# ART SY

Social Media Toolkit for Galleries 2017

ARTSY'S GUIDE TO GROWING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Social Media in 2016

It was a big year for social media in 2016, filled with changes to every major platform. We saw live streaming take off, Instagram and Snapchat battle for your stories, and updates to the way Facebook and Instagram serve content. Their audiences multiplied as well, with Instagram growing by 100 million monthly active users in the second half of 2016 alone (accounting for 20% of its total user base) and Facebook growing by 270 million users over the course of the year.[1] With social media growing at a breakneck pace and platforms competing aggressively for our attention, 2017 is poised to change the face of social as we know it.

So how do you determine where to start? The general rule of thumb is to go where your target audience is most engaged. With limited time and resources, you need to think strategically about your gallery's returns and only invest where it counts. If you don't feel that your ideal audience is on a certain social media platform, don't waste time developing a presence there.

With that in mind, we've decided to focus this toolkit on Facebook and Instagram. There are a few more reasons for this choice: They're the most widely and consistently used social media platforms[2], they have better global engagement than platforms like Snapchat[3], and in our experience, they're the best platforms for engaging art-world audiences. Here's what you need to know about social media for your gallery in 2017.
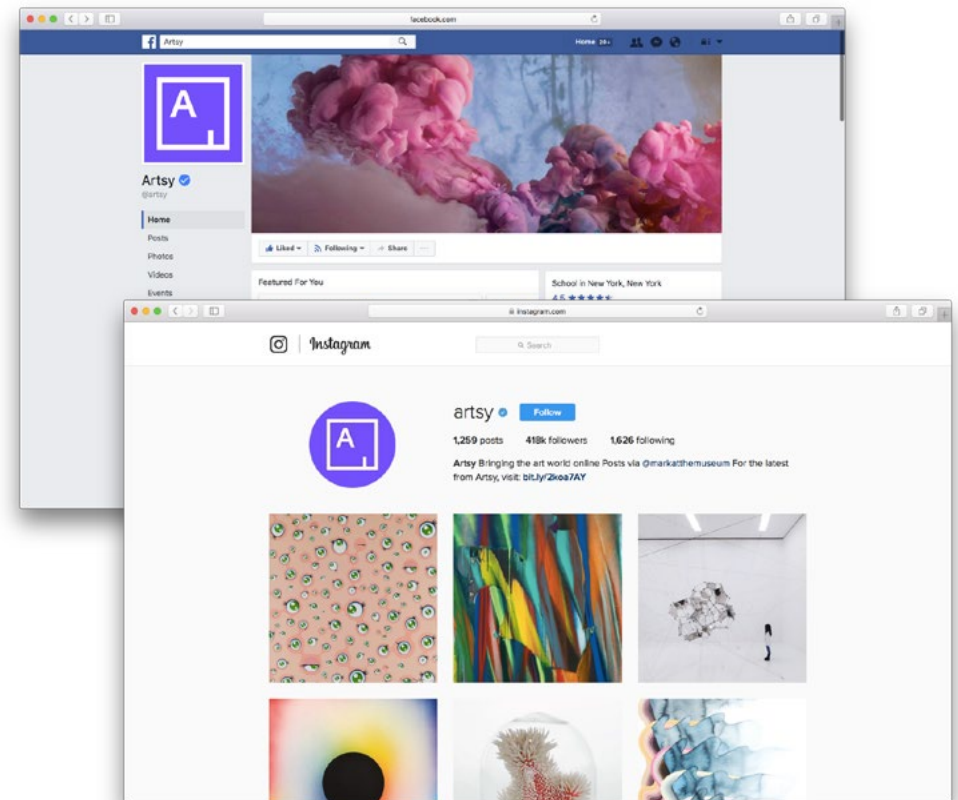
[1] *Instagram*, *Techcrunch*, *Facebook Newsroom*; [2] *Adweek*; [3] *Fortune*

What's Covered

Facebook —

The Facebook Newsfeed Algorithm, Explained

What over a billion people a day see on their Facebook News Feed is governed by an ever-changing algorithm that can make or break your presence on the platform. Every like, share, comment, click, purchase, and download made on or through Facebook is tracked and used to determine who sees what.

