

# *How Instagram Really Works and How to Create Successful Content*

Presented by  
Jenn Herman



# Jenn Herman

- World's forefront blogger on Instagram marketing
- Top 10 Social Media Blog
- Social media consultant for businesses from entrepreneur to global organizations
- Featured in Inc., Yahoo Finance, Fox News, The Verge, AdEspresso, BBC News, CBS Radio LA, Social Media Examiner, and more!
- Author of "Instagram for Business for Dummies", "The Ultimate Beginner's Guide to Instagram" and "Stop Guessing: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Creating a Social Media Strategy"



*How  
Instagram Works*



*The Instagram Algorithm*

is

*Not*

the same as Facebook!



*It's about  
each individual user*

# *The Instagram Algorithm*

There are multiple areas that use algorithms:

Explore Feed

Hashtag Searches

Stories

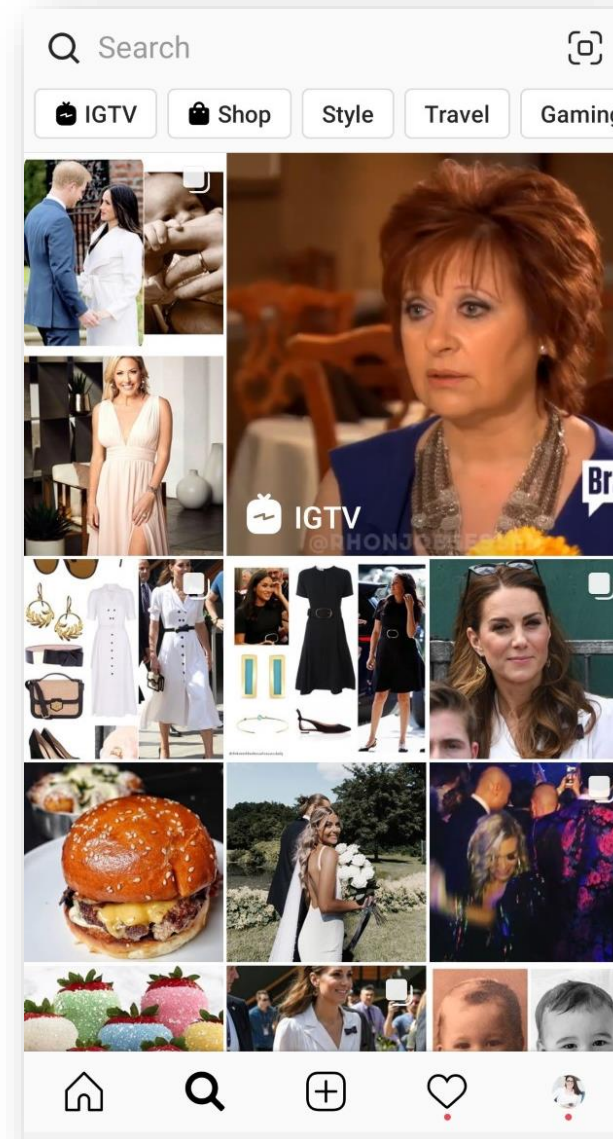
The Feed

*The Explore Feed  
Algorithm*



# The Explore Feed Algorithm

- Individual users' activity and preference
- Popularity of posts from both followers and non-followers
- Timing and saturation
- The algorithm and artificial intelligence (AI) determines what to show each person

