



# The Essential Guide to Social Selling

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# Introduction

Is your brand making the most of its social media presence? From small boutiques to global brands, social media has become more than an outlet for showcasing your brand's aesthetic, promoting products, and building customer relationships.

Today's brands of all kinds are using social selling to turn their social accounts into major revenue streams. In essence, these accounts can serve as a new front page for your Ecommerce store—giving shoppers more diverse and engaging ways to discover products and shop with your brand.

Major brands have been using social media platforms as de facto digital storefronts for years. But social selling strategies aren't limited only to those deep-pocketed businesses. Businesses of all sizes have access to tools and social selling strategies that can fit even the smallest marketing budget.

Whether you're a multinational brand or a small boutique with one or two locations, selling on social should be a big part of your strategy. In this guide, we'll cover practical tips and how-tos to help you get started with social selling today.

**Businesses of all sizes have access to tools and social selling strategies that can fit even the smallest marketing budget.**

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# 11 Tips for Selling More on Social

Ready to overhaul your social selling strategy? Use this cheat sheet for some quick tips that will make an instant splash.

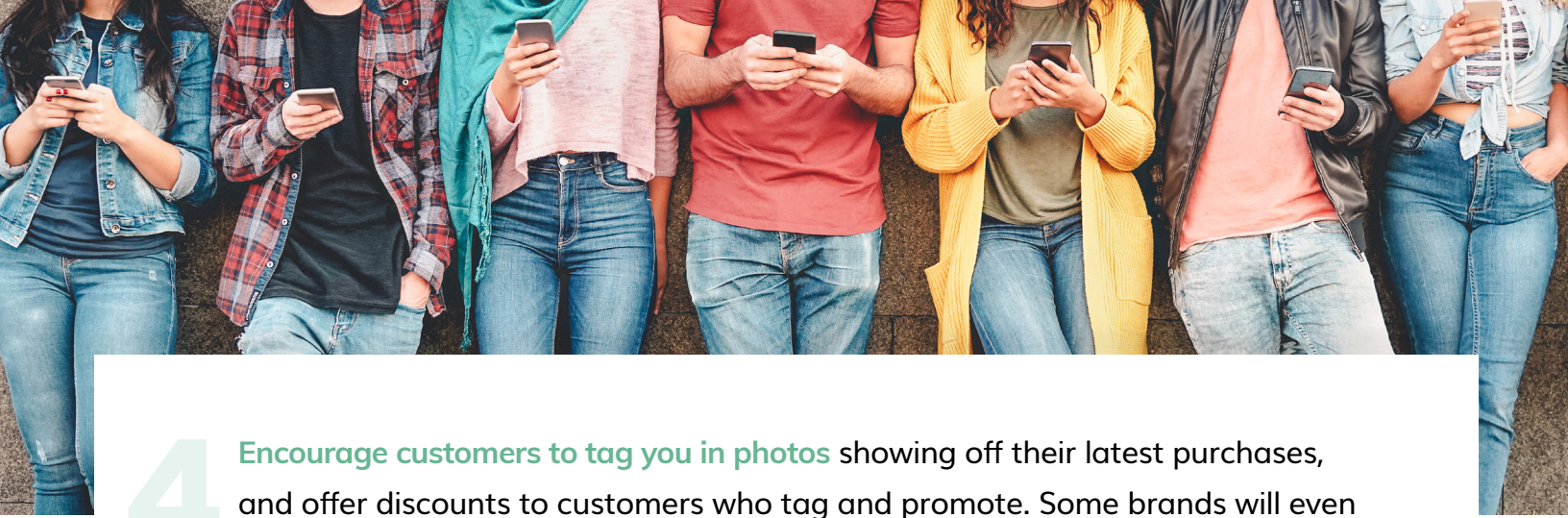
**1** The first step is the easiest: **Tell shoppers you're on social!** Promote your social accounts via email marketing, product packaging, shipping materials, in-store signage, and your website, if applicable. Use any existing properties or experiences to build a social following that can jump-start your social selling efforts.

**2** Anywhere your brand appears, whether it's an online ad or a physical palm card, **make sure your social media accounts are prominently linked or displayed.** [Sticker Mule](#) allows you to create affordable custom packaging on which you can promote your social handles.

Get creative about social promo placements: Ads displayed at your cash register, for example, can give customers something to do while waiting for their items to be packed up.

