Your Guide to Instagram Stories

Measuring What Matters

Plastic 7w

See More

SKED SOCIAL

Contents

Sked Social: The Ultimate Visual Marketing Platform
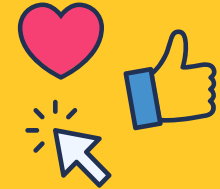

Plan Your Feed To Perfection

Design, preview, schedule and post stunning Instagram grid layouts with our visual planner that will grow your audience and increase your influence.
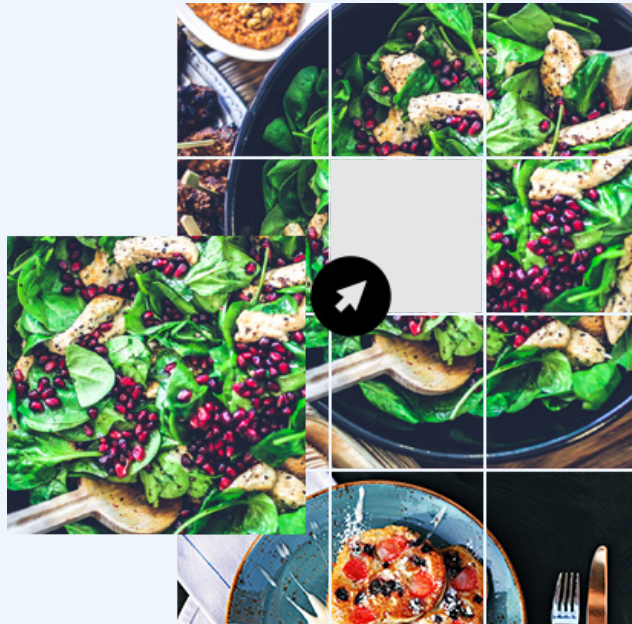
Develop A Killer Aesthetic

Use our specialised editing and layout tools to create and maintain an attention-grabbing look for your brand that shows you're a true professional.

Get a free trial of Sked Social

LOCATION TAG: MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Increase Your Exposure

Tag people and your products to get more likes, comments and followers, and add locations to your posts so potential customers can find you using search.
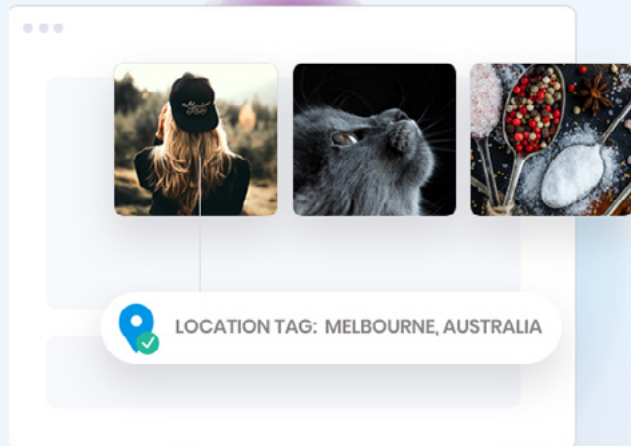
Manage Your Feed

Calendar lets you see your entire content schedule in an instant, and you can add or reorder your posts by dragging and dropping them onto the dates and times you want them published.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
28	29	1			
6	7	8			
13	14	15			

Jan 24, 2019 5:00 PM

CONFIRM NEW DATE
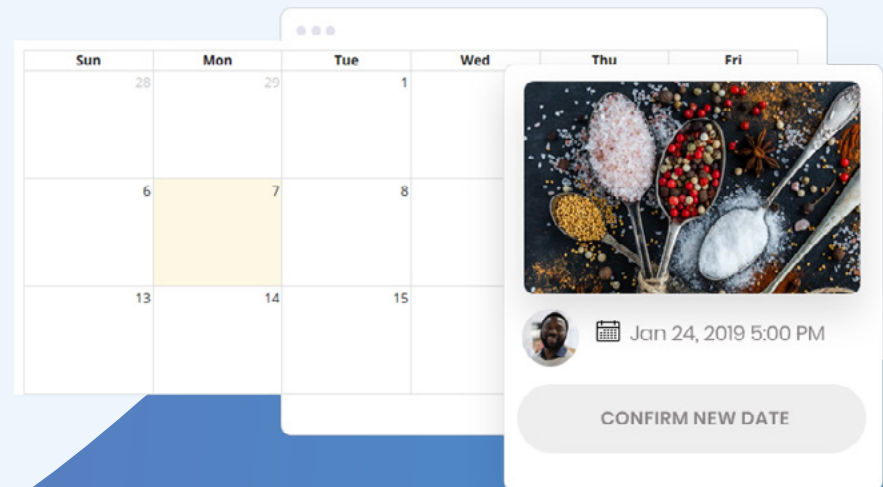
Sign Up for a Free 7-Day Trial

Get a free trial of Sked Social

Introduction: What are Instagram Stories?

