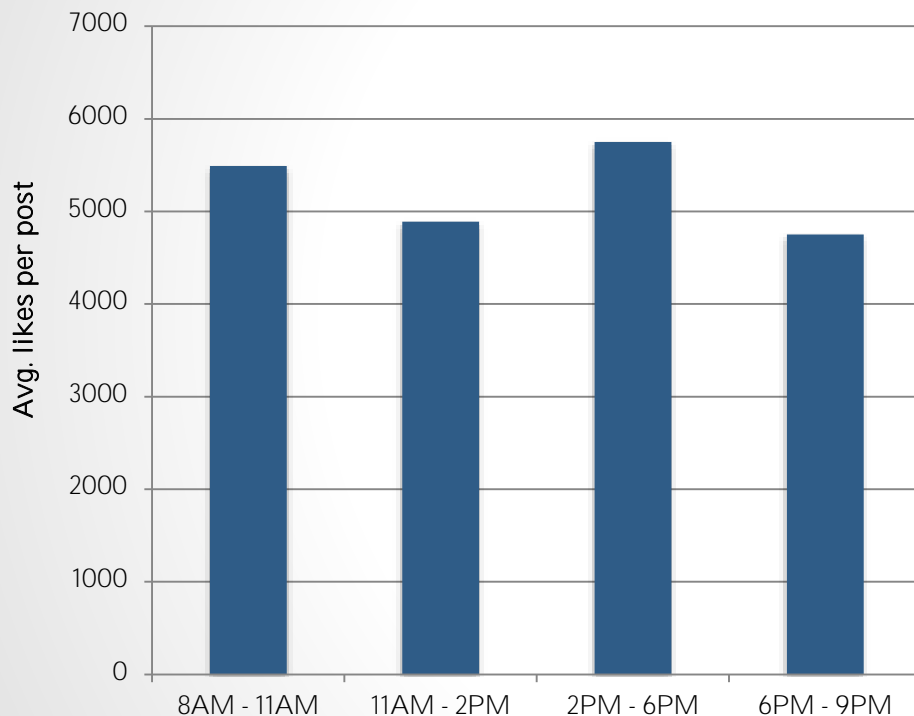
CHOOSE A GOOD THUMB

If your video starts on a black screen and you **aren't careful**, it will be a black box for users and no one will engagement with it.



Take advantage of the ability to choose a cover frame and pick something that teases your video and works as a still image as well.

CONSIDER WHEN YOU POST



Mornings before 11 and early evenings around 5-6PM are our two best-performing time windows to post. People are checking Instagram on their phones, **and they're doing it around commuting** times.

Note, speed to breaking news should always trump optimal time window.

TRY LAYOUT & BOOMERANG

Layout lets you easily create photo collages, selecting different formats and photos sizes.

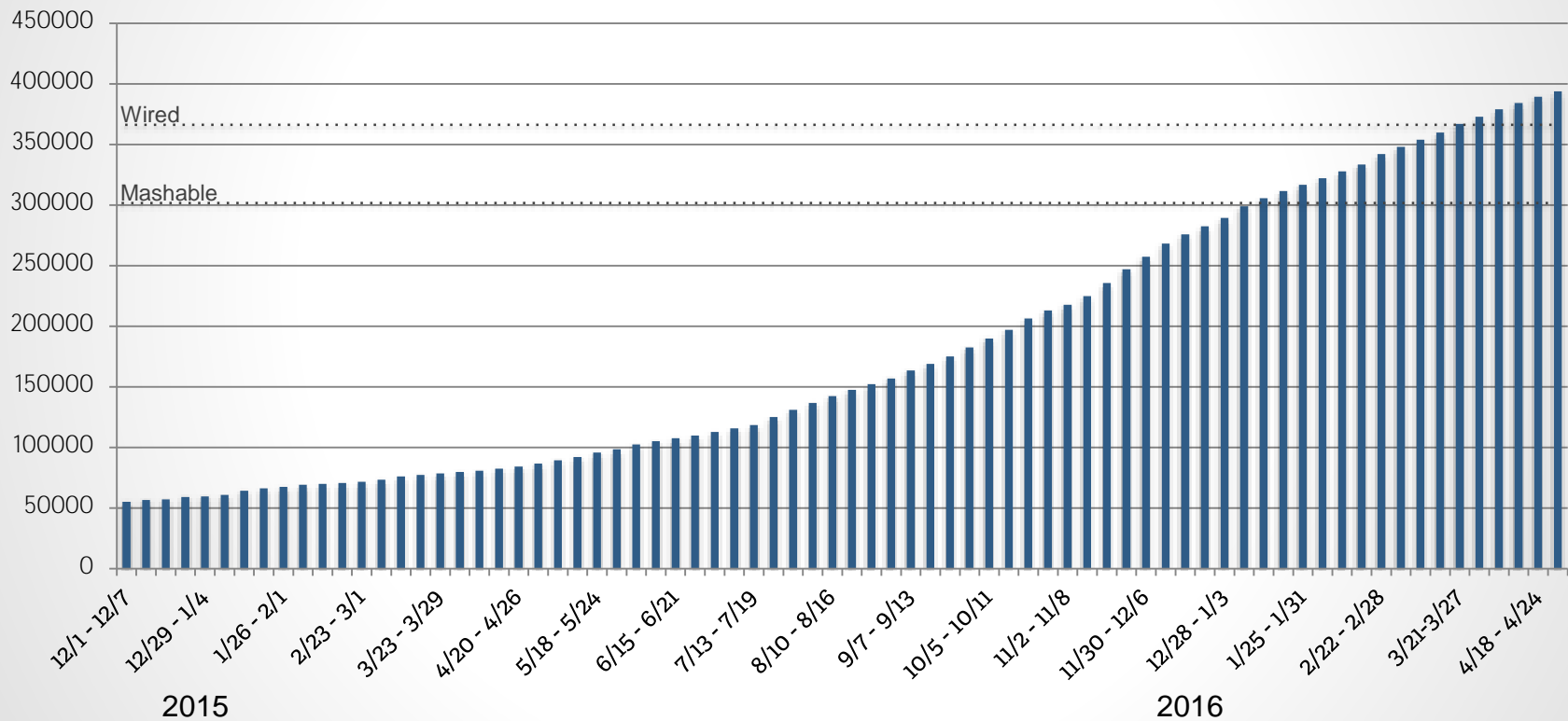


Boomerang creates a looping Instagram version of GIFs (which are not currently supported on the platform).

CONSIDER USER-GENERATED CONTENT



THE GROWTH OPPORTUNITY IS HUGE



KEY TAKEAWAYS



Be where your audience is

Instagram won't be right for everyone. Think about your marketing goals and whether you can commit to 3-4 pieces of creative / week.



Always format for mobile

Vertical photos and square video will occupy more of the smartphone screen as a user scrolls and get higher engagement.



Be beautiful but not stock

Your photos should be consistent and visually captivating, but not feel like Getty. Some brands source user-generated content via hashtags.



Be careful when you post

Mobile usage tends to peak in the mornings and evenings. Avoid early afternoons, and make a plan for weekend posting.



Analyze what's working

Don't be afraid to take risks and then abandon unsuccessful strategies. At the same time, listen to your community for feedback.



Watch out for video

With the new :60 formats, changes to Explore, and move towards algorithmic feeds, prepare for a major platform shift towards video.

THANK YOU

