

Welcome to the Jungle:

A Cocktail Wonk Guide to
Effective Social Media in the Spirits Industry

COCKTAIL  WONK

Cocktail Wonk aka Matt Pietrek

<http://cocktailwonk.com>

@cocktailwonk on Instagram,
Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest

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About CocktailWonk:

Started blogging three years ago at CocktailWonk.com

Started using Instagram - document my own boozy journey



Why Use Social Media?

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Obviously to attract attention to whatever it is you're promoting – your “brand”.

Equally important: Build a community of advocates for your brand

VERY IMPORTANT: Create a 2-way conversation with your audience, not just another platform to broadcast your marketing

Who Are the Players?

- ▶ Producers
- ▶ Bars
- ▶ Enthusiasts

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Who are we talking about here?

Brands

Spirit companies

Brand ambassadors – e.g. Simon Ford, Paul McFadyen, Madame St. Germaine, Charlotte Voisey, etc...

Importers – e.g. Anchor, Ekeko.

Bars

Enthusiasts

Spirits collectors/writers

Home bar enthusiasts

Tiki crowd is particularly big in social media – Tiki is particularly visual



What's Your Story?

People's time and eyeballs are precious – What value are you providing them for their attention?

First, figure out: What's your goal?

What story are you telling?

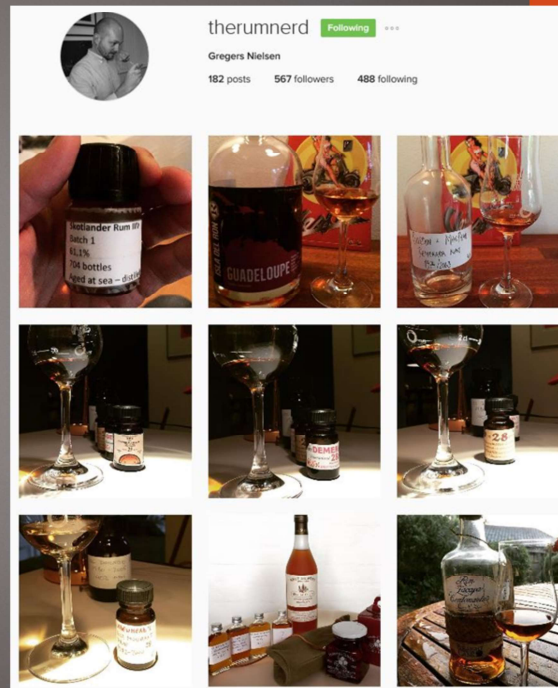
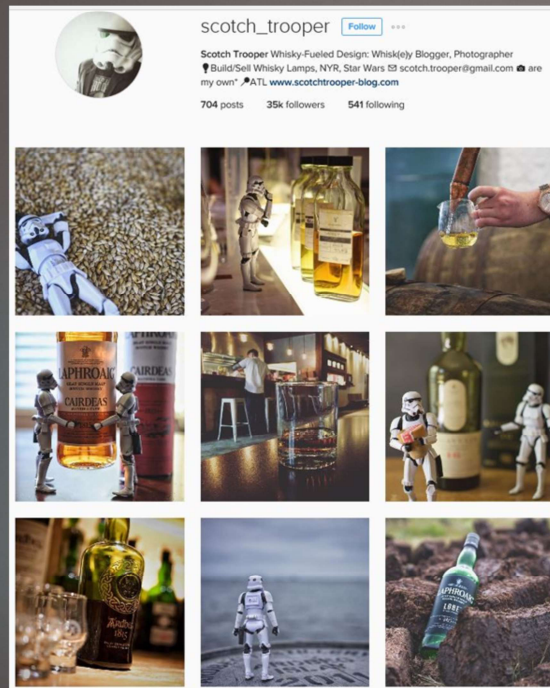
The Cocktail Wonk "story": My boozy journey of discovery through spirits, cocktails, bars, distilleries, and ???

All your content should tell some part of that story

Some brands focus on a Lifestyle/Aspiration story – e.g. Papa's Pilar imagery

Others focus on behind the scenes – e.g. St. George Spirits

What's Your Story?



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Some social media profiles have a very specific story
Star Wars Storm Troopers with Scotch
High end exotics rums being sampled

Your story don't have to have an incredibly narrow scope like these.
But you still need a story.

Social Media Platforms – Not all the same!

- ▶ Instagram
- ▶ Twitter
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Blogs
- ▶ Pinterest
- ▶ Snapchat / Vine



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Instagram

- Super easy to get started
- No text length limitations
- Seamless photo sharing to FB
- Not great for sharing URLs
- Popular with bars, enthusiasts. Visual stories.

