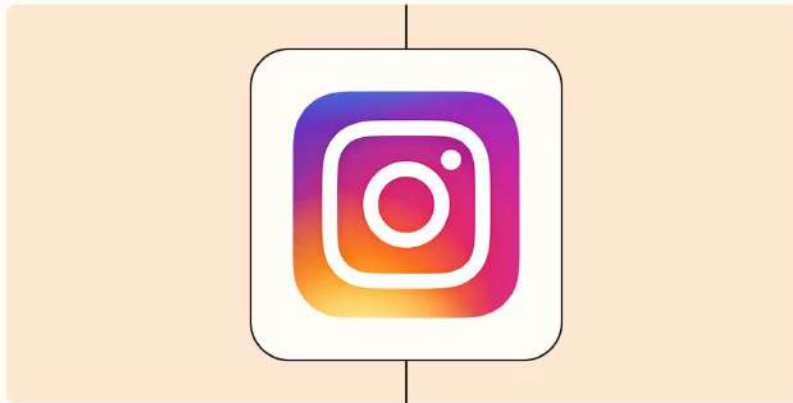


[Home](#) > [Business growth](#) > [Marketing tips](#)[Marketing tips](#) 5 min read

How to use Instagram Stories for business

By Maria Bell · May 2, 2022



When I'm on Instagram (which, let's face it, is a lot), the brands that keep me coming back for more are the ones that put effort into their Stories. Case in point: [filthyrichwriter](#), run by Nicki Krawczyk. She's a freelance writing expert who teaches business owners how to scale their profits. Her Stories cover all the bases: everything from brand updates to Q&As to quick tips.

As a consumer of her content, I appreciate the value I get from her Stories. And as a marketer, I appreciate the effort that clearly goes into these Stories. Let's take a look at how to use Instagram Stories for business—along with some more examples of folks doing it right.

What are Instagram Stories, and why are they good for business?



When you see a glowing ring around someone's profile image at the top of the app, it means a profile currently has a Story ready for you to view. You can message anyone directly from their Stories.

Instagram Stories is a feature within Instagram that allows users to share text, images, videos, live streams, and interactive features like polls—all in a slideshow-like presentation. But here's the catch: Stories can only be viewed for 24 hours

after they're posted—that adds some definite FOMO marketing to the experience.

after they're posted—that adds some definite [FOMO marketing](#) to the experience.

Each slide in a Story lasts up to 15 seconds before automatically moving to the next, which makes them a great way to tell a story (yup)—in a slightly less "formal" way than adding multiple images to a standard post.

So why should you use Stories for your business marketing?

- They're a great way to keep your followers updated on what your business is up to without oversharing on your main feed. Maybe you grabbed a quick photo you want the world to see but it's not "Instagram-worthy" enough to merit a permanent post on your timeline.
- Stories are more interactive: in addition to options like polls and countdown timers, every Story invites your followers to send you a message, with a convenient little chat box at the bottom. When you interact with your followers through Instagram Stories, you create connections that go beyond simply sharing content.
- Stories also boost your visibility. When people see you responding to comments and starting conversations, they're more likely to check out your profile and smash that follow button.
- Stories give you a spot to highlight special offers or give sneak peeks of new products or services—time-bound posts that you don't want living on your feed forever. The 24-hour shelf life also keeps curious followers coming back to your profile, since today's stories will be gone tomorrow.

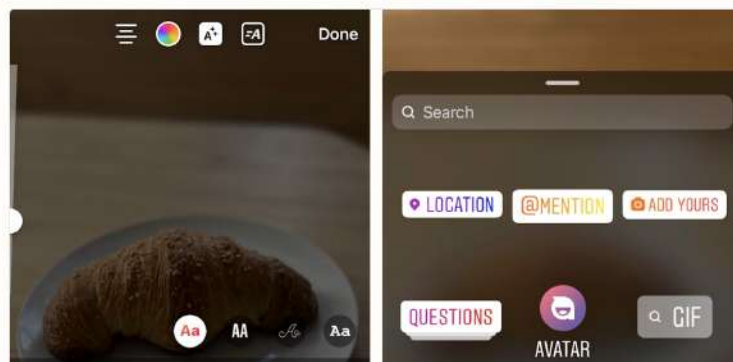
Just keep in mind that using Instagram Stories isn't like owning cats—you can't leave them alone for a few days and know they'll be ok. Stories are more like puppies: they require a lot of attention to keep them healthy. (But they're so cute when you do.)