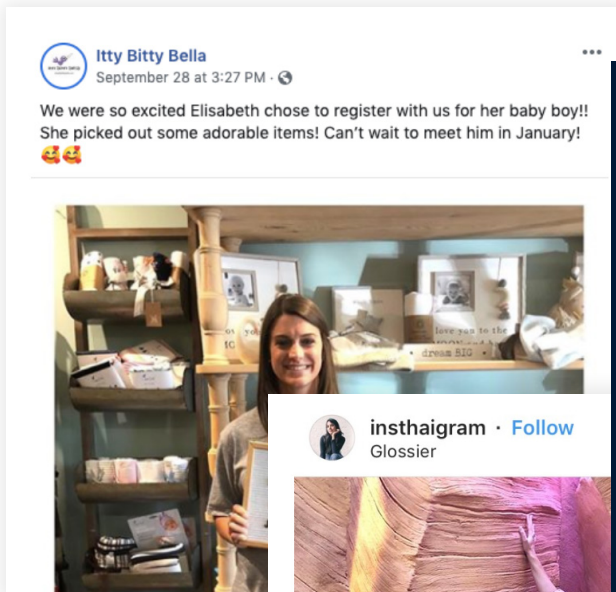
**3** Your social selling efforts also depend on strong engagement with your followers. So **make an effort to showcase customer love:** Resharing customer photos is a fun and easy way to add social proof while boosting follower engagement. Customers love to talk about their recent purchases, and brands should encourage it by reacting to and amplifying that content!



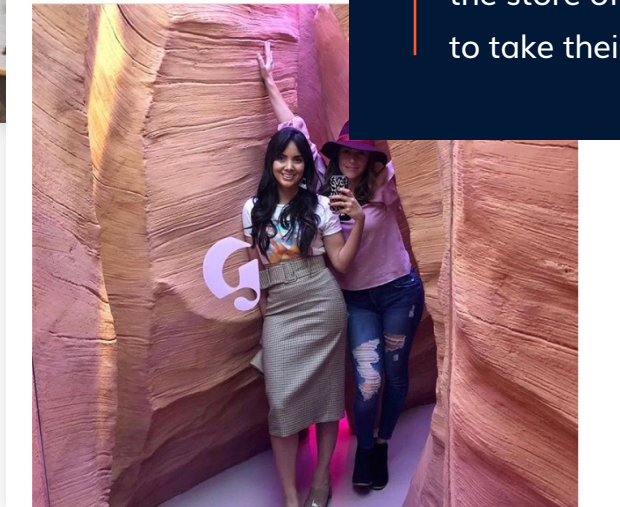


**4** Encourage customers to tag you in photos showing off their latest purchases, and offer discounts to customers who tag and promote. Some brands will even ask if a customer would like 10 percent off at checkout in exchange for an on-the-spot social share.

**5** Better yet, encourage customers to post photos from the store by setting up Insta-worthy backdrops or using letter boards and other signage to encourage social sharing:



Beauty brand Glossier has taken this Insta-opportunity to the extreme, creating an in-store selfie destination that is designed to look just like Antelope Canyon. The feature is a popular resource for user-generated content (UGC) that builds social buzz, and the store often has a line for people waiting to take their photo.



**6** Look for current trends that may influence your product or content strategy. What do your customers have to say about your products or similar brands? Is there a problem you can help solve? What patterns are you seeing?

**7** Get back to customer comments and DMs as soon as possible with a helpful, considerate, and on-brand response. Social chatbots can help you provide a quick response to every customer, but if chatbots don't fit your budget, just make sure someone on your team is tasked with managing social communications.

Make sure the lines of communication are easily accessible—open your Twitter DMs and stay active on Facebook and Instagram so you build a reputation for being responsive via social channels.

**8** Plan your social calendar in advance, and time your social efforts to ramp up around high-volume times such as popular selling seasons, new product launches, or when there is trending vendor news.



9 Social buzz around shopping always reaches its peak during the holiday shopping season. This is a great time to **run influencer marketing and UGC campaigns** and to take advantage of every social selling strategy at your disposal. Social ads can also be effective—and they can be affordable, even on a shoestring budget.

10 To expand your social reach, consider running **cross-promotions and contests** with complementary brands and/or relevant influencers and micro-influencers.

- Work with other small business owners to collaborate on social by featuring/tagging each other on your platforms.
- Offer a giveaway of local or related products, or run a contest to help all of the involved brands grow their social following.
- Work with social influencers and bloggers to attract new social followers to your business. Micro-influencers with roughly 1,000 followers per platform can be a more affordable option, and they often have highly engaged followers.



- Bloggers are a great resource when seeking an in-depth showcase for your products. Invite bloggers into your store to try the products themselves and share their experience with their followers, or ask them to show different ways to style products you're currently pushing or are about to release.
- Educate yourself on the rules regarding sponsored and gifted posts on social media. Each platform has different guidelines, and violating these policies can send the wrong message and damage your reputation among your followers and customers.