With millions of pieces of content posted a day, Facebook instituted the News Feed algorithm to show users what they're most likely to find engaging. Play to the algorithm's strengths and you'll see immediate return. Ignore it and your content likely won't see the light of day.

When you post, Facebook first serves your content to a sampling of your audience. Think of what happens next as a snowball effect. If your post performs well with that initial sample, Facebook continues to serve it until it loses momentum. Conversely, poor initial performance will kill the post's reach entirely. Your page's engagement patterns also affect its general visibility, so consistent successful posts give future posts a better chance of performing well. It is absolutely critical that you determine what content resonates with your audience and play to the algorithm by posting carefully. If a post does well, post similar content. If it doesn't, try a new tactic.
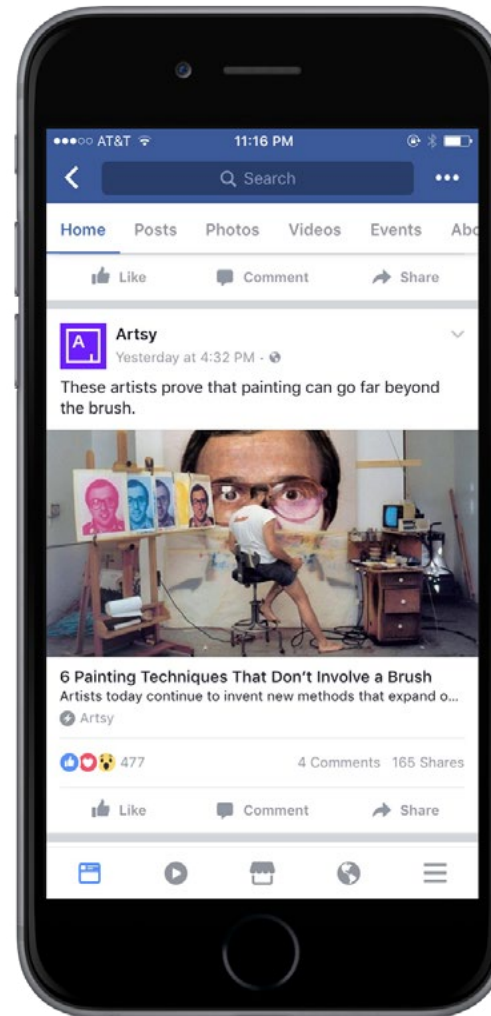
How to Optimize Your Content for Performance

You know your brand best, but you aren't your social media audience. Your job is to find a balance between the message you want to communicate and the way your audience prefers to receive it. By paying attention to what performs well (in terms of likes, comments, shares, and clicks) and what doesn't, you'll develop your most valuable tool: Intuition.

When crafting a Facebook post, ask yourself if your followers would share it with their friends.

CUSTOMIZATION

No matter the type of content, the quality of your copy (caption, headline, link description) and creative (image, video, etc.) should be considered carefully. Keep captions informative, headlines short, and pay very close attention to the resolution and dimensions of your images by using tools like Sprout's Landscape.

High-quality content is shareable content, and shareable content is what Facebook likes best. A like is valuable, but a share is the strongest signal to Facebook's algorithm that that content should show up in people's news feeds. When crafting a Facebook post, ask yourself if your followers would share it with their friends.

TIMING

Quality is key, but so is consistency. It's up to you to decide how many posts you can produce (the more the better if they perform well), but stick to a schedule and make your feed a destination your followers want to revisit.

The best way to determine when to post is to experiment strategically by picking a handful of times and posting consistently for a couple of weeks. You'll undoubtedly begin to notice trends. Generally, posts in the early morning (8am-10am), afternoon (12pm-3pm), early evening (5pm-7pm), and late evening (10pm-12am) perform best, so choose all or some of those windows to begin experimenting.