Twitter

- Big with PR firms, old line brands. Many adopted twitter, never added Instagram. Their loss.
- 140 char limit is challenging.
- Images posted to other platforms, e.g. Instagram and “shared” to Twitter don’t appear, just a URL. Who wants to click that?

Harder to build follower base, generally speaking.

Facebook

Use a dedicated page for your brand, not your personal feed. Beachbum Berry found this out the hard way.

Ideal for sharing links, photos and videos

Reach of your brand page is artificially limited – Facebook wants you to pay to promote it.

Paid promotion isn't particularly effective, IMO. Organic sharing by others is better.

To get other people to share, you need to create great content that people **want** to share

Great metrics for posts. If you do pay to promote, easy targeting of who sees it.

Blog

Different purpose than FB, Twitter, IG.

With blogs, hits and readership are spread out over a long time.

Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are ephemeral. Blog posts are “forever”. Adjust your expectations accordingly.

Use Facebook to selectively promote your blog posts. IG and Twitter tend to be less effective for this.

Not even going to attempt to cover Snapchat, Vine, IG Stories, here.

Legal Issues

- ▶ TTB considers producer social media feeds as advertising
- ▶ Understand age limits and disclaimers
- ▶ State laws differ about what promotion is allowed
- ▶ <http://beveragetradenetwork.com/en/ttbs-new-guidelines-on-social-media-and-blogs-278.htm>

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If you're a brand, be aware that there legalities you should be aware of.

Make sure your posts can't be construed as targeting minors.

Weird state laws (e.g. in Louisiana) about what sort of promotions by producer tier are allowed.

Social Media Do's

- ▶ Great imagery
- ▶ Tailor content to platform
- ▶ Inbound engagement
- ▶ Outbound engagement
- ▶ Tagging / referencing
- ▶ Appropriate hash tags
- ▶ Take a break from posting



Not every photo has to be visually stunning, but at least should be properly lit, framed, etc.. to tell your story
Especially in blog posts – Instagram is ephemeral, but your blog posts stay for years to come

Create content tailored to each platform – Not everything you post needs to go on every platform.
Links to web sites don't do great on IG, but do better on FB.
Twitter is better suited towards news and profound thoughts, and less towards visual.

Try to engage with everyone who comments (intelligently) on your posts.
Barring that, answer any questions, and take opportunities to share more relevant info
1:1 engagement builds personal connections that makes people feel connected to you.

Where appropriate, comment intelligently on other brand/influencer feeds

A great way to get in front of eyeballs who don't know you exist.

Don't use outbound as just another ad dumping ground. Don't spam on other people's feeds. Or yours!

It's OK to take a few days off from posting to recharge. Don't push a stream of mediocre posts.

Social Media Don'ts

- ▶ Uninspiring photos
- ▶ Ineffective content from cross-posting
- ▶ Automatic cross-posting across platforms
- ▶ Feed spamming
- ▶ Off-topic posts



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Crappy photos. Especially dark, sloped, underlit, or overlit photos. Just about any photo can be improved after the fact.
Photos of random groups of people that no-one knows.
Martini glasses filled with brown liquid **usually** aren't attractive. Think hard before posting.

Spamming

A **constant** stream of post that are explicitly advertising, e.g. upcoming events.

Cross posting the same post to large number of forums all at once, especially if they share a large audience in common.

Bonus spammer points for posting into only tangentially related forums.

Like promoting a Detroit event in a West coast-based Facebook group.

Never make your Facebook feed **automatically** share to Instagram and Twitter – Annoys the hell out of people.

Facebook and Instagram posts in-app shared to Twitter look horrible

The text gets truncated

@references aren't always the same across platforms

Photos become a link, rather than the image

Your dog is cute, but does he belong in your cocktail recipe Instagram feed?

If you wouldn't post it on Facebook page, think hard about why you'd put it on Instagram. Is it telling your story?

Get the picture: Effective camera phone photos

- ▶ Focus
- ▶ Framing
- ▶ Exposure
- ▶ Background/props

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Daylight is usually optimal for lighting, but in the absence of that, like in a dark bar, use candles or other tricks.

On your camera phone, tap on the interesting part – It tells your phone what to optimize for, including lighting.

If the main topic isn't that visually interesting, but you still want to use the photo, use background props. Backbars, bar equipment, bottles, etc...

Photo Basics: Focus!



Focus is atrocious. Do not post photos like these.