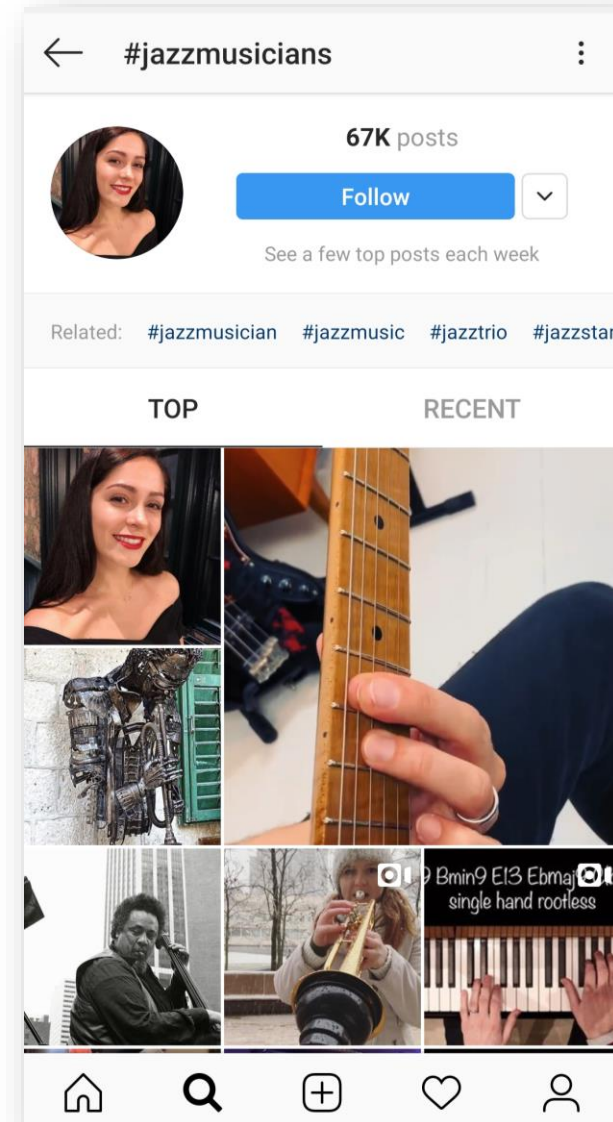


*The Hashtag  
Algorithm*



# The Hashtag Algorithm

- Top and Recent tabs
- Is based on individual users' activity and preference
- Popularity of posts from both followers and non-followers
- Timing and saturation



# Hashtag Strategies

10-20 hashtags per post

1. Use your own custom-branded hashtags
2. Use trendy or themed hashtags
3. Use content-related hashtags
4. Use industry-related hashtags

48 likes  
thatmusicteacher A happy #ForksUpFriday to you all!

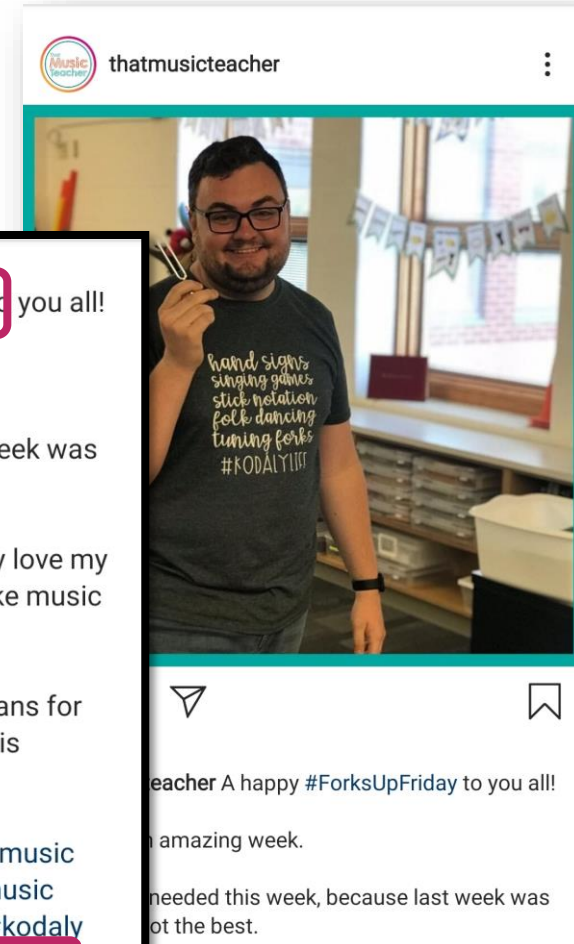
It's been an amazing week.

I definitely needed this week, because last week was definitely not the best.

My teacher heart is full from this week. I truly love my job and I love being able to wake up and make music with kids each and every day!

How was your week? Do you have any big plans for the weekend? What are you doing for YOU this weekend?