When Instagram Stories first launched in 2016, it was an instant hit, sailing to 100 million daily active users within just two months. The number now stands at over 300 million daily active users.

According to a survey conducted by Facebook, more than 1 in 3 respondents said that they have become more interested in a brand or product after seeing it in Instagram Stories. These numbers make Instagram Stories a channel marketers can't ignore.

What are Instagram Stories?

Instagram Stories enables users to post pictures and videos that disappear after 24 hours. Your followers can watch these posts in slideshow format thus making it possible for more real-time sharing and one that is relevant to that particular moment. With the usual filter options still intact such as texts, drawing, and stickers, these features can be creatively used when posting Stories.

Instagram has always been a top choice social media channel where users share the moments they want to remember. With the Instagram Stories feature, you can now share important highlights regarding your business with followers. Businesses that get it right are building loyalty and sales with Instagram Stories.

Instagram stories disappear after 24 hours, making them useful for real-time authentic communcation

1 in 3 respondents said Instagram Stories made them more interested in a product

Chapter 1: Why Instagram Stories are Worth the Effort

You may have been used to the traditional media approach where what you publish stays out there. But now, a new breed of content with a 24-hour lifespan has made its entry into the marketing space. So, you can share in a more authentic way.

People are not just using Instagram Stories to connect with friends. A third of the most viewed Stories come from businesses. These impressive engagement numbers prove the popularity of Instagram itself. With nearly 50% of brands already using Instagram, can your brand really afford to wait?

PRO TIP
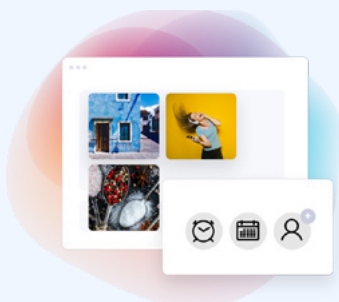
Sked Social can help you plan your Instagram stories ahead of time. Sign up for a free trial today!

There are plenty more reasons why marketers and entrepreneurs should seriously consider using Instagram Stories:

An active user base: With a record of 300 million daily users, this is a good opportunity to drive traffic.

Effortless creation: It would be futile to spend so much time on a post that will disappear the following day. All you need for a good Instagram Story is a quick idea, coupled with some creativity.

Enables you to test the waters: These Stories are not as exposed as the regular posts, so this makes them great for testing out ideas. If people watch your Story all the way without dropping off, you can be confident reposting it as a permanent Instagram post. Testing content enables you to find out what works and quickly adapt. Alternatively, you can adapt the idea of using another social media channel.

An armory of features: You have tools for drawing, lots of augmented reality filters, and various stickers.

Chapter 2: How to Use Instagram Stories to Your Advantage

Intrigued by Instagram Stories but are unsure of where to start? There are many brands, non-profit organizations and even agencies that are already using Instagram Stories as part of their social media strategy. The key is to stay relevant to your audience, provide value and always encourage user engagement. The brevity of these Stories in Instagram calls for proper timing when posting, adding relevant photos/ videos and lots of creativity. With that in mind, these tips will help you guarantee your success:

Show a "Day in the Life" of Your Business

Start a Series

Show How Something Is Made

Promote a Recent Blog Post

Get Creative with the Stories Features

Tip #1 : Show a "Day in the Life" of Your Business

Have a sweet office or a desk you're proud of? Are you visiting the facility where your products are made? Give your followers a little behind-the-scenes peek at where or how you get your work done.

When social media can feel impersonal at times, giving this insider look fosters a more personal connection with all of your followers.

Interior design brand, The Re-Vision, did this in their Instagram stories by showing a behind-the-scenes video of how they shot a recent Instagram photo.