Photo Basics: Alignment



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Is that glass about to fall over? Don't post photos like this. It's super easy to correct.

Photo Basics: Exposure



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You can adjust the exposure of dark photos afterwards
But if you lighten too much, you get a grainy look. See photo on left.

Photo Basics: Background/props

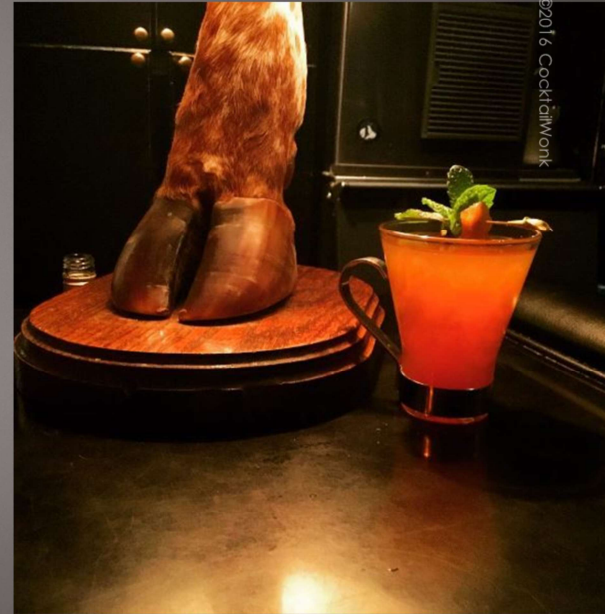
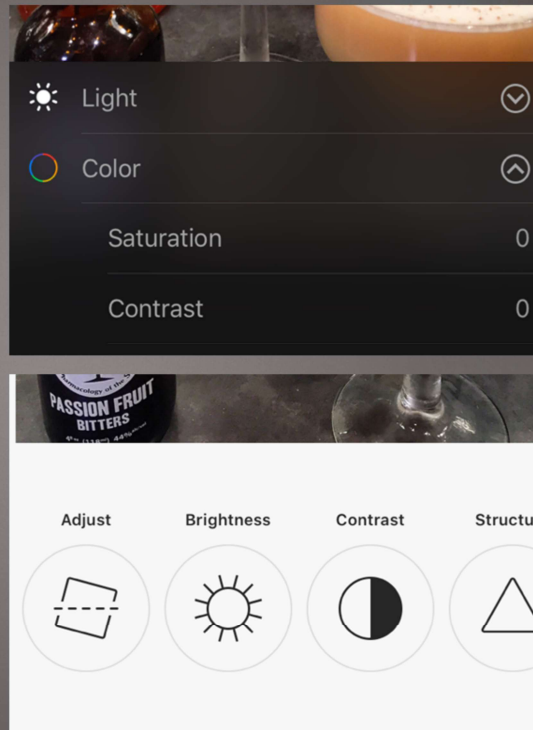


Image on the left is a cocktail tragedy. But at least visually interesting. Until you spy the cars in the background. WTF????

Photo on the right shows good prop usage. A well known prop from Seattle's Rob Roy. Search on IG for #drinkwithhoofy

Before You Post

- ▶ Straighten / Crop
- ▶ Lighting
- ▶ Contrast / Structure
- ▶ Saturation (Lux)
- ▶ Filters?