TARGETING

You can also give your content a better chance of performing well by opting in to Facebook's Preferred Audience Targeting. Available for free to all English-language Pages, this feature allows you to select the subset of your followers Facebook will serve your content to first. See these instructions to get started and remember to use the targets with the largest Facebook audience—this will ensure that your content is first seen by the largest relevant subset of your followers. Here are the interest targets we use most at Artsy:

How to Optimize Your Content for Performance

COMMERCIAL INTENT
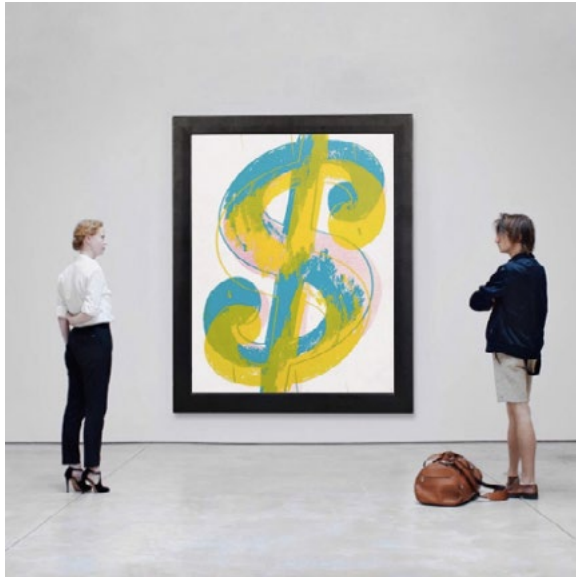
— Art collecting

— Collecting art

— Contemporary art gallery

SPECIALTY

— Sculpture

— Fine art

— Painting

— Conceptual art

— Drawing

— Photography

— Visual arts

ART TERMS

— Art exhibition

— Art museum

— Contemporary art

— History of art

— Art history

— Art movement

— Artist

Anatomy of a Facebook Post
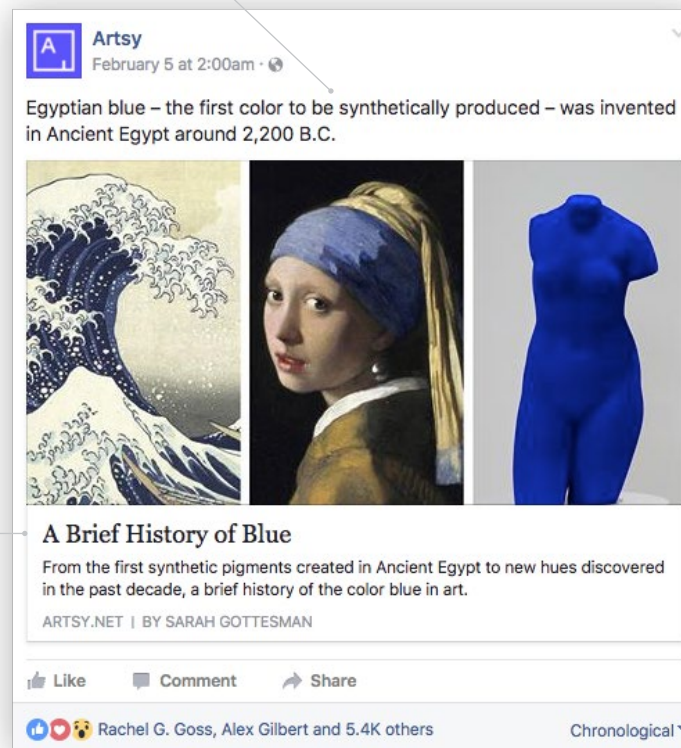
f

CAPTIONS ARE KEY

Experiment with caption length and type to find what works best for you.

PRO TIP: Try short, punchy captions (like questions) but also try using longer excerpts or pull quotes from particularly exciting pieces of content. Your caption serves as a teaser for the headline below, so work hard to keep the copy interesting.

EDIT YOUR HEADLINE

Edit headlines to make them more intriguing. Shorter is always better.

PRO TIP: Try to take a final look at how your caption and headline speak to one another before you post. You can easily edit the headline by clicking on it while you're crafting your post. You can also edit, or delete, the teaser text that often appears under the headline.