A big plus of sharing videos with Instagram Stories is that you can be simple and still drive your point home. A quick and spontaneous snippet of your daily life can have a powerful effect on your brand.

PRO TIP

With Sked Social, you can schedule Video Stories in advance which helps create a well-planned Stories strategy. Sign up for a free trial today!

Get a free trial of Sked Social

Tip #2 : Start a Series

One of the reasons that consistency is so crucial on Instagram is because people love predictability. That's why scheduling your content can be so beneficial—it helps you stick to your schedule, without the headaches and hassle.

With consistency carrying so much weight for users and Instagram's algorithm, it's worth considering starting a regular series on your Instagram Stories.

Take Bustle for example. They run a "Be My Guest" series where various people take followers on a tour through their homes. They also have their "Beauty Call" series where two Bustle staffers review different beauty products.

Think of a series that you could start on your own account. It'll keep your followers coming back for more—while also holding you to a more consistent posting schedule.

Tip #3: Show How Something Is Made

People love feeling like they're getting exclusive content—and, given its somewhat urgent nature, Instagram Stories is the perfect place to do that.

Why not give users a glimpse at how something is created? Whether it's how your own product is made, a fun craft project, or even your team's favorite guacamole recipe, create a series of videos that show how you create something from scratch.

Etsy, a marketplace for makers and creative entrepreneurs, is awesome at doing this. They're always posting stories (and even saving them to their highlights!) that teach followers how to create handmade products.
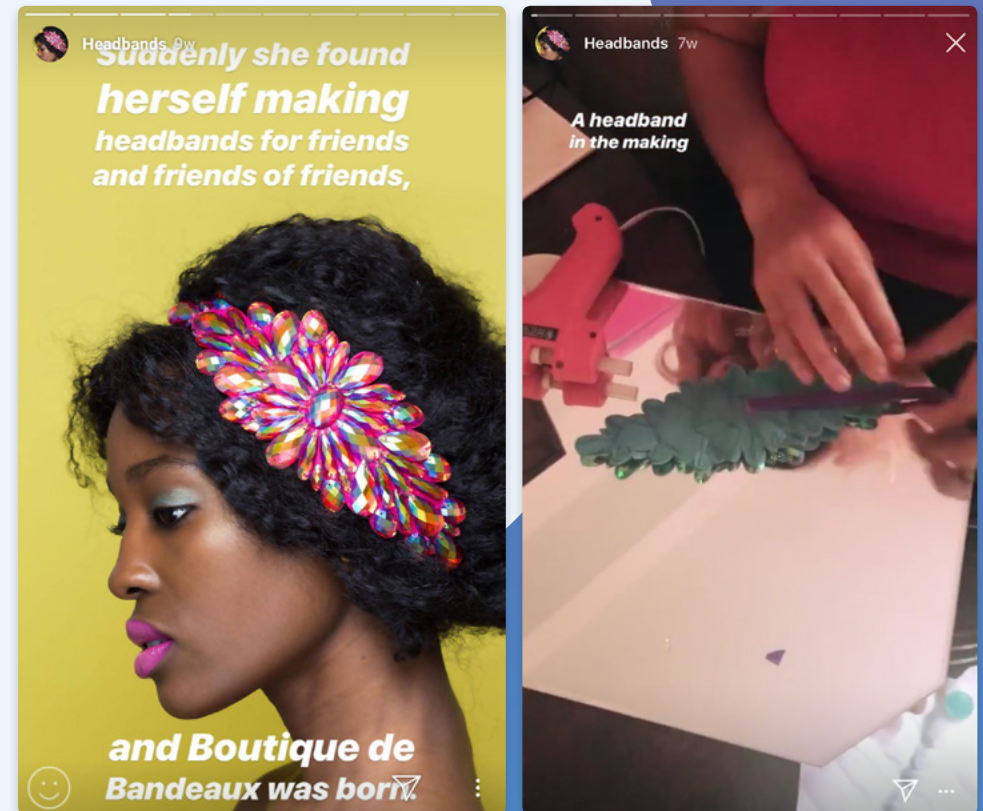
Tip #4: Promote a Recent Blog Post

Instagram Stories are also great for you to display your editorial content. You worked really hard on a recent blog post, and you want to get as many eyeballs on it as possible. You can use Instagram stories to drive traffic to that specific post—or really any type of content!