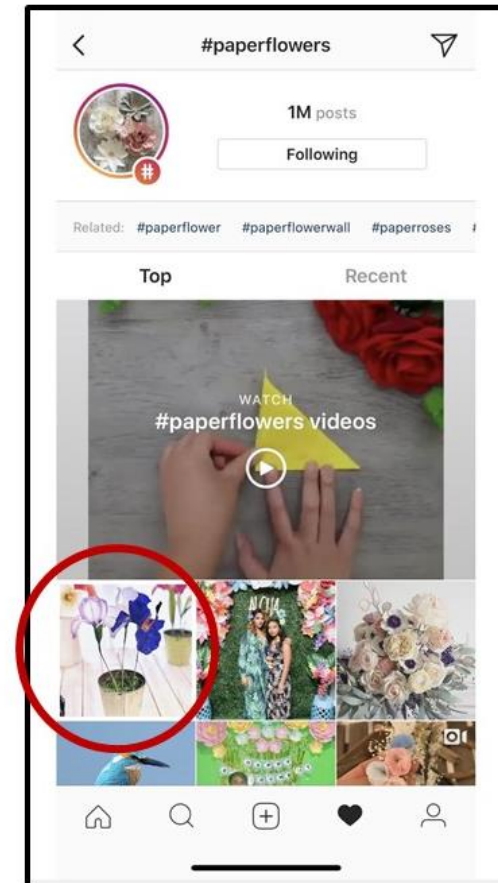
#TGIF #teacher #musicteacher #elementarymusic #iteachmusic #thatmusicteacher #generalmusic #middleschoolmusic #activemusicmaking #kodaly #orff #orffposse #teachergram #musiceducation #music #education #musicchat #music #iteachto #dudeswhoteach #education #teaching #teachersfollowteachers #musicteachers



# Hashtag Strategies

## Get strategic with hashtags

- Combine the following RELEVANT hashtags:
  - 4-5 popular hashtags (up to millions of posts)
  - 5-6 moderately popular hashtags (hundreds of thousands)
  - 2-5 niche specific hashtags
  - 1-3 branded hashtags
- Top Posts are how your audience finds you!