# Platform Guides

[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Pinterest](#)

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# Instagram

Instagram has quickly built a reputation as a top platform for social selling, and it's easy to see why. On the image- and video-centric platform, products can catch the attention of shoppers scrolling through their feed or swiping through Instagram Stories.

Research shows that, on average, an engaged Instagram follower is worth about \$10 more than a similarly engaged Facebook follower.<sup>1</sup> Instagram users are eager to find new products; 80 percent of users follow at least one brand,<sup>2</sup> and **at least 30 percent have purchased products they discovered on the platform.**<sup>3</sup>

Even if you've tried Instagram in the past and didn't find it worth your time, it's worth taking a second look. The platform has introduced a number of new features that cater specifically to retailers trying to sell their products on Instagram.

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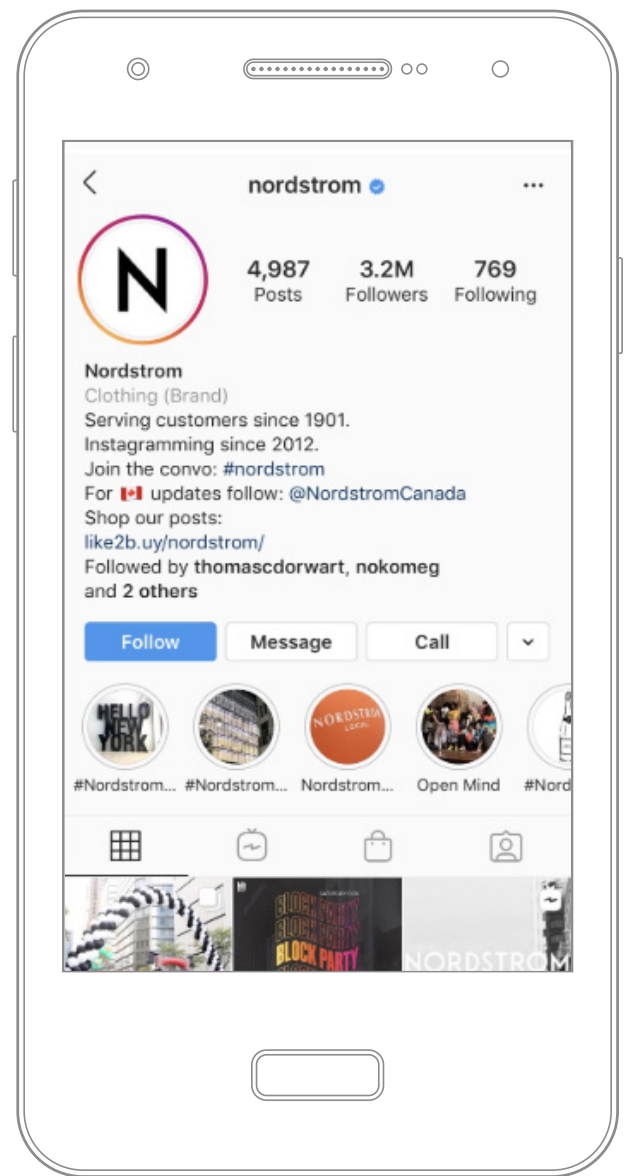
## Optimize Your Business Profile

The more shoppers use Instagram to discover new brands, the more central to social selling your profile page will become. Your profile needs to be optimized to provide as much information and engaging content as possible.

Take time to cultivate a profile page that users can quickly view and navigate to learn more about your brand, your products, and other key information, including the link to your online store.

### What You Can Do

- Craft a bio that quickly and succinctly articulates your brand's appeal and what it offers shoppers. Make sure a link to your online store is also included. If you have smaller branded imprints, you might consider tagging those here as well.
- Choose a profile photo that aligns with your branding. Most retailers opt for a business logo, but feel free to explore with other imagery.
- Save important and/or effective Instagram Stories by pinning them to your profile page in Stories Highlights. This will extend their lifespan beyond the typical 24 hours, and new consumers can check them out when they visit your profile to learn more.