One of the easiest ways to do this is to add links directly to your Instagram story—which allows users to swipe up to be taken right to the designated page. However, that feature is only available to business accounts with more than 10,000 followers.

For example, WeWork used a series of Instagram stories to direct followers to a post announcing their reimagined WeMRKT, a market showcasing member products.

## Tip #5: Get Creative with the Stories Features

Within Instagram Stories, there are all sorts of fun filters and stickers you can use.

Location: Including your location gives you a chance at being featured on Instagram's location page. So people who are interested in that specific location can find your content.

Not only does this clue your followers in on where you are, but it also gives your engagement a big boost. Posts tagged with a location experience 79% higher engagement than posts without a location.

Poll: Another interesting feature is the Poll option. There are tons of different ways you can use this feature. Have your followers choose between two names for your new product or just ask them something silly.

It's an effective tactic to involve your followers in your decision-making and emphasize that you have a two-sided relationship—rather than constantly broadcasting your own messages.
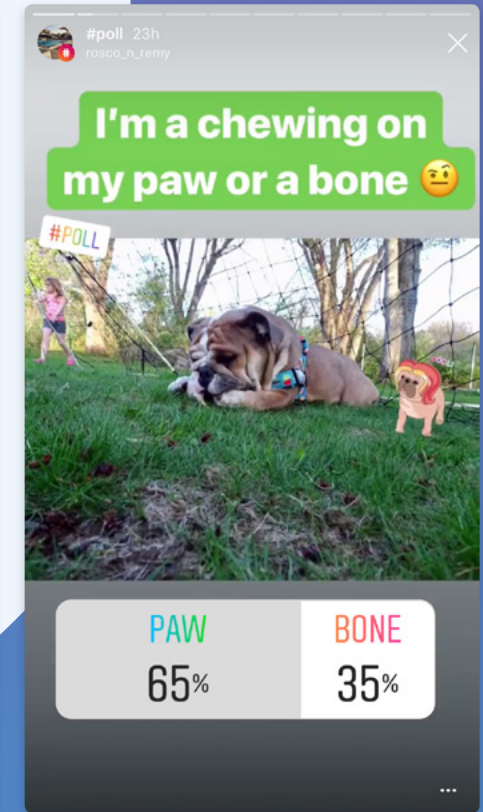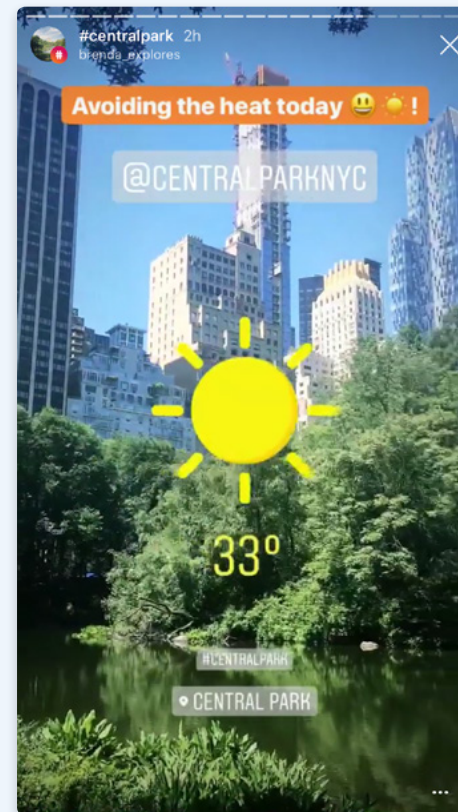
PRO TIP

Using Sked Social, you can manage all your frequently used hashtags with the hashtag manager and access them while setting up a new post or story.

Get a free trial of Sked Social

How Instagram Stories Benefit Your Instagram Engagement

Although some may be skeptical of the fact that these Stories only last for a short while, this is actually beneficial in many ways.

You do not have to clutter up your profile with numerous photo albums. Post a lot more raw content on your Stories and turn your posts into a portfolio, showcasing your best content.

Stories are relevant to businesses because it humanizes your business and gives it transparency. Therefore, you can have a deeper communication with your target audience.