Artsy
February 5 at 2:00am · 🌐

Egyptian blue – the first color to be synthetically produced – was invented in Ancient Egypt around 2,200 B.C.

A Brief History of Blue
From the first synthetic pigments created in Ancient Egypt to new hues discovered in the past decade, a brief history of the color blue in art.
ARTSY.NET | BY SARAH GOTTESMAN

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ➤ Share

Rachel G. Goss, Alex Gilbert and 5.4K others   Chronological ▾

IMAGES GIVE CONTEXT

Always try to post content that includes an image. Especially in the art world, followers respond to visual content most, and it often provides useful context for your post.

PRO TIP: If you're having an issue with an image appearing, report the bug here and try again.

How to go Live with Facebook Live

The vast majority of your followers may never set foot in your gallery, never travel with you, and never meet you IRL. Nothing can replace the in-person experience, but Facebook Live allows you to broadcast video to your followers in real time, connecting you with your audience more than a photo or link ever could. Take your followers on a tour of your latest show, interview an artist or curator, or develop a series that takes viewers behind the scenes. Quality can be tricky with Facebook Live, but there are a few things you can do to set up your broadcasts for success.

All you need to get started is an iPhone and a strong WiFi connection. Dedicated WiFi hotspots can help you guarantee you'll have dependable internet access wherever you go, and some are available for as little as $30 (plus monthly data fees). Sound will be your biggest challenge if you aren't in a quiet space, so if you're going to go live on a regular basis, invest in an adapter like this one and use a microphone like this one.

Now that you have the basic equipment, it's time to go live. Download Facebook's Pages app, tap the Live icon, type in a caption, and off you go. If you're a little hesitant to jump in, you can also run a test by using the Facebook app to go live privately from your personal account. Simply change your share settings to "me only." This will allow you to play with filming, test sound quality, and get used to being in front of the camera.

One of the best parts of Facebook Live is that broadcasts will be put in the "videos" section of your Facebook page and will appear as posts within your feed. These posts are shareable, so encourage your staff to share them in order to grow the number of views on your broadcast. Live videos are already more likely to appear high on a user's news feed than other types of content, and early shares can help the post build additional momentum.[4]
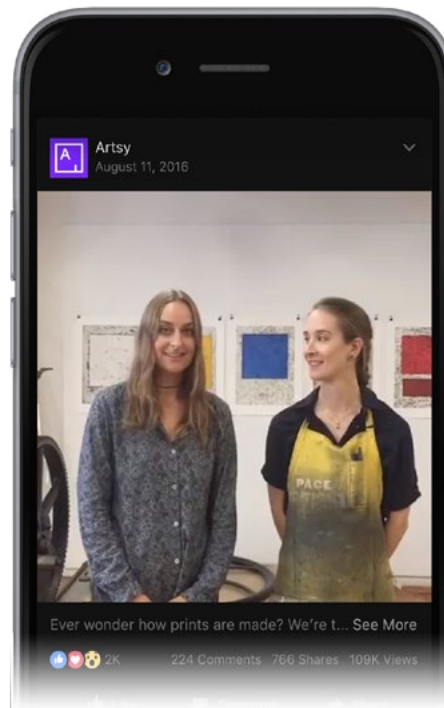
Instagram —

Introducing the Instagram Algorithm

In March of 2016, Instagram changed the ordering of content in users' feeds from reverse chronological (most recent first) to algorithmic (most interesting to you first). This means that when you open the Instagram app on your phone, you'll see posts that Instagram's algorithm has determined you're most likely to engage with first, followed by everything else—much like Facebook's algorithm. With upwards of 100 million posts daily[5], Instagram implemented this change as a kind of quality control. It will continue to evolve, but it's important that you keep it in mind and only post the most engaging content possible.

Instagram now prioritizes content based on your historical engagement.

There are a few concrete things you can do to increase your brand visibility on Instagram. A recent study[6] found that posts with at least 1 hashtag average 12.6% more engagement than those without, and Instagram allows you to incorporate up to 30 per post. Hashtags are crucial as you build your account, but use them wisely and avoid bombarding your followers with dozens at a time.