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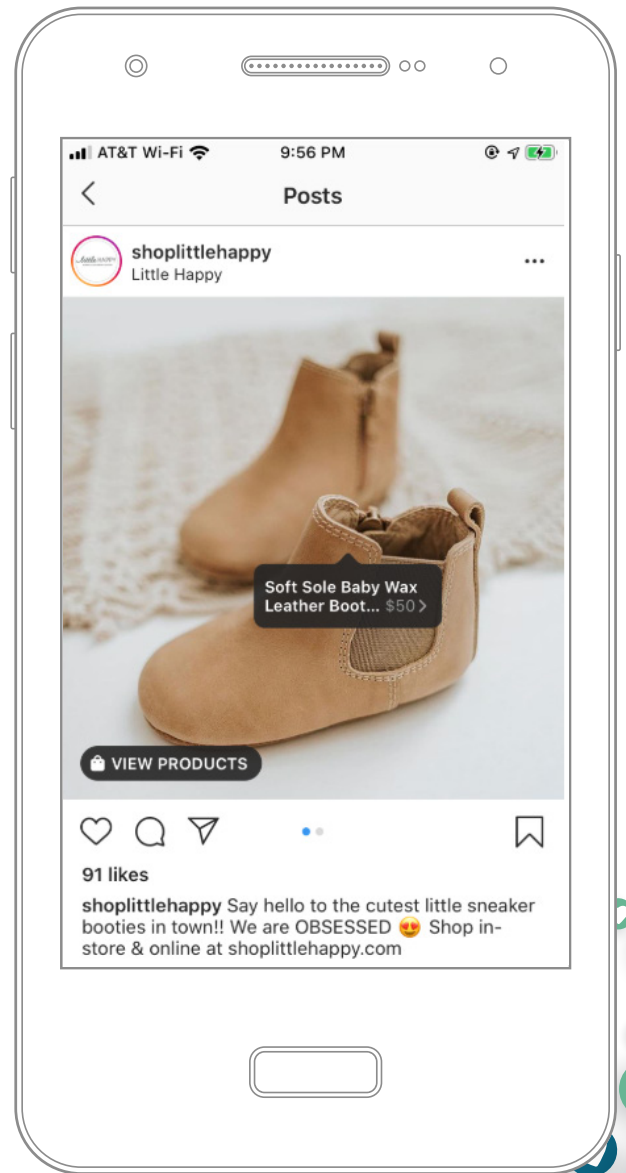
## Create Shoppable Posts

Selling on Instagram starts with [shoppable posts](#). This is a relatively new type of social post that allows business accounts to link an Instagram post directly to a product page on your retail website.

Shoppable posts can be promoted like any other sponsored Instagram post. Small boutiques may also opt for alternative Instagram selling tools, such as Linkin.bio, which let you share multiple links in your Instagram bio and add active links to Instagram posts. This can be a cost-effective way to make your Instagram content more shoppable at a price you can afford.