Your Stories will appear at the top of the feed for users who follow you, as opposed to the regular posts which have to compete for a top spot. Each time you add a story, your followers will be alerted with a colorful ring to indicate that a new Story has been published. This maintains visibility in your follower's feeds.

The Instagram Story indicator also lets your followers know your account has been recently active.

PRO TIP
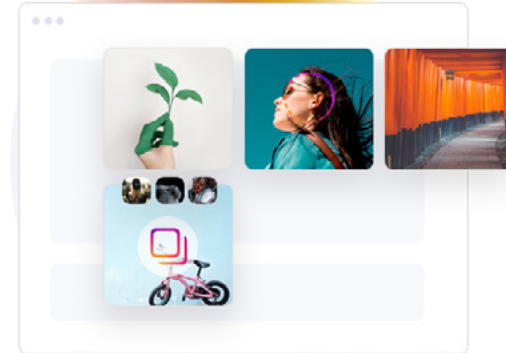
Using Sked Social, you can bulk upload and then schedule Instagram posts, comments, and even Instagram stories from your desktop, so that your followers consistently see content from you.

Get a free trial of Sked Social

Chapter 3: Importance of Tracking Your Instagram Stories Metrics

When it comes to Instagram Stories, there are a number of KPIs that allow brands to understand how their audience is responding to it. The goal of any marketing strategy is to build lasting relationships, and Stories are a great way to do so on a more personal level.

Measuring these performance indicators allow you to:

Tackle pain points

Analyze Stories that drive the most engagement

Segment your audience and deliver the right message to the right people

Increase brand awareness

But before you're able to do the above, you need to understand the basic Instagram Stories metrics.

Instagram Stories Metrics

Number of views

When you click on your own Story, the eye icon tells you how many people viewed a particular story. Clicking the eye icon will show you exactly who the viewers are – an extremely helpful tool to help you target a specific type of audience.

Recently, Instagram introduced a feature that also lets you know which viewer took a screenshot or recording of your Story. If you find that a significant number of people took the time to save your Story, then that's a good indicator of what kind of stories you should create more of.
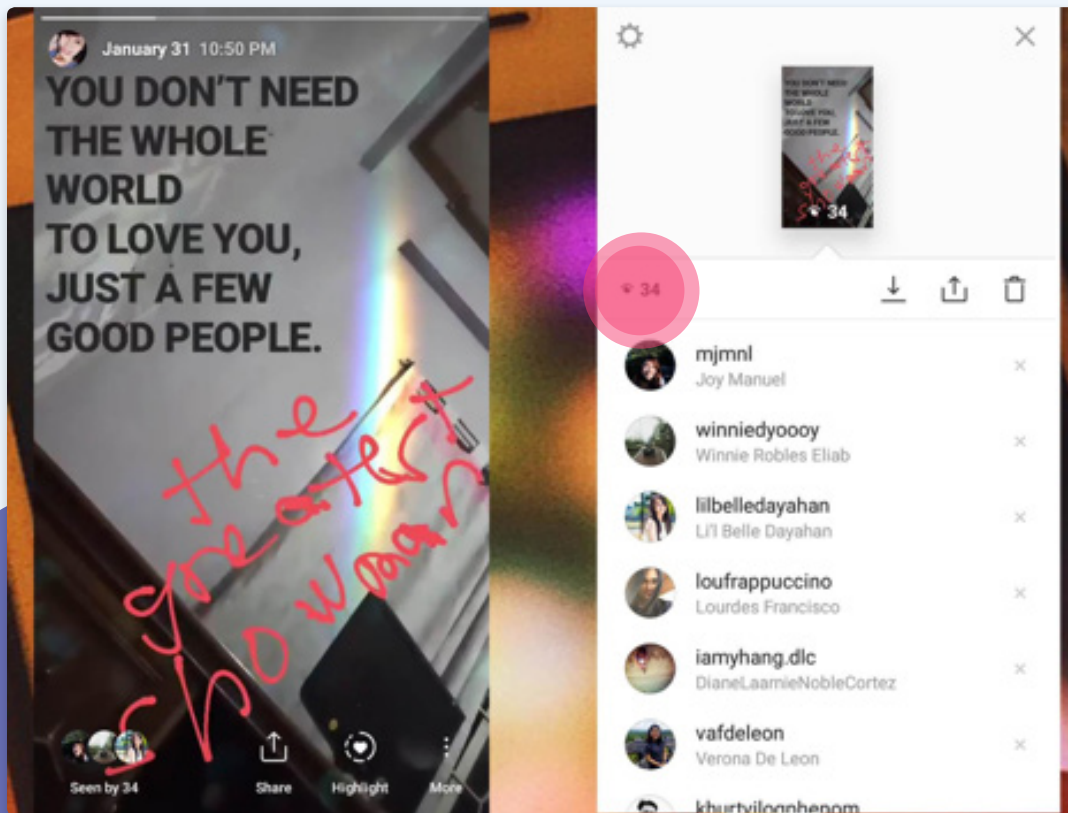
PRO TIP