# *Hashtag Strategies*

Think about what your audience is looking for –

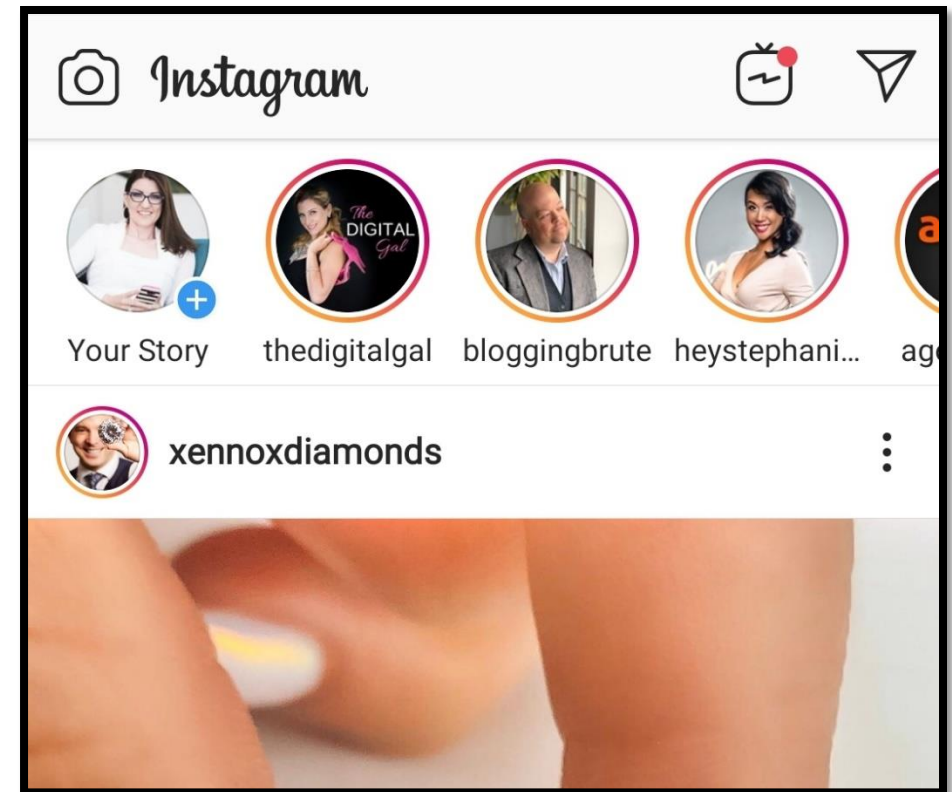
Not what you want to be found for

*The Story  
Algorithm*



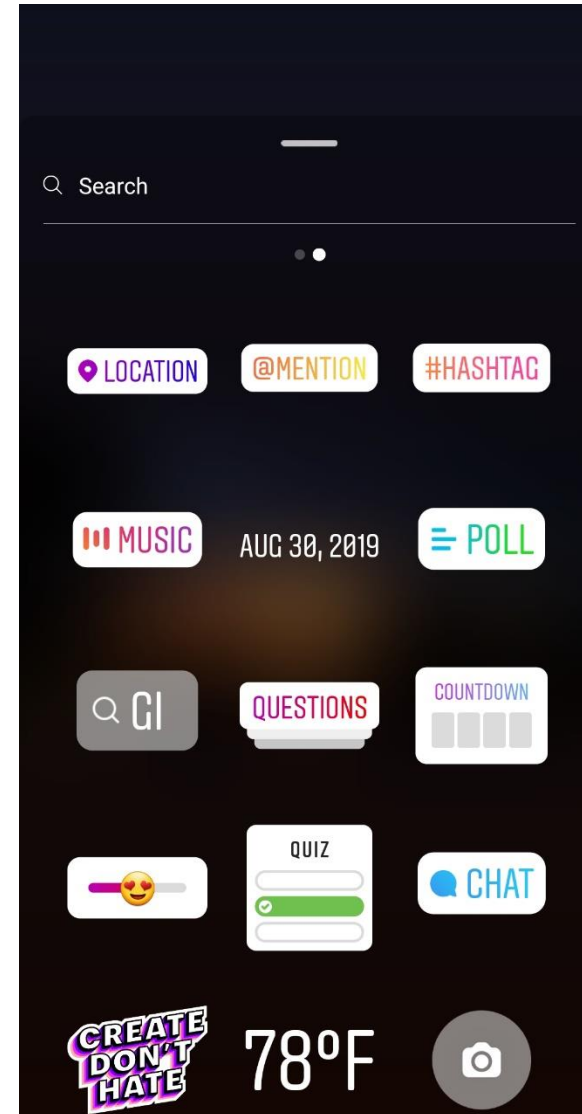
# The Instagram Story Algorithm

- Placement in the banner feed on users profiles is based on their personal interactions with each account they follow
- Accounts that are live get prioritized placements
- New Story posts will push ahead of ones already watched