HASHTAGS

Use hashtags that are relevant to your content and target audiences (artist names, movements, etc.) and avoid those that are flooded with lower-quality content (#art, #artsy, etc.). A common tactic is to keep the most relevant hashtags in your caption and add a comment with any others you would like to be associated with your post. This keeps your caption clutter-free but still gives your post added visibility.

GEOTAGS

Geotags are also key for engaging with new audiences. No matter where you are, always include the most relevant geotag to make your post more discoverable to Instagram users. Tagging stakeholders in your images is also a great way to both boost visibility and engage new audiences. If you tag an account in the image of your post, it will become visible to anyone exploring photos in which that account is tagged. Beyond the boost in discoverability, it's always in your best interest to give a nod to another account as they're likely to take notice and may return the favor.

[5] *Hootsuite*; [6] *Simply Measured*

Anatomy of an Instagram Post

GEOTAG

Make sure you consistently use the right geotag (a tag indicating the geographical location the image is referencing).

PRO TIP: Your gallery's Instagram geotag is connected to your Facebook page. If you are having issues with your geotag showing up, update the address linked to the gallery's Facebook page and wait a few days for the geotag to fix itself.
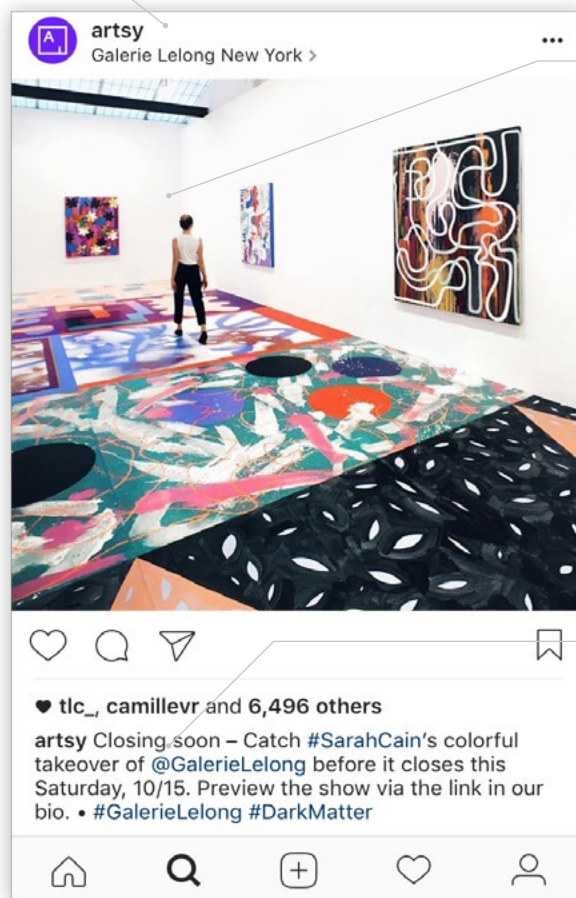
ADD A FIGURE

A person in the image both gives the work dimension and keeps the shot from looking too sterile.

PRO TIP: Experiment with posing figures in your photos. You might be able to capture a visitor as we did, but also consider using your team to "play visitor" and help stage your shot.

TAG STAKEHOLDERS

Be sure to tag all relevant stakeholders excluding yourself in your caption to give your followers more opportunities to explore.

PRO TIP: Tag artists in the caption and also hashtag their name at the end of the caption. This gives your followers an opportunity to both follow your artists and explore more of their work hashtagged on Instagram.

HASHTAGS

Include relevant hashtags in your caption, and not all at the end.

PRO TIP: If you want to experiment with more than just a few hashtags, add them in a comment immediately after you post. This will keep your caption more succinct but still make your image discoverable. Also experiment with upstyling your hashtags to make them more legible (e.g. #DeWainValentine vs. #dewainvalentine).

How to Increase Visibility with Instagram Stories

Instagram Stories was one of the most talked-about social media developments in 2016—and it's already gained a huge following. Since launching in the beginning of August, Stories has attracted over 150 million daily active users.[7] If you're not using Stories yet, it's definitely time to start.