Click on the eye icon to see exactly who has viewed your story.

View percentage

Essentially, this tells you what percent of your followers are viewing your Stories. All it takes is some basic math:

What this metric does is give you an idea of how many of your followers have adopted Instagram's Stories feature. If you find that only a small percentage of your followers view your Stories, then maybe you should cut back on the number of stories you post, and focus more on regular posts.

Posting time is a huge factor in posting your Instagram stories. Although your Stories will stay on the top part of your followers' Instagram feeds, Instagram's algorithm arrange the featured stories by the time it was posted. This allows the most recent update to be the most noticeable.

Optimizing your posting time to the usual time your audience engages (which you can find out through organic data analysis), and using geo-tags and hashtags so that your stories may be discovered by new people can improve engagement considerably.

FORMULA

VIEW PERCENTAGE:

$$\frac{\text{\# of story viewers}}{\text{total \# of followers}} \times 100$$

PRO TIP

Platforms like Sked Social can help you schedule your Instagram stories at the time your audience is most active. Sign up for a free trial today.

Get a free trial of Sked Social

Completion rate

It'll take a bit more complicated math, but this metric will show you how many people watch your entire Story. Here's how:

This stat lets you know how effective your Stories are at not only grabbing, but retaining attention. Additionally, what's important to note is how your completion rate holds over an extended period of time.

For example, you can compute your average completion rate over a 14-day period. Looking at those numbers, identify which Stories have the highest and lowest completion rates. Was it a discount promo that drove engagement? A behind-the-scenes video of an event?

This will give you a good enough idea of what resonates with your audience and what doesn't.

FORMULA

COMPLETION RATE:

$$\frac{\text{\# of viewers on your last story}}{\text{\# of viewers on your first story}} \times 100$$

EXAMPLE:

$$\frac{74 \text{ viewers}}{100 \text{ viewers}} \times 100 = 74\% \text{ completion}$$

Number of replies

Viewers can't comment on Stories, but they can do something better—send you a direct message. The ability to have personal conversations with your followers complements the authentic nature of Stories, and allows you to strengthen relationships on an even deeper level.

Make sure you reply back to every message to encourage them to keep engaging with you.

