



Visual marketing is gaining steam with the success of Instagram

Visual social marketing is creating buzz due to the rapid growth of companies like Pinterest and Instagram. Instagram is unique in that it is both a photo sharing application and a social network. People who take pictures with Instagram can share them across the app's native network as well as other social networks like Facebook, Tumblr and Twitter.

Instagram is young, even by web standards, especially considering the amount of attention and traffic it currently receives. The company celebrated its second birthday this month, after having been purchased by Facebook for approximately \$1 billion in April. According to comScore's Mobile Metrix 2.0, Instagram edged out Twitter in mobile traffic in September. Over 5 million pictures are uploaded daily.

Attorneys can take advantage of visual marketing and visually oriented social networks. Everyone – including attorneys – can tell a story through pictures. And that is how you should think about visual marketing: it is a story. The pictures you take and share via Instagram are not just individual images, they are part of an overall narrative you are telling about your firm. Pictures have an added advantage of attracting more likes and engagement than textual posts among users of social media. It is time to get snapping.

Solicit testimonials from clients. Testimonials are a time-tested way to help establish trust and credibility. If you have clients who are willing to participate, snap a few pictures of them in your office interacting with attorneys and post them with a quote from the client about your firm. This creates an instant visual and emotional connection with your firm.

Try a photo competition. You can host a photo competition among the general public or among your staff. Either way, share and have people vote through likes. Having staff and attorneys take pictures is particularly useful because it will help your firm build an inventory of non-stock photography for other purposes. This can give your social media, and potentially other marketing materials, a more personal feel.

Share pictures of events. Any time your firm participates in a community event or hosts a seminar has office open house – anything – take pictures. Even if the event does not seem visually oriented, there are always some good stories to tell. Since Instagram allows you to add one of many filters to a picture, even the ordinary can look interesting and unique.

Let people in on behind the scenes moments. It is likely that not everything that happens in your office is all work all day. It is good to build a library of professional pictures, but it is also helpful to share some non-standard office scenes.





This could be anything from a quirky still life of interesting desk items to candid moments among staff and attorneys. Giving people a sneak peak at office interactions – even the non-serious type – can help enhance your firm’s personality and generate interest among followers.

Tag your pictures. You can use a trending hashtag or create your own tags, but always tag your pictures. At a minimum, include your firm name, keywords and location. You can also include the names of people in the picture, with permission.

Like any other social media marketing, visual marketing requires planning and targeting. Do not just post the same pictures to all networks every time. Pick and choose where you post given the demographic of the network. Telling a story through pictures should be fun and engaging. Consistent storytelling is a branding must and one all firms can take advantage of.

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