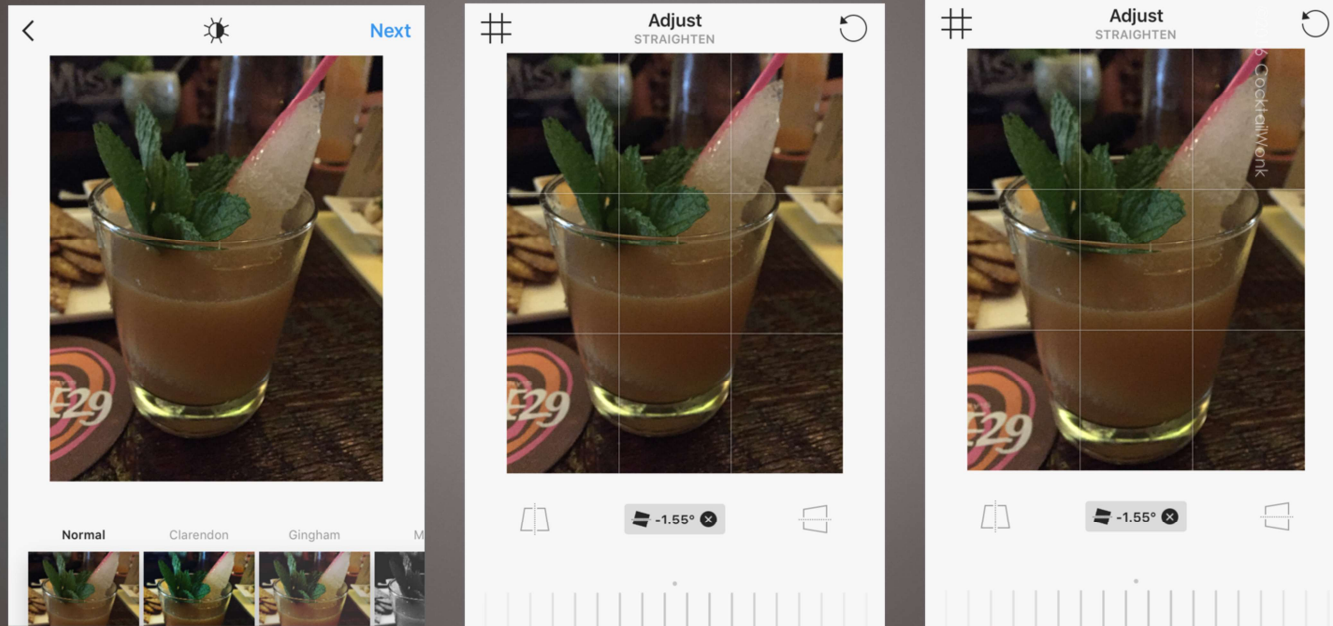


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Always consider the first four steps before posting any photo.

Filters are often used as a crutch by the lazy. It's better to adjust exactly what needs to be adjusted.

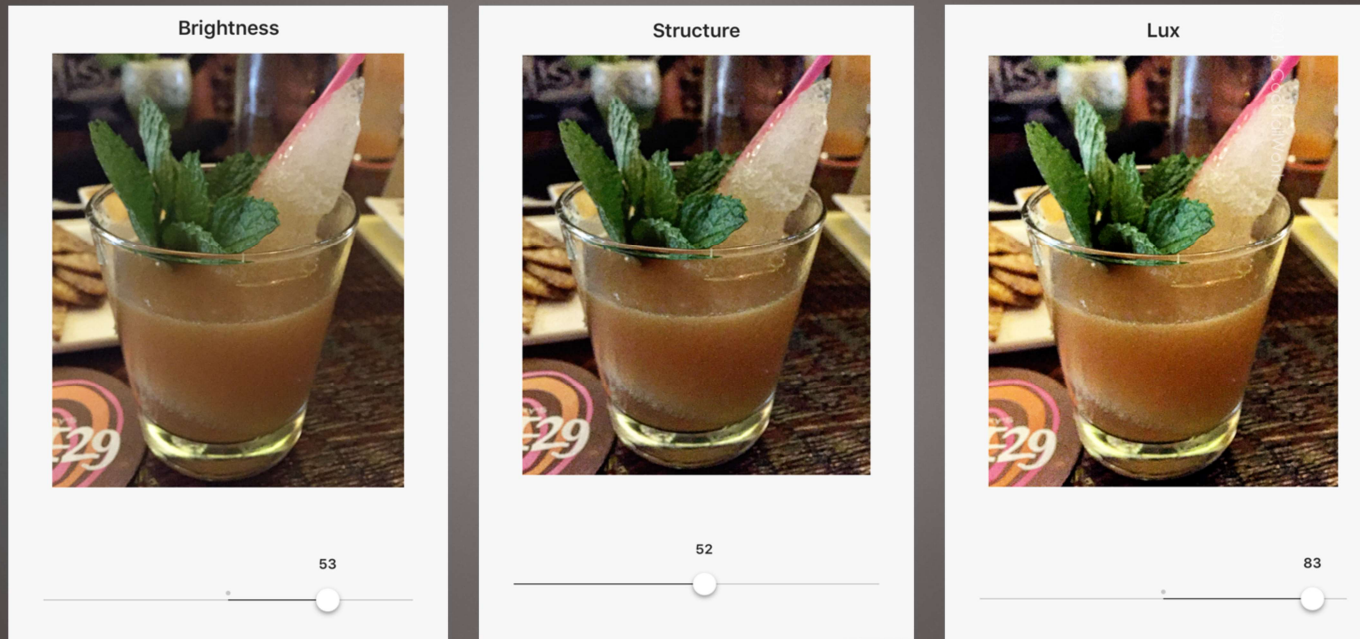
Fixing photos: Straighten/crop



Example of improving a ho-hum picture after the fact.