Another additional feature to boost engagement is Stories polls, which allow your viewers to vote between two choices. You can use polls to not only gauge interest in a Story, but get valuable feedback from your audience.
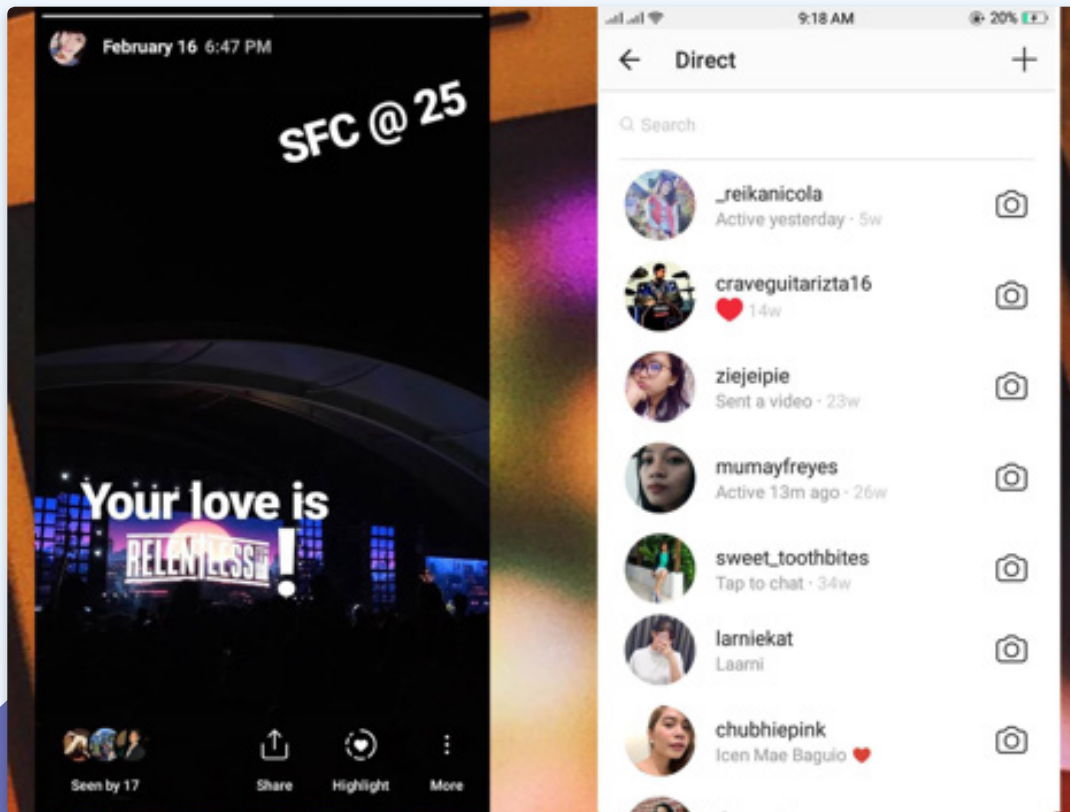
PRO TIP

Make sure you reply to every message received to keep your followers engaged.

Chapter 4: Advanced Instagram Stories Metrics

Swipe-through rates

Perhaps the most valuable feature of Instagram Stories when it comes to measuring ROI is its swipe up CTA. Basically, when users swipe up, they're taken to a website of your choice through the Instagram app.

According to SWAT.IO, since the feature was introduced, swipe-through rates have ranged between 15-25 percent—an incredible conversion rate for anyone. You can use Stories CTA to:

Drive viewers to your online store	Link to full versions of your Story videos	Share valuable content	Tease a new product, linked to its landing page

There are plethora of possibilities you can tap into with this feature. And by using third-party software (like Google Analytics), you can track just how much traffic is driven by Instagram to your website.

To really make Stories effective for your brand, you need to leverage it into something that doesn't depend on proprietary algorithm. And Instagram just made it easier with swipe up CTA.

Instagram ads insights

Stories ads has all the benefits of regular Instagram ads—targeted reach, driving traffic, conversions—the feature not only allows you to engage your audience, it aids driving business results.

More importantly, business profile users can see how their Stories ads perform in the Insights section. And with Ads Manager and Power Editor, additional metrics like reach, impressions and video metrics can be gleaned.

Graph API

Last year, Instagram introduced new features to its Graph API, which according to them, helps businesses manage their organic presence more effectively by upgrading to Facebook's API. This allows them to keep track of their performance even on third-party tools.

Additionally, the new API features allows for comment moderation (including the ability to hide comments/toggle them on and off). According to Instagram, this is in line with their commitment to keep the platform a "safe place for self-expression."

It's important to note that the features are available exclusively to users with business profiles. They will also be required to use a Facebook Login when giving permission to third-party tools.

PRO TIP
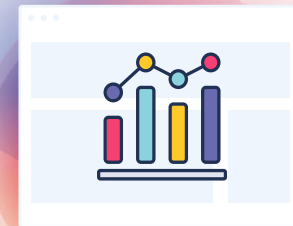
Switching to an Instagram business profile can give you access to advanced insights & metrics using Facebook's API.

Conclusion

Consistently monitoring the metrics mentioned above should lead towards crafting a sound Instagram Stories strategy. But before you dive deep into Stories analytics, it's crucial that you set realistic goals and objectives.

And again, the real objective of Stories goes beyond number of views or swipe-through rates. It's about how many of your audiences you're able to build strong connections with. Stories is a door you need them to step through, getting them to stay in touch through other channels is the ultimate goal.
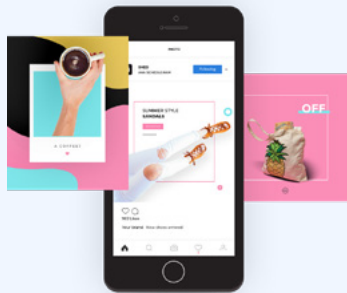
Give Sked Social a Try With a Free 7-day Trial

Make Sked your Social Media sidekick, who saves you time and automatically posts your content when you want, where you want and how you want.