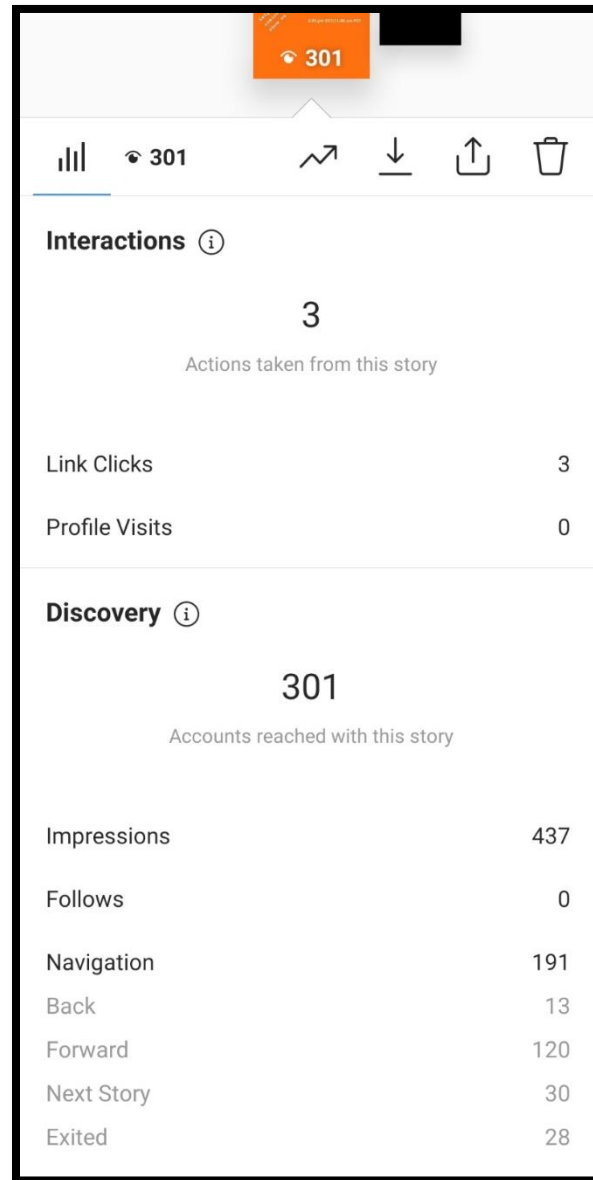
# The Instagram Story Algorithm

- Use stickers that generate engagement and encourage participation



# The Instagram Story Algorithm

- Review analytics for performance



*The Feed  
Algorithm*



# *The Instagram Feed Algorithm*

- Is based predominantly on individual interactions
  - Your interest level in related content
  - Your relationship with the account
- Now, more of a focus on more “recent” content
- Some (small) value on popularity
- Your activity impacts reach (to an extent)

# *The Instagram Feed Algorithm*

Content is NOT HIDDEN – it is simply resorted

Is NOT impacted by:

- Instagram Story interactions
- Response times (specifically)
- Editing/deleting
- Hashtag usage
- Video versus photo
- Business profiles

# *The Instagram Feed Algorithm*

Why you *\*may\** get reduced reach:

- Your content isn't appealing to your audience
- You act like a spammer
- Your content is flagged for spam content
- You tag lots of people and they report you
- You post content that may violate copyright laws (audio is the biggest culprit)

# *The Instagram Feed Algorithm*

## How Hiding Likes May Affect You:

- You still see your own like counts
  - You will see performance metrics to validate popularity of and reactions to posts
- Engagement will likely stay the same
- Brands need to focus on more than just like counts: impressions, comments, action button clicks, website clicks, DMs, etc.
- Focus on creating the content that “works”