- #1) Original image
- #2) Straighten it so that the glass looks level
- #3) Crop out uninteresting elements, like brown table top.

Fixing photos: Exposure, contrast, saturation



- #4) Adjust brightness. But notice a bit of graininess has seeped in.
- #5) Adjust contrast, saturation, structure, or whatever works best.
- #6) Final image. Compare to #1 original image.

Salvaging a photo



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Another example of improving a mediocre image via post-processing.

Image is mine, of a drink made by Justin Wojslaw (@raining_and_pouring) at the Diller Room in Seattle.

Image on right has:

- Straightening
- Adjusted lighting
- Punched up saturation

Still is kind of grainy, but those are the breaks.

Also, note creative use of light source. In this case, a keychain light behind the base of the glass. Otherwise the glass would be almost completely dark.

What Works: Hard-won wisdom

- ▶ Good
 - ▶ Killer garnishes
 - ▶ Famous people
 - ▶ Vibrant colors
 - ▶ Vignettes (tight crop, out of focus background)
 - ▶ Tiki Fire!
- ▶ Not so good
 - ▶ Bottle shots
 - ▶ Photos of random people at events
 - ▶ Inspirational quotes
 - ▶ Videos



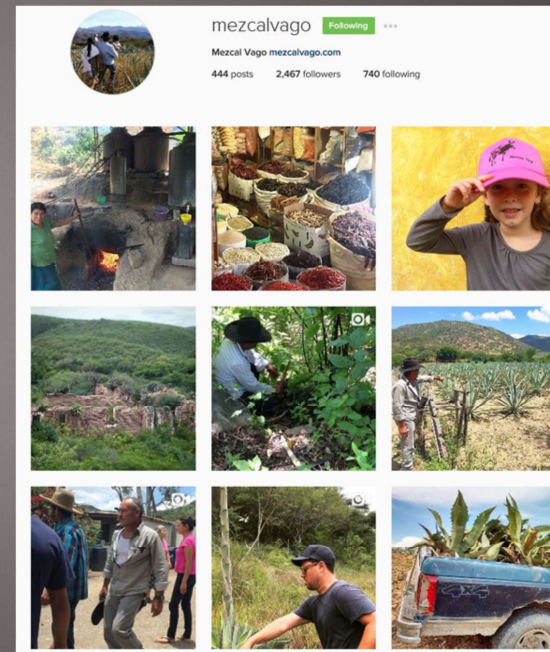
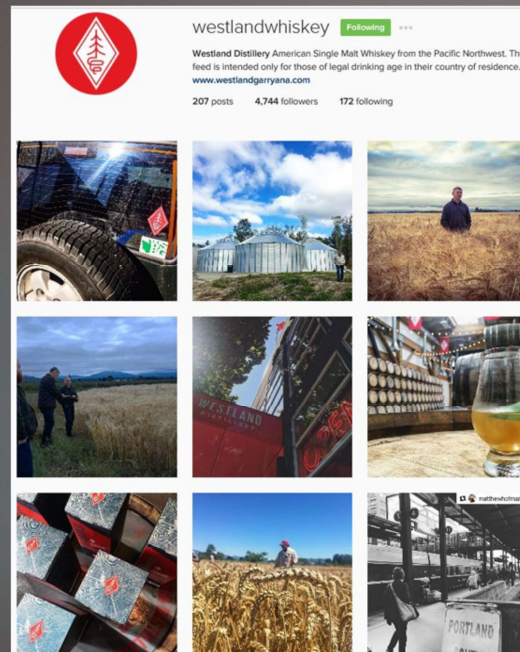
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My personal observations for what gets the most likes on Instagram, and what doesn't do so well.

The lack of likes for videos is somewhat surprising.

Image is mine, from Latitude 29 in NOLA.