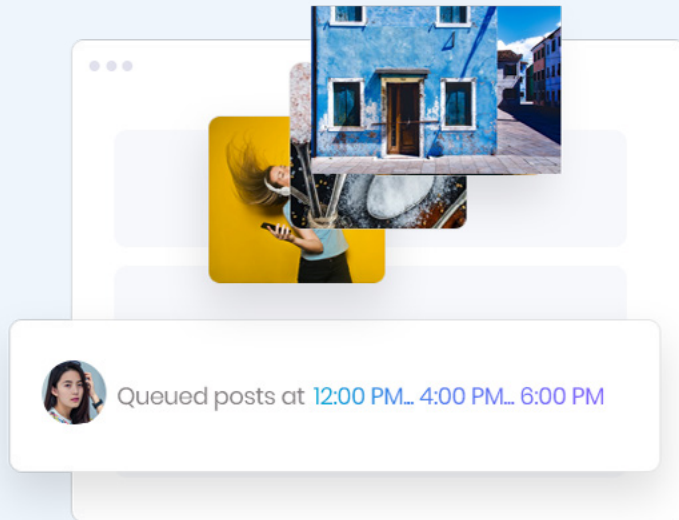**Get started with a free 7-day trial today.**

features

Spend less time managing social media, More time engaging with your audience.

Sked Social has everything you need to plan and automatically post your content to Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and more.

Sign Up for a Free 7-Day Trial

Automatic Posting

Once you schedule or queue a post with Sked Social, we'll publish it for you automatically anytime you want, including carousel posts, videos and Instagram stories.
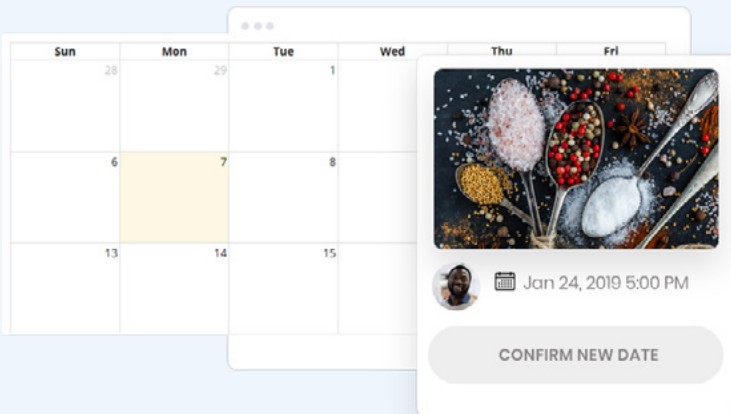
Queued posts at 12:00 PM... 4:00 PM... 6:00 PM
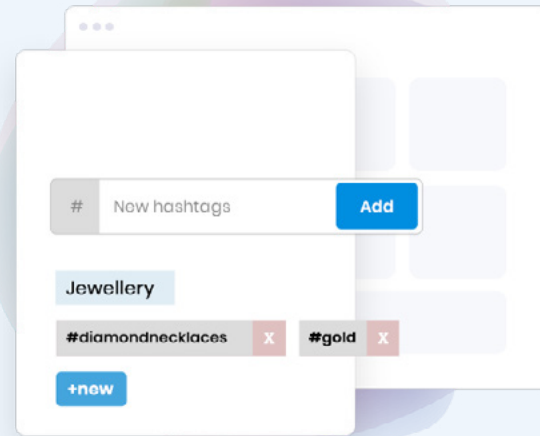
Get a free trial of Sked Social

Hashtag Manager

Store all your hashtags in one convenient place and divide them into sets so you can easily add them to posts, Instagram stories or campaigns.

Drag & Drop Calendar

Calendar lets you see your entire content schedule at a glance. Set it to monthly, weekly or daily view and it'll show you all your planned posts for that period.

Professional Image Editor

Your images will look amazing after you've tweaked them using our in-browser editor. You can crop them, resize them, apply filters, and add stickers and text to create a unique look for your brand.

Get a free trial of Sked Social