# *The Instagram Feed Algorithm*

## How Hiding Likes May Affect You:

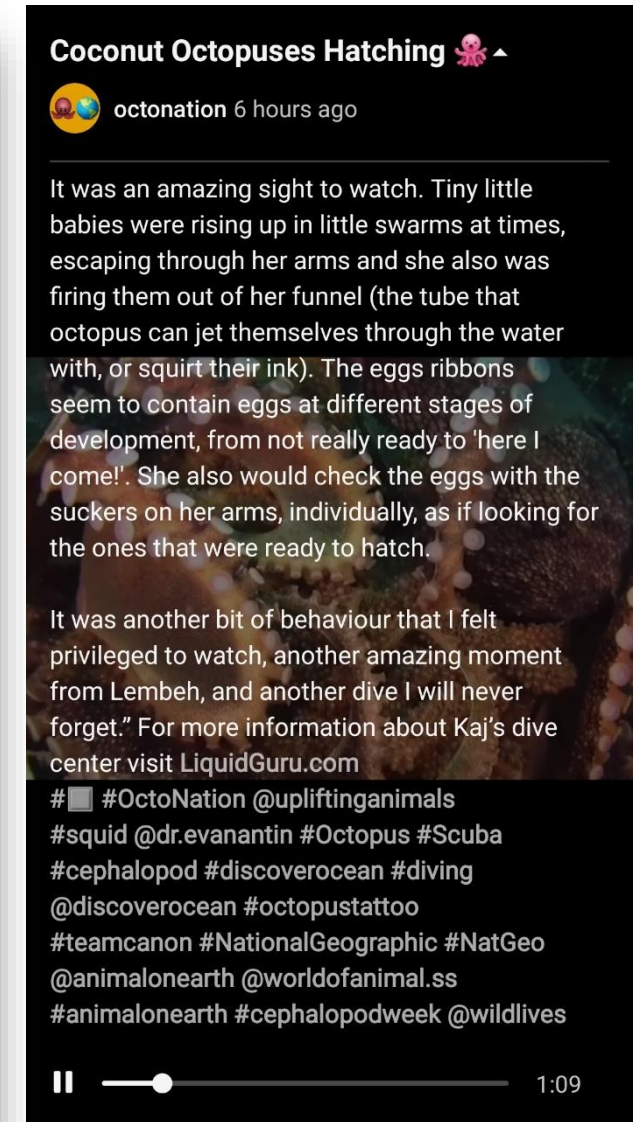
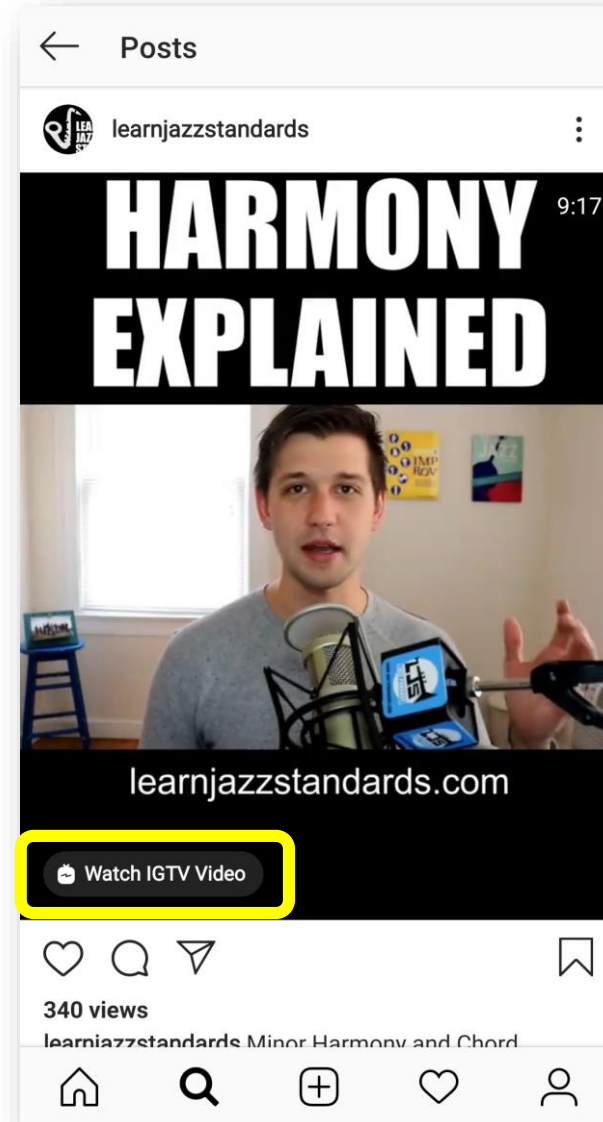
- Influencers have to find better ways to validate their results
  - Track their own likes, show click throughs, track website visits, and prove overall ROI
- Brands looking for influencers will need to look at an influencer's style, content, and comments to determine if the content aligns with their brand before reaching out and without merely relying on the popularity of a post
- This will improve the influencer marketing industry!

Use IGTV to  
Your Advantage



# IGTV

- IGTV previews in the feed – Instagram preferred content
- Make the first seconds super valuable and the first minute irresistible
- Use the description to include CTAs
- Include a link in the description
- Include a CTA in the video to click the link in the description