Brands to Watch



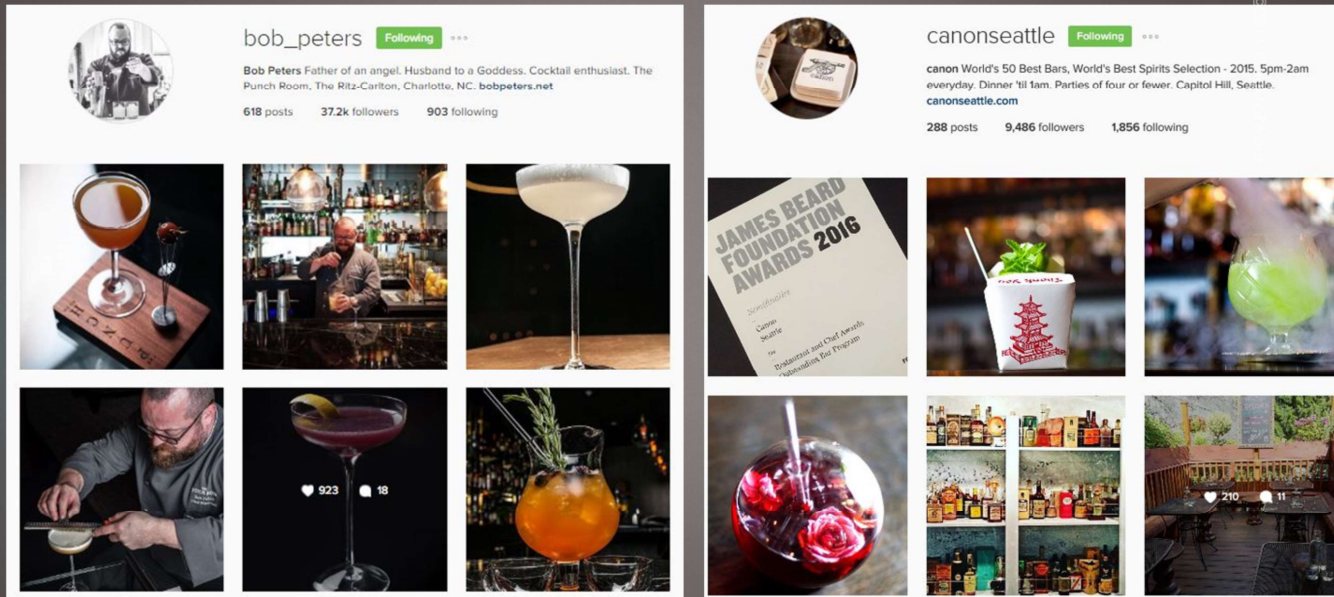
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Show behind the scenes. Help people connect with your brands.

Invite questions.

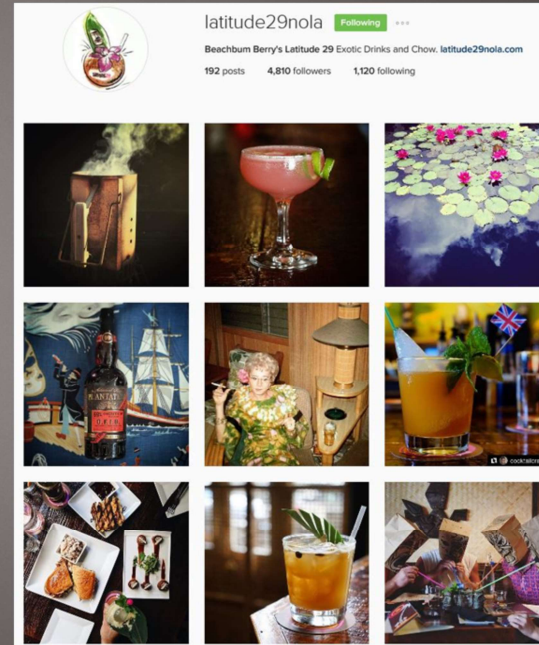
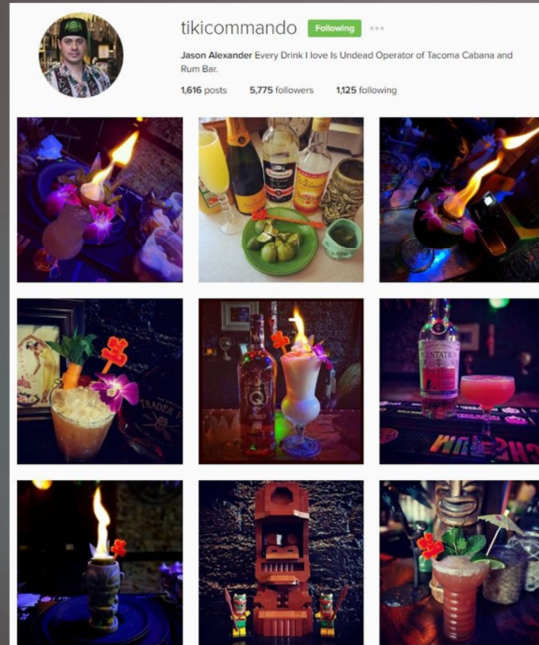
It gets old just seeing glamour shots of bottle and cocktails in exotic locales – Anybody can do that. Why is your product unique?