With an Instagram Story, you can truly immerse followers with both photo and video content and connect with them on a more authentic level than may be possible with a static post. Perfectionists take note: Stories only live for 24 hours, so try not to worry about getting every detail exactly right.

Start your story with a hook that will encourage viewers to keep watching.

Stories are made up of multiple segments, each consisting of a photo or video. Start your Story with a hook that will encourage viewers to keep watching. The rest of your story should generally alternate between videos that showcase environment and photos that showcase detail. Embellishments (emoji, text, doodles) are all welcome, but use them sparingly and purposefully. A cohesive narrative should be your top priority. Looking for ideas? Follow your favorite brands (like @Artsy!) to get inspired.

Instagram Stories are also the most visible content on the platform, appearing at the very top of your feed. Because of this placement, users are likely to spend more time viewing stories than viewing posts, so take advantage by regularly posting Stories. Just keep in mind that they're still governed by the Instagram algorithm, so quality is no less important here than elsewhere.

How to Increase Visibility with Instagram Stories

Example Instagram Story ideas featuring Lévy Gorvy's exhibition 'Willem de Kooning | Zao Wou-Ki'

Production Tactics and Useful Apps

We could write an entire article on just this topic, but in the interest of efficiency, we'll distill it down to a few key insights and apps that will best help you engage your users.

Boomerang and Hyperlapse are two apps developed by Instagram to help you create more exciting video content. Boomerang takes a burst of photos and pieces them together into a video that plays forward and backward, while Hyperlapse allows you to create timelapse videos that you can speed up or slow down. Pro tip: tap four fingers on your screen five times in either app to unlock more customization options.

If you're posting a video to your Story, keep in mind that each clip must be under 15 seconds in length. For those who are more cinematically inclined, the Continual app allows you to split long videos into shorter clips that can be posted consecutively to Instagram Stories.

Photo and video content from your camera roll is only eligible for use in an Instagram story if it was taken within the last 24 hours. For that reason, it can be challenging to create Instagram Stories on the fly, but there's a solution. The Storied app allows you to turn any content in your camera roll (from any time) into content you can use in Instagram Stories. This allows you to take your time crafting the exact story you want to tell.

The more consistent your content is, the more your followers will want to return to it. Do you have a signature emoji (or do you avoid emojis altogether)? How do you format text? Develop a clear aesthetic and style and stick to it.

Production Tactics and Useful Apps

Here are a few formatting options to get you started.

Unlocking Analytics with Instagram for Business

Now that you're paying close attention to your follower engagement, Instagram for Business is a must. Instead of only seeing likes and comments, Instagram for Business allows you gain access to metrics like reach, impressions, and follower statistics. Are your most active followers online from midnight to 1am? Between the ages of 35 and 44? Knowing metrics like these can help you to tailor your strategy to your audience. Using a Business Profile also gives you the option to allow followers to contact you, which can make Instagram feel more personal.

