

THE

NEWS STAND

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Instagram Introduces New Changes

The much awaited, built-in ad blocker for Chrome is finally here

The New and Updated Algorithm

Instagram has recently updated its algorithm, resulting in tons of businesses stressing out over how badly their Instagram profiles are performing.

The goal of most businesses on Instagram is to land on the home page, where posts get the most exposure and engagement. So, how do you get there with the new algorithm in place?

The visual platform has designed its new algorithm to prioritize engagement over everything else. However, there are multiple factors that tie into a post's ability to make it in front of the right audiences at the right time.

Here are some of the major factors Instagram's new algorithm takes into account:



Engagement

This includes the number of views, likes, comments, DM shares, and also the duration of engagement on your posts. The new algorithm rewards posts with higher engagement and increases their chances of being found on the front page.



Relevancy

The algorithm also takes the relevancy of the content into account. Not every user's front page looks the same, and that's because the content shown to



them depends on the genres they view, like, and interact with the most.

Timeliness

This factor revolves around how recent your content is. The new algorithm favors speed as well as likes. The quicker your post drives up engagement, the more likely it is to land on the home page, or on top of your audiences' news feeds.



Relationships

This aspect takes into account the people users interact with the most on Instagram. It also explains why a lot of posts on the home page are often from influencers or accounts you've interacted with or viewed the content of before.



It's important to remember that Instagram essentially makes money by selling ads to businesses and influencers. The platform has over 800 million users and higher engagement rates than many other social media networks.

The higher engagement there is on the platform, the more businesses will want to buy its ads. That's why it makes complete sense that Instagram's new algorithm is designed to keep an increasing number of people engaged for longer durations.



Shoppable Organic Posts Expand to **8** More Countries

Last year, Instagram rolled out a new feature for U.S. businesses that let brands tag products in their organic posts to make them shoppable, i.e. by incorporating e-commerce links within the tags.

The visual platform is finally expanding this feature to eight more countries, including the UK, Canada, Italy, Germany, France, Australia, Brazil, and Spain.

The feature lets Instagram users simply tap on a post to view all the product tags with pricing and details. They can click on those tags to shop those products or learn more.

According to Instagram, nearly half of their active users in the U.S. follow a shopping business account, and over 200 million users visit at least one business profile per day. Shoppable organic posts offer a tremendous opportunity for businesses to cash on.

Lulus, one of the brands who had access to the beta version of shoppable posts, reported great value and growth because of this feature. According to Lulus' Vice President of Marketing, Noelle Sandler, Instagram shopping was responsible for over 1,200 orders and 100,000+ sessions.





Pinterest Makes Shopping Ads Available to All Advertisers

Good news for social media advertisers: Pinterest is now expanding its Shopping Ads feature to hundreds of businesses who want to grow on the platform.

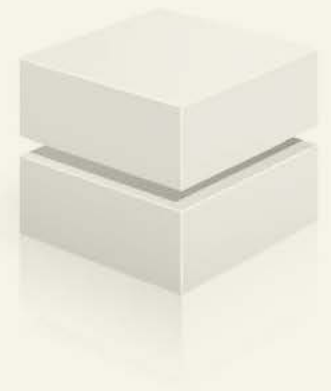
Pinterest's Shopping Ads remained in the beta phase for about a year up until this March. It was only used by a handful of retailers, like IKEA Canada, Ulta Beauty, Venus, Overstock, Lowe's, eBay, and Wayfair.

Shopping Ads is an automated feature that seamlessly enables businesses and advertisers to turn their product catalogs on their existing feeds into better visual and interactive ads.

Shopping Ads has brought successful results to businesses using it in the beta phase. According to the platform's blog, IKEA Canada successfully scaled their Pinterest advertising with a 25% lower overall cost per order. Lowe's also saw outstanding metrics: Their return on ad spending was 76% better than their initial goal. Ulta Beauty has also expressed their satisfaction with Shopping Ads, reporting increased awareness and sales.

Businesses looking to benefit from this feature need to qualify for it by signing up using the Pinterest Propel program form. The platform will then contact them directly with instructions on the next steps. Moreover, businesses can either setup Shopping Ads directly through Pinterest, or their marketing partners 4C or Kenshoo.

Top Email Marketing Challenges in 2018



The digital landscape is constantly changing. Consumer demands are taking new forms and shapes, and so are the marketing trends. Each year marketers face a new set of challenges that weren't much of a problem before.

Here are the two major roadblocks email marketers are likely to come across this year, along with tips on how to deal with them:

Keeping Subscribers Interested Amidst the Competition



Over 269 billion emails are sent and received each day. That is a lot of competition for brands looking to capture their customers' attention by landing in their inboxes.

On the bright side, email open rates are growing. This means brands are optimistic about the success of their email campaigns, but only if customers find their emails interesting enough.

So, amidst the terrifying competition, how do brands make their emails stand out and grab subscribers' attention?

It's simple. Businesses should start to focus more on relevancy and timeliness. People tend to be more interested in updated news and events relevant to their location, time zone, climate, or just their interests. Focus on relevant, personalized, and fine-tuned subject lines. A/B split testing subject lines and email content is especially recommended.

Moreover, with the increasing number of emails being opened on mobile, brands should make sure their emails are mobile-optimized and responsive. Avoid using too many or heavy images that take ages to load on mobile devices or flaky internet connections.

Integrating Content Across Multiple Channels



It is getting increasingly important for campaign success to integrate content across more than just one channel, and not just digital. Email marketers are aware of this and need to come to up with new and innovative ways to keep their customers engaged online and offline.

Around 48% of digital marketers report that Facebook is their top choice of social media platforms in 2018. Moreover, around 27% of marketers are utilizing video for content integration, and around 31% are interested in using landing pages to engage subscribers further.

There is also an increasing retail trend of using QR codes to engage email subscribers and lead them to landing pages with special discounts and promos they can use in-store.

Location-Based Mobile Ads Key to Higher Engagement

A new study by Verve has found that consumers are twice as likely to engage with location-based mobile ads compared to generic ones that don't utilize location data.

The research studied 2,000 adult consumers from the UK and also found that mobile ads targeted based on hobbies and interests fared better than ads that weren't.



The findings of this study carry a lot of significance for brands and businesses using digital ads. Mobile usage is growing, and advertisers need to understand what makes their ads successful among mobile users.

Although a lot of brands do acknowledge the importance of optimizing their mobile ads for engagement, around 56% of consumers reported that they found mobile ads dull and boring. Only 11% said they actually found them to be useful.