Bars to Watch



The goal for bars is twofold:
Show new people what it's about
Keep regulars updated on a special reason to come by

More Bars to Watch

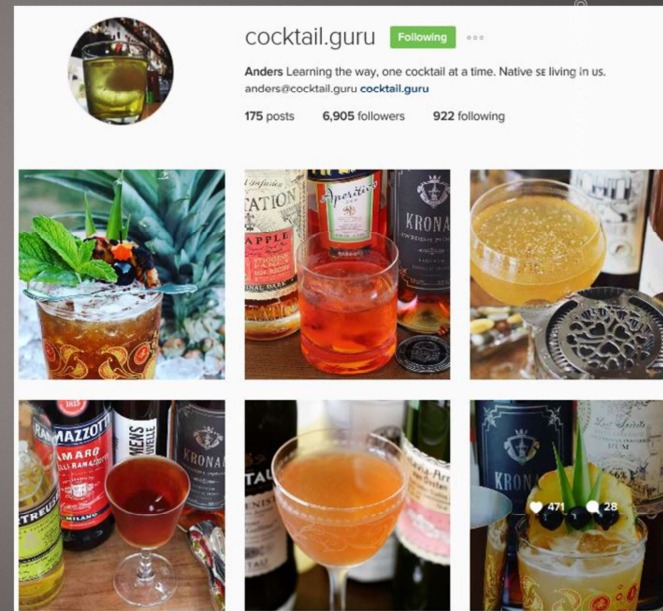
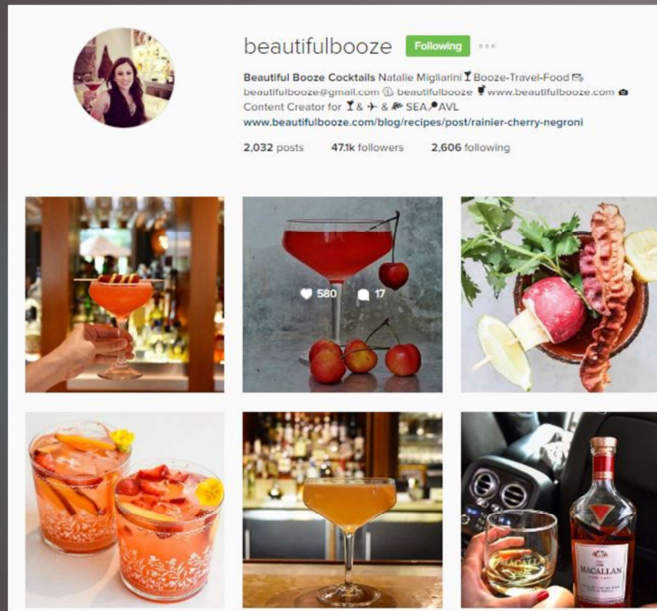


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The Tiki crowd is particularly visual, and has many influencers.

Two of my favorites are Jason Alexander (@tikicommando) at the Tacoma Cabana, and Latitude 29 (@latitude29nola)

Influencers to Watch



Find influencers that you admire. Figure out what they do well. Steal the good ideas and adopt to your style.

Different influencers focus on different things.

Some focus on pretty homemade cocktail photos -

Some focus on recipes and the ingredients involved

Some focus on great bar imagery

Some focus on a particular spirit – Scotch and Mezcal/Tequila are particularly prevalent

Metrics and Tools

- ▶ What's your engagement rate?
 - ▶ Likes and comments per 100 followers
- ▶ Shares
- ▶ Tools
 - ▶ Iconosquare
 - ▶ Hootsuite / cross-posting
 - ▶ IG Reposting apps
- ▶ Facebook