Signing up is simple: Go to Settings in your instagram app, tap "Switch to Business Profile," and connect your company Facebook page. See Instagram's guidelines for more information.
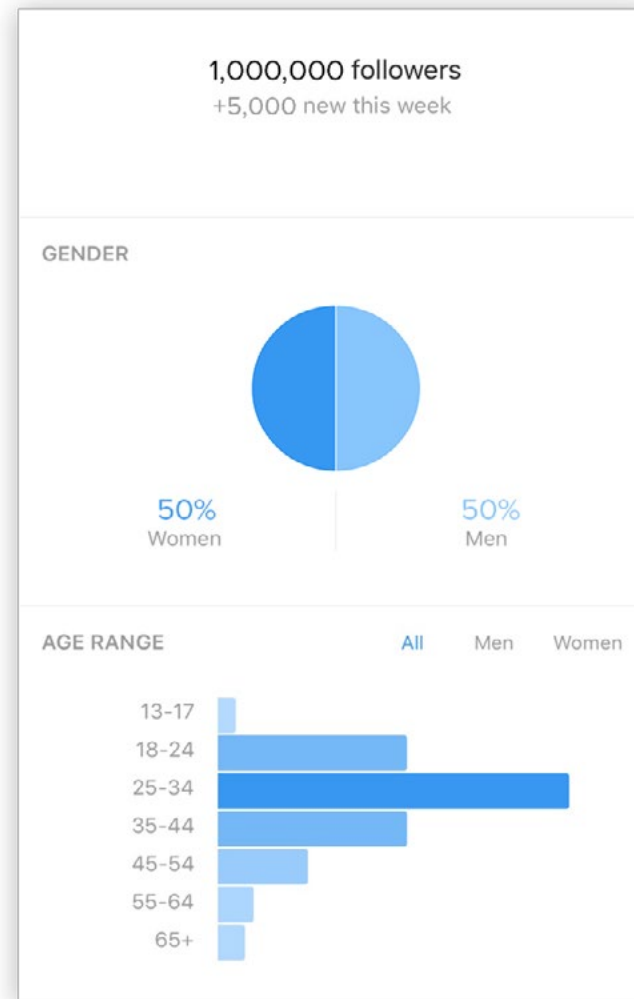
Sample statistics, not based on actual data

The Future is Live

Instagram jumped on the live bandwagon by launching Instagram Live in November of 2016. While this function is similar to Facebook Live in that it allows you to livestream to your followers, there are a few crucial differences to note. First, Instagram Live is 100% ephemeral, so it disappears forever after you end your broadcast. Second, your followers receive a push notification when you go live, which creates instant engagement.

Logistically, filming with Instagram Live is much the same as Facebook Live. From your feed, you tap the camera icon, swipe along the bottom of the screen to select "Live," and you're off and running. You can also tap the gear icon in the top left corner to change settings for comments and visibility.

Note that the temporary nature of live videos on Instagram means that they probably shouldn't be as labor-intensive as Facebook Live might be—if you're taking a lot of time to set up a shoot, you'll probably want to use Facebook so it can stay on your page after the broadcast is finished. Instead, keep Instagram Live videos informal and low-touch.

Social Media in 2017

Social media is evolving more and more rapidly, and 2017 is guaranteed to be a year in which you'll only succeed if you pay attention to the latest developments.

A few predictions: Facebook and Instagram will continue to finesse their live functionalities, making it easier and more commonplace to go live. With more and more content, they're both also likely to develop better ways of tagging, sorting, and categorizing live content to encourage greater usage and make it more discoverable.

In the further future, augmented reality and virtual reality will become ubiquitous. Remember the Pokemon Go phenomenon of summer 2016? Don't think for a single second that social platforms ignored how wild you went for catching Pikachu outside of your local Starbucks. That kind of augmented reality will undoubtedly hit the market shortly in a big way (beyond Snapchat's selfie filters), and with Facebook behind it, it's guaranteed to have staying power. As 360° content becomes cheaper to produce (it already has with cameras like the Ricoh Theta S), more and more accounts will produce content that all-but-physically puts you at the scene.

With change coming at such a rapid pace, what can you do to keep up? Remember that the basic rules will always apply. Listening to your followers, optimizing your content accordingly, and posting consistently are the best ways to set yourself up for success.

Learn more about reaching global audiences through social media and more with Artsy for Galleries.
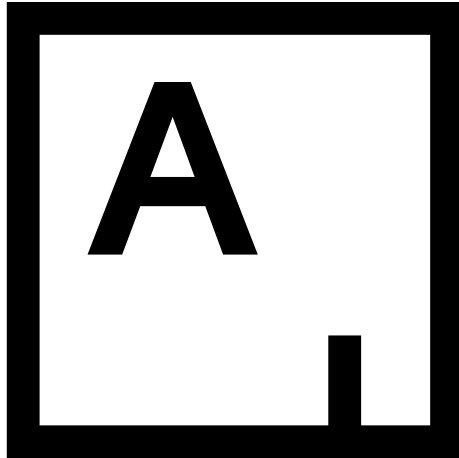
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