So before deciding Stories are right for your business, consider whether you have the time to create thoughtful and creative content at a regular cadence, at least a few times a week. The good news: if you have an active blog or podcast, you can [repurpose that content](#) for IG Stories.

How to create an Instagram Story

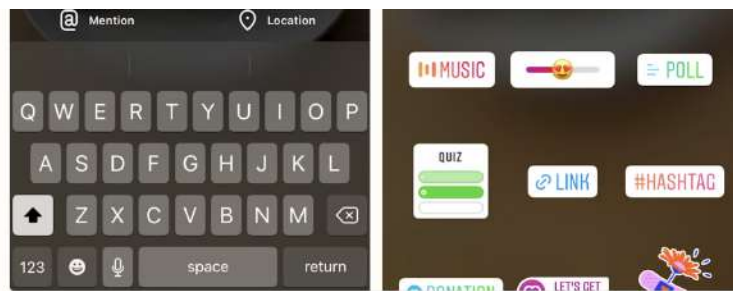
Creating an Instagram Story is pretty simple:

1. From either the Instagram home screen or your profile page, tap the + icon in the top right, then choose **Story**.
2. Choose a photo or video from your gallery, or hit **Camera** to take a new one. Tapping the circle snaps a photo; holding it starts recording video.
3. Once you've selected your photo or video, you can add text, stickers, drawings, and interactive elements using the tools at the top of the screen.
4. When your masterpiece is ready, tap **Your Story** in the bottom-left corner. The world now has 24 hours to experience your creative genius.



**Ditch the repetitive task
of posting everything
across social channels**

Automate Instagram



10 tips for using Instagram Stories for business

Here are some best practices for making your business Stories something people want to come back to.

1. **Keep Stories short and sweet.** Stick to a single topic in each Story, avoid rambling so people don't click away, and make sure your Stories don't last more than a minute or two max.
2. **Get creative with visuals.** The stickers and interactive features are there for a reason. Use them—just be sure that your visuals match your brand.
3. **Use hashtags.** Hashtags can expand your Stories' reach, and Stories are a way to get people who are searching for certain hashtags excited about your content.
4. **Repurpose user-generated content (UGC).** Ask your followers to submit photos or videos related to your brand, then share the best submissions in your Stories. Here are more tips on [using UGC on Instagram](#).
5. **Save important Stories.** Stories only last 24 hours, but you can save ones you love to be featured on the front of your profile (you can even categorize them).
6. **Share exclusive content.** Everyone likes to feel like they're in the know. Offer your followers a sneak peek at new products, behind-the-scenes footage, or special discounts.
7. **Try quizzes and polls.** Quizzes and polls are a great way to get feedback on your products or services and can even help you make smarter marketing decisions like what types of content to post and when.
8. **Run contests.** Running creative contests in your Stories is a surefire way to get viewers hooked. Try asking followers to submit photos or videos related to your brand, or to come up with a slogan or tagline for a new product or service.
9. **Leverage live streaming.** Live streaming on Instagram allows you to connect with your followers in real-time, and once you're done with a Live, you can save it to your Story. Learn more about [how to use Instagram Live for business](#).
10. **Tell stories.** It's called a Story for a reason—tell one.

4 examples of Instagram Stories from businesses

How you use Instagram Stories will depend on all sorts of factors: your industry, your business size, your product, the list goes on. But hopefully these examples will give you some inspiration to start creating.