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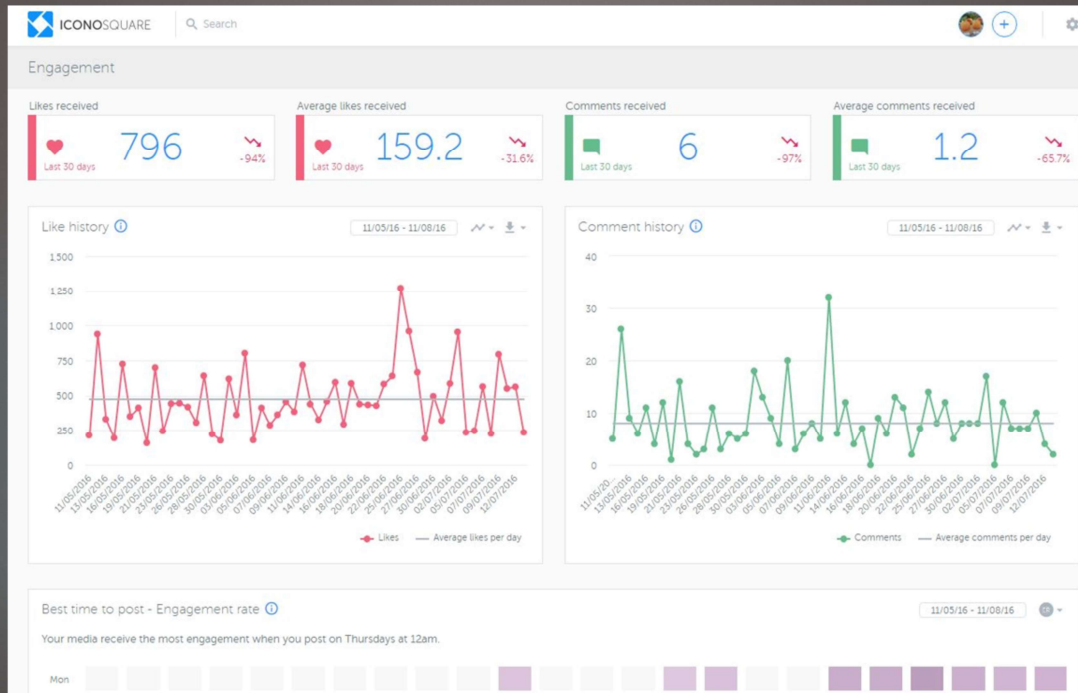
After you've built a decent number of posting, start understanding what posts get better responses

As you gain followers, focus on engagement rate, not absolute numbers. What percentage of your followers are seeing your FB post? What percentage of followers have "liked" your Instagram posts?

Know when to post

There are a number of social media tools that help you manage your social media feeds and analyze how they perform.

Iconosquare



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Hootsuite


Matt Pietrek 0 Compose message...

Streams

- Publisher
- Analytics
- Assignments
- Campaigns **BETA**
- Contacts
- App Directory
- Settings
- Tools
- Help


Get Hootsuite to go
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Seattle, Washington
I've this American-made, pot still, 100% rye whisky in my collection. It's a great addition to my spirits in San Francisco, and strives to...



Liked cocktailwonk

Novo Fogo Cachaça Orgânica @novofogo
3 hours ago · Insignia Seattle
Plenty of food, plenty of drinks! A big thank to our industry friends who came to our little Brazilian Happy Hour event last night. We had a blast...



Read More

Facebook Insights

Page Summary Last 7 days Export Data

Results from Aug 09, 2016 - Aug 15, 2016 Organic Paid

Actions on Page
August 9 - August 15

We don't have data to show you this week.

Page Views
August 9 - August 15

52
Total Page Views ▲ 18%

Page Likes
August 9 - August 15

11
Page Likes ▲ 10%

Reach
August 9 - August 15

6,349
People Reached ▲ 25%

Post Engagements
August 9 - August 15

1,046
Post Engagement ▲ 52%

Videos
August 9 - August 15

92
Total Video Views ▼ 92%

Your 5 Most Recent Posts

Reach: Organic / Paid Post Clicks Reactions, Comments & Shares

Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote
08/14/2016 11:20 pm	So what went on at Tales of the Cocktail this year? For me it inclu...			1.1K	86 45	Boost Post
08/12/2016 7:49 am	More attention grabbing rum with recent TTB label approval: Mount...			2.2K	216 114	Boost Post

Your Fans **People Reached** **People Engaged**

The people who have liked, commented on, or shared your posts or engaged with your Page in the past 28 days.

Women

25% People Engaged 23% Your Fans

Men

74% People Engaged 76% Your Fans

Country	People Engag...	City	People Engag...	Language	People Engag...
United States of America	436	Seattle, WA	54	English (US)	489
United Kingdom	67	Chicago, IL	39	English (UK)	121
France	53	London, England, Unit...	18	French (France)	66
Denmark	26	New York, NY	12	Italian	21
Canada	20	Los Angeles, CA	12	Danish	17
Italy	19	Paris, Île-de-France, Fr...	11	Portuguese (Portugal)	15
Germany	17	Copenhagen, Capital R...	10	Dutch	15

Resources:

- ▶ <http://cocktailwonk.com/2015/02/the-cocktail-wonk-guide-to-great-cocktail-bar-photos-with-your-camera-phone.html>
- ▶ <https://pro.iconosquare.com/>
- ▶ <https://hootsuite.com/>

Questions?

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