### What You Can Do

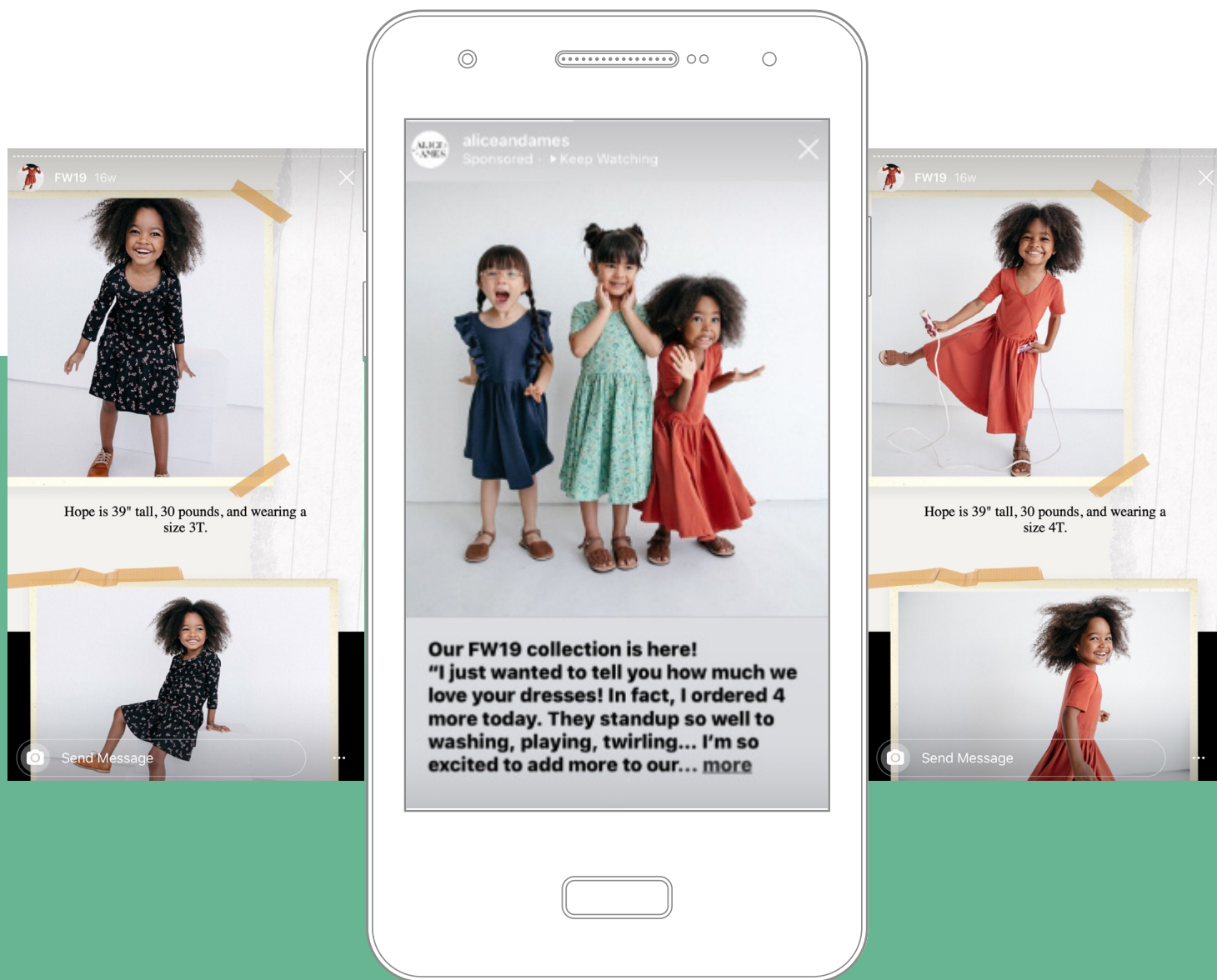
- In order to create shoppable posts, you'll need to get set up for Shopping on Instagram. Follow Instagram's set-up guide to make sure your business qualifies. Then, you'll need to connect your Instagram account with an Ecommerce catalog hosted on Facebook.
- If you haven't uploaded a catalog to Facebook, you'll need to do this before you can feature your products on Instagram. Follow the [official set-up guide](#) to gain approval and create your first shoppable post.



