

# Are Instagram Hashtags Still #Cool?

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The secret is out: Hashtags, [per Instagram chief Adam Mosseri](#), are still primarily used in conjunction with their original purpose, which started as a way to categorize and organize content on the channel. Over the years, we've discovered tags are not necessarily used for increasing reach or impressions or maximizing content distribution as the digital marketing world once hypothesized. So, what's the situation with hashtags nowadays? Good question...

## Are Hashtags #Dead?

**Depends on who you ask.**

Well, according to [Seller's Choice](#). Their biggest concern? Bots, and rightfully so. For starters, browser extensions and other tools make use of bots and spammers that crawl hashtags to create micro-interactions on others' content—creating the illusion of engagement.

Not only that, but a simple search of #beautycommunity can turn into ad after ad from spam accounts and bots, whether they're relevant to the tag or not.

With popular tags being bombarded with irrelevant or spammy content, it can be hard to reach your desired audience as your content will quickly become buried, especially if you're *only* prioritizing high competition tags.

And while you may notice that the popular hashtags you use *are* moving the impression or engagement needle in some cases, you may be surprised to find out that a handful of those accounts who have engaged are actually bots, not your actual desired consumers.

## Are Hashtags #Necessary?

**There's a time and a place.**

It's true, hashtags do have some importance in the digital world (of course, or else they wouldn't exist!). They can often help [increase your exposure](#) among consumers who follow or regularly check hashtags you're posting to. With constant searching of related tags, your consumers are more likely to find your content on their Explore pages.

Your place in search isn't the only “benefit” to using hashtags. As forementioned by Instagram chief Adam Mosseri, hashtags are great for filing your content into specific categories, and with branded hashtags, you can create a make-shift bucket of approved user-generated content that's readily available, right on the platform. Brands all over have seen great success with branded hashtags that inspire conversations, offer photo-sharing opportunities, or increase a consumer's chance of winning a giveaway. And while some see success using some popular tags, it's important to set your focus on low competition hashtags as your chances of being discovered on the tag's page are more likely.

But does posting to low competition tags even help? [A recent study found](#) that **there are no significant differences** in the average engagement rate despite how many (or how few) hashtags there are in the post. Like blogging and SEO, Google recommends marketers not resort to keyword-stuffing in order to rank higher in search. The same can be said for Instagram. While Instagram has a 30-hashtag limit on posts, crowding a post with hashtags doesn't actually help bring up your brand's engagement...and skimping on the tags doesn't seem to do much either.

So, does that mean for Instagram hashtag usage?

## Here's our POV

**Maybe you just need a boost.**

Long story short, there are benefits that your brand should be taking advantage of. Hashtags offer a glimpse into understanding your brand's share of voice in the world of competitors and can help you find great user-generated content featuring your products, testimonials, and more. But if your objective is reach, boosting your content is the way to go. After all, [Nielsen's Global Annual Marketing Report 2022](#) found 64% of marketers say paid social is their most effective paid channel—the most of any other paid channel!

Boosting your content is a great way to tell what's actually performing, as you can reach your [desired demographic](#)—real people, not bots or spammers—via geotargeting and audience interest tagging. Boosting all your posts equally can provide you with accurate insights and showcase what is working (and not working) for your brand.

Even more important: [Focus on the quality of the content](#), not the number of hashtags! The quality of your brand's content is of utmost importance. If you're not designing or speaking to your audience, you'll never reach them.

So, our POV: Boost. Favor content quality. Hashtag sparingly. Trust the algorithm.

## Let's Create Together

Learn more about how AGAIN Interactive can help you reach your desired demographic through unique creative ideas, clever copywriting, boosting strategies, and more. Drop us a line at [info@againinteractive.com](mailto:info@againinteractive.com).

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Samantha Sekora—a member of the creative team here at AGAIN—is a cutting-edge writer and lover of all things social. When she's not typing away, you might find Samantha off doing some of her favorite things, like roller skating and antiquing. All while sporting her signature sunflower pin.

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