*Create Better  
Instagram  
Content*



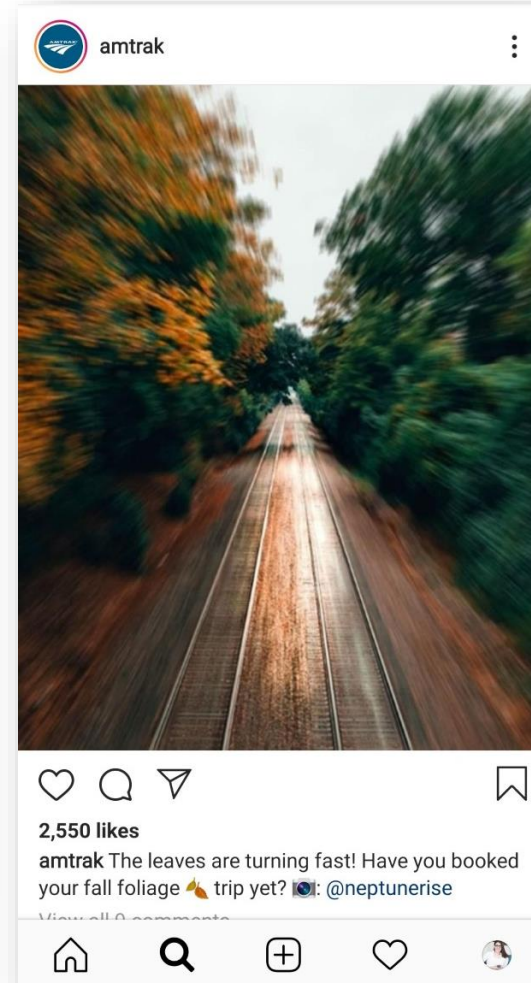
# *Instagram Content Strategies*

## LESS content & BETTER content

- Don't make your content compete with itself
- Don't post mediocre content that doesn't capture their attention in the feed
- Make your content stand out
- Post with a purpose

# Instagram Content Strategies

## LESS content & BETTER content



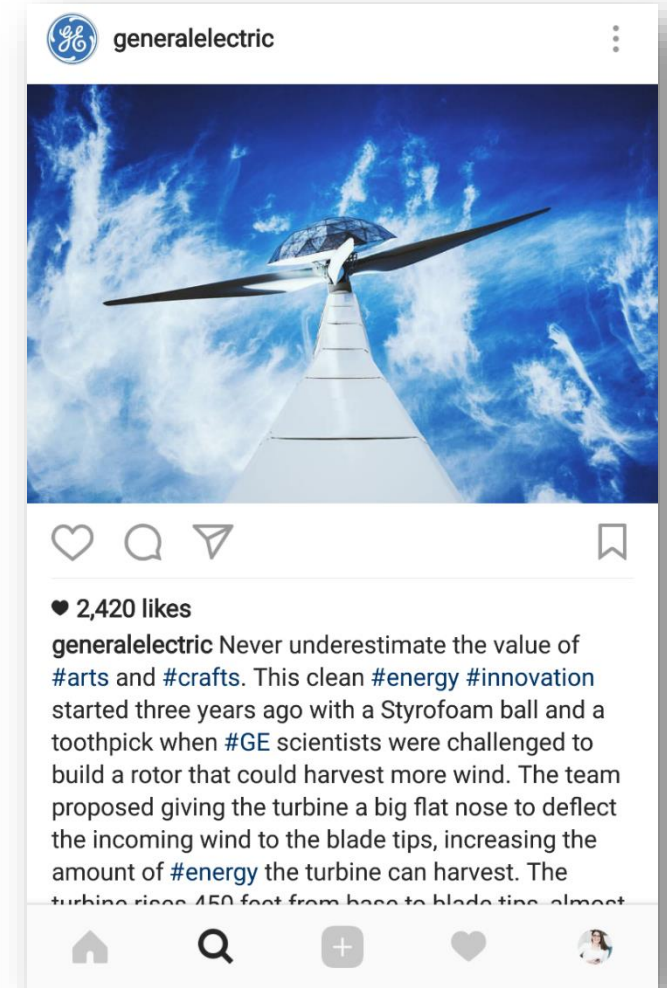
# *Instagram Content Strategies*

## Things to keep in mind:

- Dark mode is a thing now
- Carousels give you an extra opportunity for exposure
- Shoppable posts (definitely not punished...)

# Instagram Content Strategies

## Write better captions



# Instagram Content Strategies

## Write better captions

- Be descriptive
- Be entertaining, educational, informative, or valuable
- Not too short, not too long
  - 1-3 short paragraphs
- Take the photo/video “story” that much further
- Make the first sentence powerful
- Include the CTA in the caption

