

Housing Collective
Social Media Guidelines + Tips
April 30, 2024

Instagram Overview

Instagram is a great way to humanize brands and companies and get in front of younger audiences:

- The platform has **2 billion** monthly active users
- **18 to 34** is the largest age group on Instagram
- U.S. adults are spending an average of **33.1 minutes** on the platform a day
- Instagram is the top platform for influencer marketing and ad reach only continues to grow



Companies use Instagram for:

Visual/Graphic Storytelling – Instagram’s focus on photo and video content allows brands to leverage visual storytelling through a variety of creative content formats, like Reels, Stories or static posts.

Brand Building – Similar to LinkedIn, Instagram is a great tool for organizations to build their brands, leveraging stylized graphics and specific language.

Gaining Visibility – Due to Instagram’s large active user base, the algorithm and reach can help companies gain wider visibility and reach. This means that content has the potential to reach a wider audience than other social media platforms.

Community Building + Lifestyle Content – Instagram is the go-to platform for building a personal community. It allows brands to connect with audiences on a more personal level, foster relationships and create a loyal following. It’s a good platform to show community engagement initiatives, public art installations, events and property activations, etc.

Instagram Do’s and Don’ts

DO	DON'T
Use hashtags and emojis in posts.	Use more than 3 hashtags in one caption or emojis that are not relevant to the post.

Tailor each post's copy according to Instagram best practices - including tagging relevant accounts, platform tone, and intended audience (IPs and donors).	Copy and paste the same post across all social media channels.
Uplift the HC community through direct messages, reposts (on IG stories), and comment replies.	Ignore comments, DMs, tags or mentions on Instagram.
Post on Instagram (in-feed) at least twice per week.	Post on Instagram (in-feed) more than once per day (excluding rapid response situations).
Use Instagram Stories to post relevant links and repost content that tag HC.	Spam Instagram stories with content that bears little to no resemblance to HC's core messaging and brand identity.
Use a Linktree to host (up to six) relevant links on Instagram.	Post links in your Instagram caption or in graphics where users cannot click on them.
Use collaborative posts with other organizations or high-profile individuals for joint ventures.	Leave out @mentions or tags in posts that specifically call out partner organizations or individuals.
Reuse content that generates high engagement when at least three months have passed since the original post and the content is related to an upcoming timely event.	Recycle content when less than three months have passed since it was originally posted. Additionally, do not reuse content that performed poorly.

Instagram Stories

To keep audiences engaged beyond regular in-feed posting, it's critical to regularly update HC's Instagram Stories (which generally disappear after 24 hours unless saved as a highlight). Instagram Stories allow you to be at the top of someone's screen without them needing to scroll to see your post, giving them direct access to your content. We recommend posting in Stories at least once daily to ensure HC stays top of mind for the community. Keep frames short (no more than 6) to keep people engaged throughout your entire story and/or driving direct action to a link. Good things to post here are in-feed posts to drive more engagement, educational content and resources, and relevant industry news around homelessness and affordable housing in Connecticut.

Content Pillars

What they are: Pillars of content (or buckets of content) are overarching themes that all content shared by HC should fall under. We recommend identifying 3-5 pillars of content for your organization. Pillars should remain consistent across platforms, however the way you approach the content can vary by platform.

How to find yours: What are the top 3-5 issues your organization is dedicated to addressing? What are the top 3-5 issues your audience cares about? What issue areas undergird the projects your organization is currently working on? What are the major calls to action you consistently ask of your followers?

Key Social Media Strategies to Keep in Mind

1. Develop a “human” tone of voice on social media.
2. Remember social media is about encouraging conversations between people. Get interactive and use @mentions to tag people and brands where relevant.
3. Use #hashtags that are trending and central to your issue or content and broaden the reach of your posts.
4. Use multimedia (memes, GIFs, videos, anything that’s not just text) to boost engagement and stand out on feeds.
5. Experiment with new tactics to generate engagement by using polls, sliders on Instagram, Q+A features, stickers, replies, etc that will encourage the audience to interact with your content.
6. Make sure you’re posting content that looks like it belongs on that platform. Try not to post the exact same copy on Facebook that you would on Twitter, or Instagram.
7. Extend the lifetime of posts by resharing past, relevant posts at key moments and including a call to action or timely new hook.
8. Sometimes (most of the time), simpler is better.
9. Timeliness matters. Leverage trending topics or hashtags to insert your perspective in ongoing conversations online as they happen.