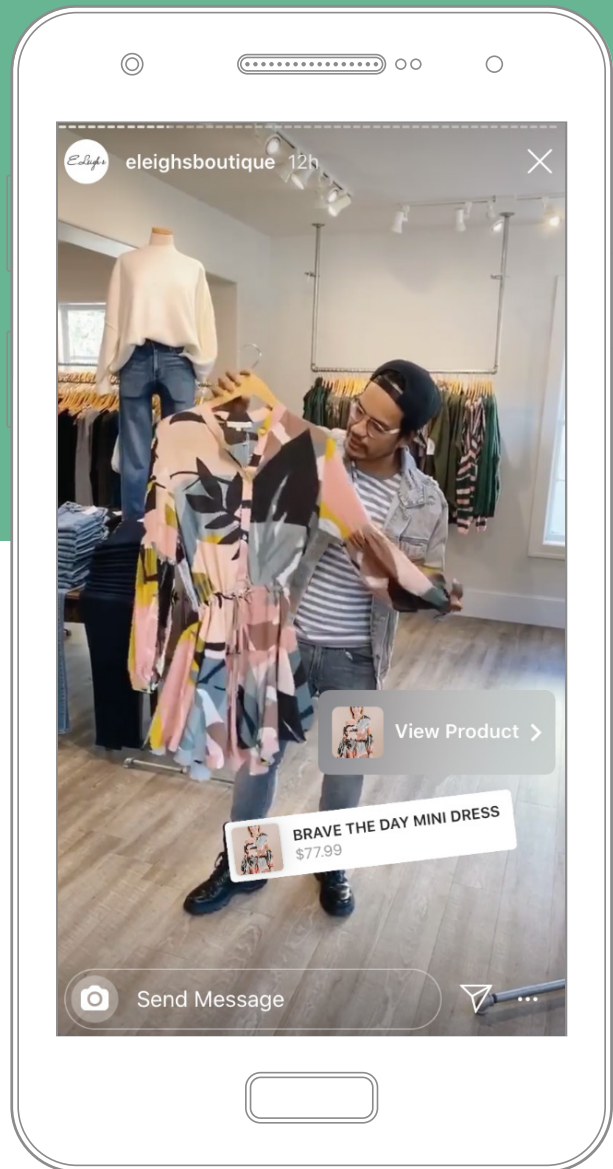
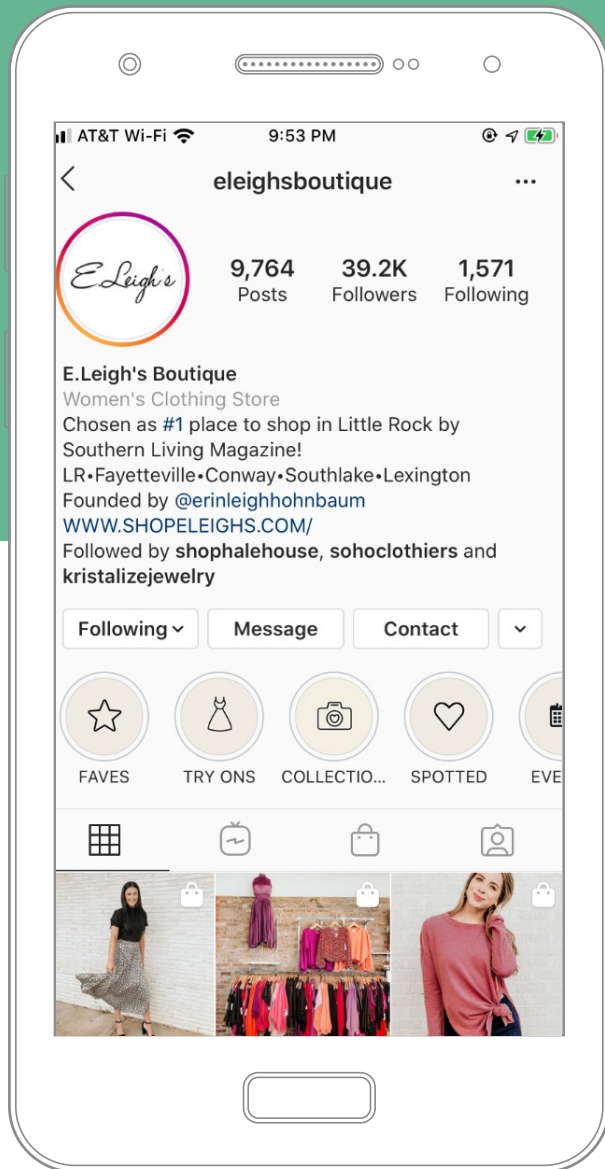
## Boost Engagement with Instagram Stories