1. Google Play uses National Poetry Month to recommend books





Google Play (Google's app store) participated in #NationalPoetryMonth by using the hashtag in their Stories. They shared quotes, recommended books, and promoted authors. And, of course, there's a link in the Story that leads to the Google Play store, where you can purchase the books associated with each slide.

2. FedEx shows behind-the-scenes footage to promote their community involvement



FedEx used this Story to share behind-the-scenes pictures of their Career Insights program. They showcased college students getting a tour of a local race, checking out the cars, and meeting drivers. This Story does a great job of showing their followers how they help their community.

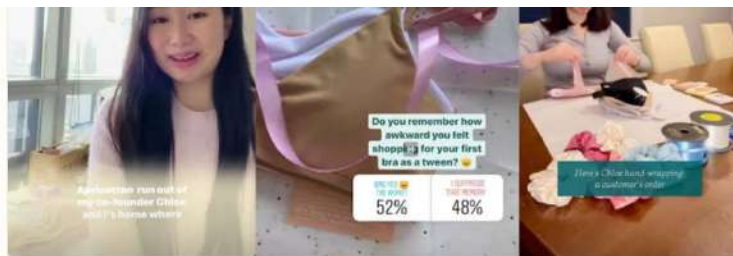
3. Lusha uses humor to promote a referral campaign



Lusha is B2B contact enrichment software, and in this Instagram Story, they experiment with some humor—and it lands. Two employees put on a funny skit for their "refer-an-enemy" campaign: instead of asking you to refer a friend to use their software, Lusha asks you to send your enemy. This lighthearted Story—with just the right music in the background—caught my attention right away.

4. Girlboss features female entrepreneurs





Girlboss is a community of women who create content and experiences to support women's success on their own terms. Every day on their Instagram Stories, they feature a different woman who's started her own business. In the above Story, Jessica Miao, the co-founder of bra company Apricot Cotton, shares a behind-the-scenes look at running her business.

Your Stories should reflect your brand—and if they do, they can help you create a connection with your audience that goes beyond content consumption.

Read more:

- [The best Instagram scheduling apps](#)
- [Bluesky vs. Threads: Which should you use?](#)

Get productivity tips delivered straight to your inbox

We'll email you 1-3 times per week—and never share your information.



Maria Bell

Maria Bell is a San Francisco-based content marketer and freelance writer. She works with B2B small and mid-sized business software companies like Lusha, Workiz, and StyleSeat on thought leadership content. You can see her work at Mariabell.co.

Tags

Marketing

Social media

Mentioned Apps

Instagram for Business

Related articles



[Marketing tips](#)

11 LinkedIn marketing tools to grow your business in 2025



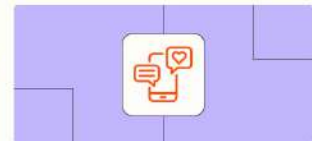
[Zapier tutorials](#)

How to automatically respond to Facebook Messenger with Zapier and ChatGPT



[Best apps](#)

The best free graphic design software to create social media posts in 2025



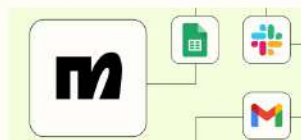
[Marketing tips](#)

What is organic reach? And is it still useful in 2025?



[Automation inspiration](#)

How to use Zapier for social media automation



[Automation inspiration](#)

4 ways to automate Manychat with Zapier



[Marketing tips](#)

What will the Digg reboot look like? 9 predictions



[Best apps](#)

The best Instagram scheduling apps in 2025

Improve your productivity
automatically. Use Zapier to get
your apps working together.

Sign up

[See how Zapier works](#)



When I get a new lead



Notify my team

Follow us



[Pricing](#) [Help](#) [Developer Platform](#) [Press](#) [Jobs](#) [Enterprise](#) [Templates](#) [App Integrations](#) [Partners Program](#)



© 2025 Zapier Inc. [Manage cookies](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy](#)