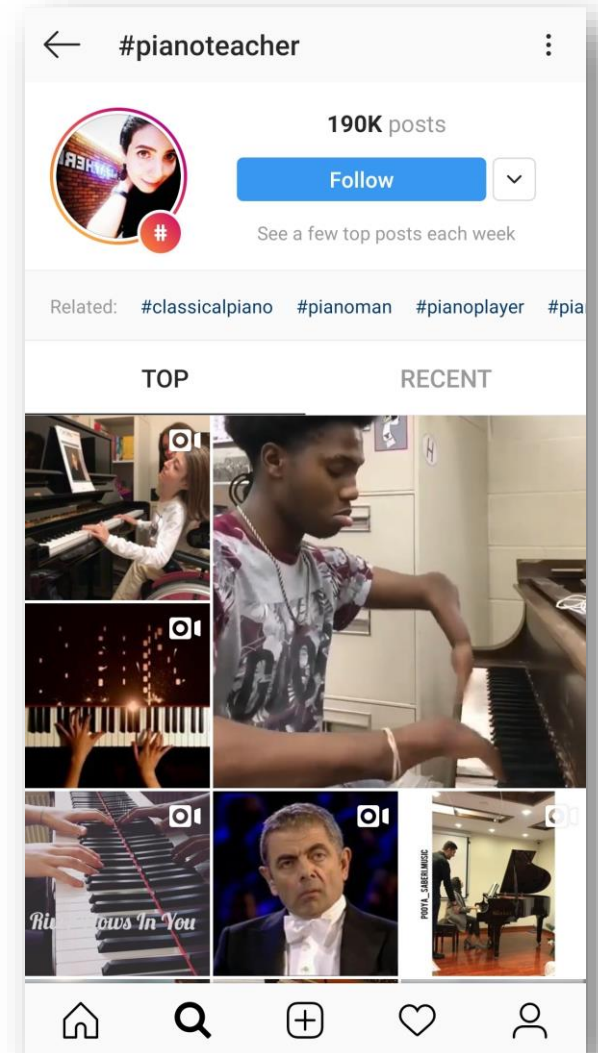
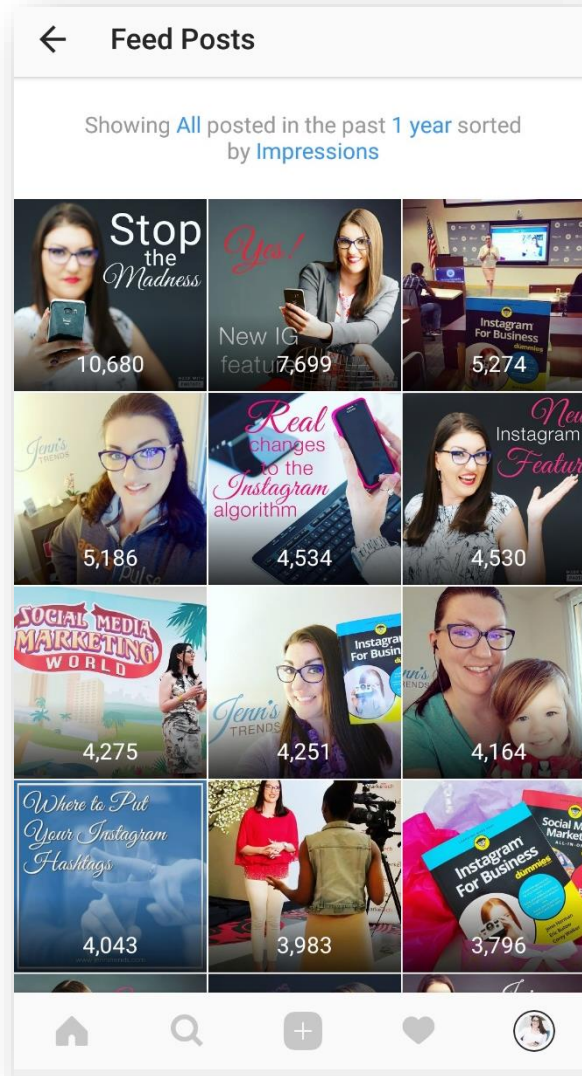
# Instagram Content Strategies

Connect emotionally and stay true to your brand voice and style



# Instagram Content Strategies

Create MORE of what your audience wants



*And, remember...*



*If you give your audience what  
they want,  
they'll give you what you want*

# *Time for Questions!*

- [www.jennstrends.com](http://www.jennstrends.com)
- @jenns\_trends
- [jenn@jennstrends.com](mailto:jenn@jennstrends.com)
- Facebook group: Jenn's Trends in Social Media