Instagram Stories offers powerful selling capabilities beyond the main Instagram feed. The “swipe up” feature in Stories allows you to send users directly to your website or any other site.

But there’s a catch: Instagram accounts must have at least 10,000 followers before they can access this feature, which might be out of reach for small/emerging brands.



If you don’t have 10k followers yet, don’t worry. You can still make your Stories interactive using polls, quizzes, countdowns, private chat, and emoji sliders.



Brands can use Instagram Live as a promotional tool for product launches, Q&As, and engaging behind-the-scenes videos. Polls and questions can help gather information and feedback from your followers, and chats can either lead to one-on-one customer conversations or group chats oriented around a certain topic.

You can also reach out to influencers who have access to the swipe up feature to see if they are open to working with you to promote your products.

## What You Can Do

- To enable the swipe up feature, make sure you're using an Instagram business account with more than 10,000 followers. This feature will automatically pop up when creating a Story on the platform.
- If you don't have 10,000 followers, tap the sticker button within Instagram Stories to access polls and other interactive content, which you can integrate into Stories along with brand photos and videos.

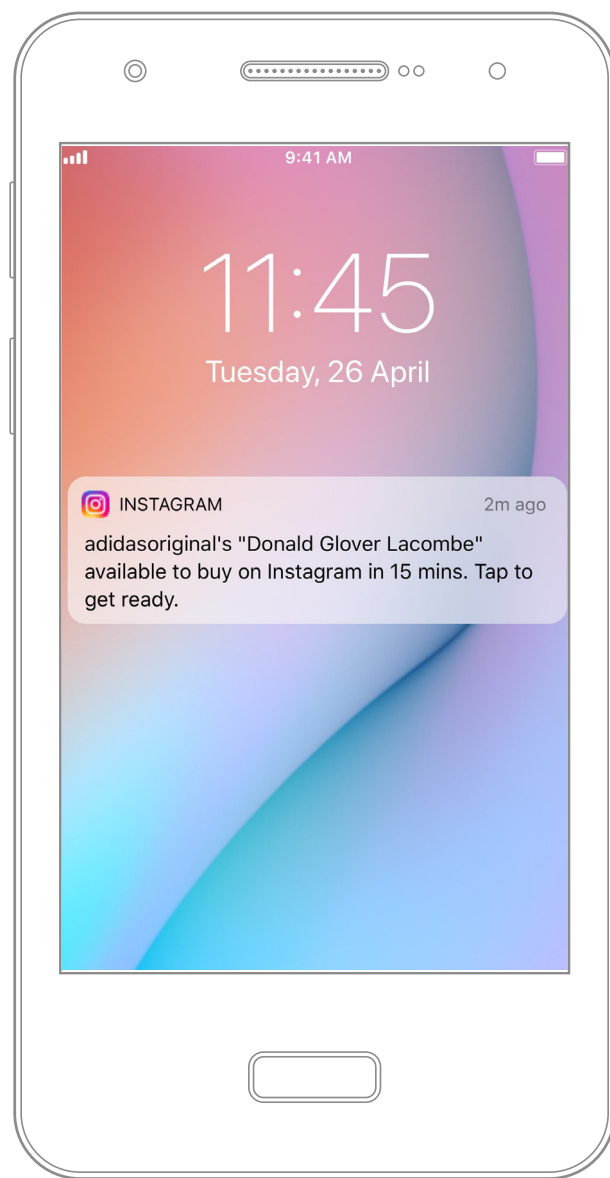


## Launch Product Drop Alerts

Instagram's product drop alert feature lets brands send out notifications to interested users when a new product is available for purchase.<sup>4</sup> This can be a great approach for small brands that drop exclusive products or styles in batches.

### What You Can Do

- Make sure your profile is optimized: Use appropriate niche hashtags, add a well-crafted bio that showcases any branded hashtags, and link to your online store or use a tool like Linkin.bio to create a clickable feed.
- Test out different ways to engage your followers and encourage purchases, such as Instagram-only promotions (discount codes delivered only to your followers).
- The same goes for contests and giveaways: Find fun, creative ways to incentivize your followers to pay attention when your brand posts new content to Instagram.



**Instagram's product drop alert feature lets brands send out notifications to interested users when a new product is available for purchase.**

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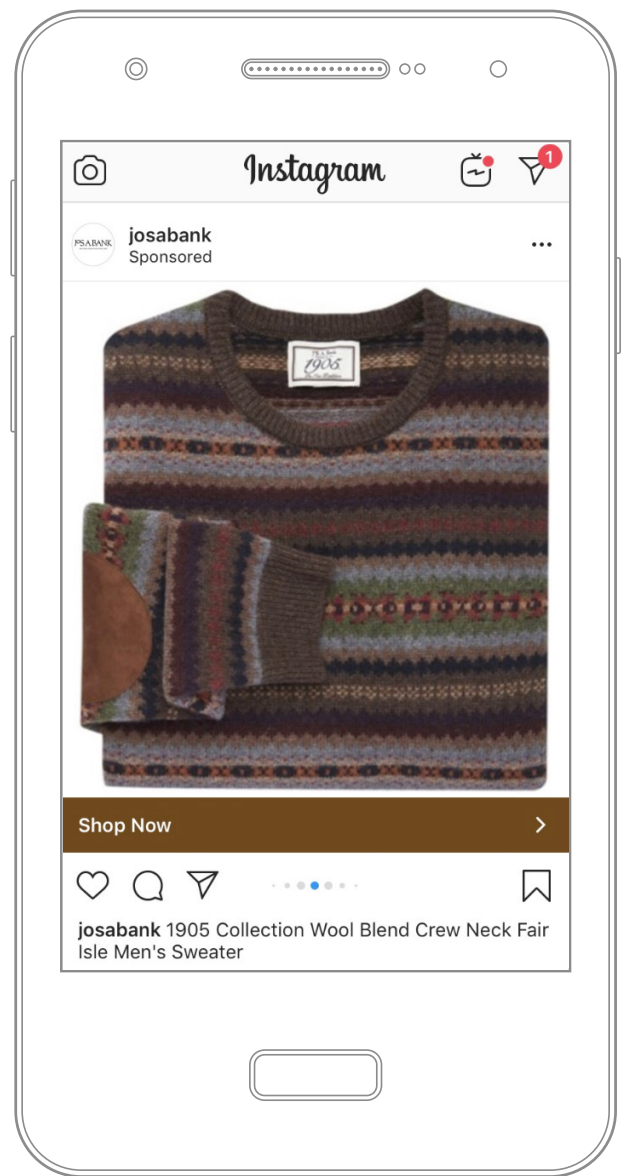
## Run Sponsored Content to Target Your Audience

Instagram's sponsored content uses the targeting data and capabilities of Facebook's advertising platform, making it arguably the most powerful targeting tool you'll find—not just on social media, but anywhere online.

Brands can run a variety of campaigns utilizing multiple types of targeting, including proximity-based targeting for physical stores and retargeting campaigns geared toward consumers who previously shopped at your online store.

