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GUEST ARTICLE: A rundown of the remarkable growth of Instagram Reels in 2023

With the launch of Reels in 2020, Instagram is reigning supreme in the world of social media.



Mumbai: TikTok dominated social media for the longest time, with a robust user base of over 120 million as of 2019. Despite close competition and a nearly equal extent of popularity, Instagram's growth in India could not match up with that of TikTok. But with TikTok's exit in June 2020 and the emergence of Reels in the same year, Instagram made its way to the top and continues to block the coveted spot with new updates and unrivaled features.

How? We will find out. First, let us understand the basics.

What are Instagram Reels?

Instagram Reels are short-form videos that allow users to record, edit, and string together multiple clips to produce an engaging video in just a few minutes. The video clips can range from 15 to 30 seconds and be merged with audio clips or music and enhanced with fun elements like filters or Instagram stickers. Unlike Instagram Stories, Reels do not disappear within 24 hours after uploading them; instead, they stay on the timeline for as long as one decides to retain them.

In terms of usage, this feature is easily understandable and doesn't demand much time or external resources. Users can select the Reels tab on Instagram and press the camera icon on the top right. A Reel can either be recorded in a single stream or series of clips or pre-recorded and uploaded later.

For those who want to add music to the footage can tap the audio icon and select music from Instagram's library. Alternatively, adding original audio by importing the file is possible. The seamless transitions between different clips can be attained by accessing the aligning and editing feature. Upon reaching a point of satisfaction, users can preview the Reel, add a cover photo, and write an interesting caption that resonates with the video.

Reasons behind the popularity and acceptance of Reels

Ever since Instagram introduced Reels, the new feature has grabbed the attention of younger audiences for various compelling reasons, such as:

Short Content Format: In today's fast-paced digital world, capturing and maintaining the audience's attention is essential for social media success. Reels' short content format catered to the shrinking attention span of users by delivering succinct, fun, and engaging messages, thereby increasing their likeability.

Content Versatility: Reels are incredibly flexible and versatile. Scroll through the explore page on Instagram, and you will find Reels being used in every way possible – whether it is for sharing personal finance tips and makeup hacks or cooking tutorials and educational content. In addition to entertaining the audience, Reels helped users stay connected with their followers, showcase their creativity, and improve engagement. In a way, this web of infinite Reels has attracted and retained users on the platform.

Wider Reach and Better Engagement: Users that embraced Reels saw a tremendous rise in their follower count, engagement rates, and overall profile visibility. This helped them reach newer users and serve the videos to a larger audience. The sharable nature and potential for virality encouraged users to create more content and add to the platform's exposure.

How are marketers leveraging Instagram Reels to grow business

Given that Instagram Reels can be made seamlessly, allow for plenty of creativity, boost reach and engagement, and help generate leads and sales, brands are purposefully making it a part of their social media strategy. In fact, brands skeptical of this format are now swiftly investing in short-form video content, partly due to its resemblance with TikTok. But fast forward to today; there are some Instagram Reels that you do not want to miss!

Britannia's Reel Ad with content creator Danish Salt for Nutri Choice Protein is one of them. In the video campaign that read "Make Protein Routine," Salt can be seen lifting weights and exercising while playfully and effectively getting his message across, including Nutri Choice cookies.

Similarly, the popular clothing brand – Bewakoof – which boasts over 1.7 MN followers on Instagram, has often grabbed the limelight for their approach to launch a new collection via Reels. Besides selecting impactful models & influencers and creating smooth product-focused videos, Bewakoof demonstrates a portfolio of its products using fresh and unique content formats on the platform, thereby breaking the monotony and making the timeline aesthetically pleasing.

Reels should be a top priority for brands looking to build awareness and win more customers via Instagram. They are worth the time and an important content format for business owners and marketers to leverage!

The bottom line

We all need to keep up with the ever-evolving paradigm of social media to remain relevant. Until now, it was TikTok and Twitter. Now, it is Instagram and the Reels feature. Tomorrow, it can be something else!

The author of this article is C Com Digital founder and managing director Chandan Bagwe.

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