### What You Can Do

- Any Instagram business account can run sponsored content on the platform. Once you've created a new Instagram post, you can "boost" the post with paid ad spend and target that exposure to your audience.
- Other ad products, including Stories ads, video ads, and carousel ads, are also available.
- Use Facebook's advertising filters and targeting tools to create a sponsored campaign that is targeted to a relevant audience and optimized for efficient spending.
- Once you've created an Instagram business account, visit your Facebook Ads Manager to create a custom campaign. Or [visit Instagram's advertising hub](#) for step-by-step guidance on creating these ads.



**Instagram's sponsored content uses the targeting data and capabilities of Facebook's advertising platform.**

# Facebook

Facebook can be another huge driver of sales from social. Its advantages to retailers have largely to do with the platform's scale: As the largest social network, it offers an unmatched ability to reach any audience, no matter how niche.

Facebook and Instagram share the same analytics and targeting capabilities. The sheer size of their combined audiences creates opportunities that you won't find anywhere else. If you're running paid promotions, these targeting tools can boost your potential ROI.

Additionally, Facebook offers more diverse types of content than other social networks, which gives you the flexibility to choose the content and strategies you think will best serve your brand.

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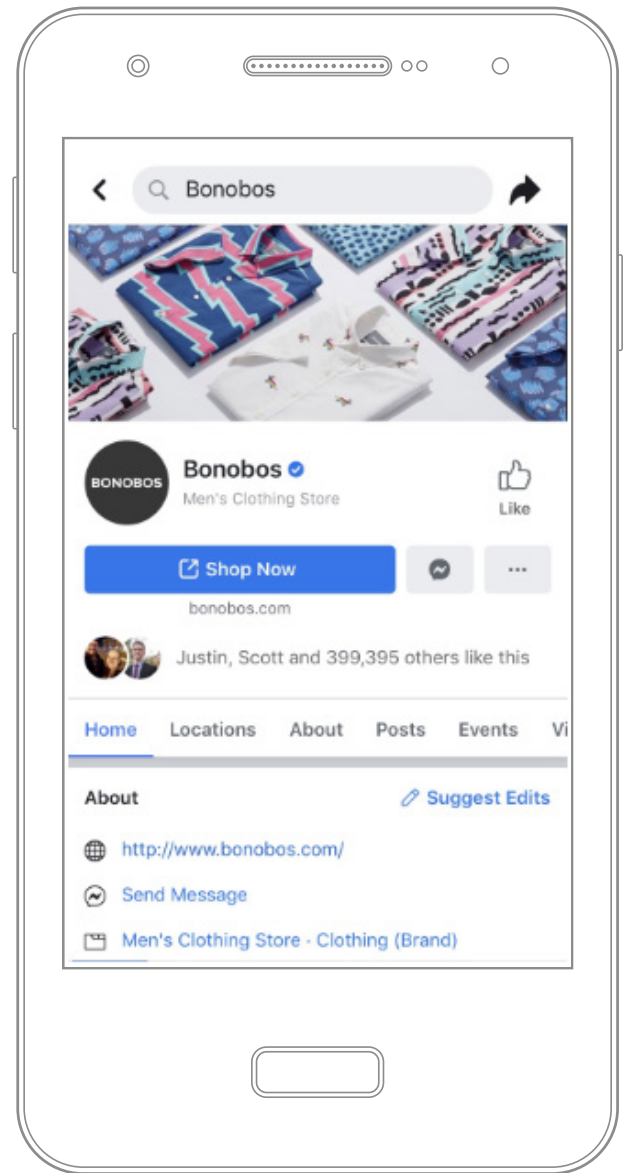


## Optimize Your Facebook Presence

A Facebook business page is a highly visible asset that will receive a lot of traffic from current and prospective customers, whether they're looking for products, learning more about your business, or looking for ways to contact customer service. An optimized page will make it easier for shoppers to find what they want.

### What You Can Do

- Create a custom vanity URL for your brand's Facebook page, write an optimized welcome message, and fill out the About section on your business page to introduce your brand.
- You can also link to your other social media profiles via Facebook, using this social platform as a centerpiece of your larger social media strategy.
- Make sure your brand account features your locations and hours to help shoppers find the closest store.



**A Facebook business page is a highly visible asset that will receive a lot of traffic from current and prospective customers.**

## Create a Group That Aligns with Your Brand

Brands of any size can create private Facebook groups that can make it easier to reach followers with organic content, compared to the organic reach of standard News Feed posts.

An outdoor apparel retailer, for example, could create a local outdoor sports group for interested consumers to connect around shared interests.

### What You Can Do

- Use your Facebook business profile to create a group that your customers will want to join and engage with. It could be a group that offers specific industry insights and trends, an advice or support group, an early access opportunity to attend private events or purchase products before they hit the market, or any other focused group that you can use to deepen customer relationships.

**Use your Facebook business profile to create a group that your customers will want to join and engage with.**

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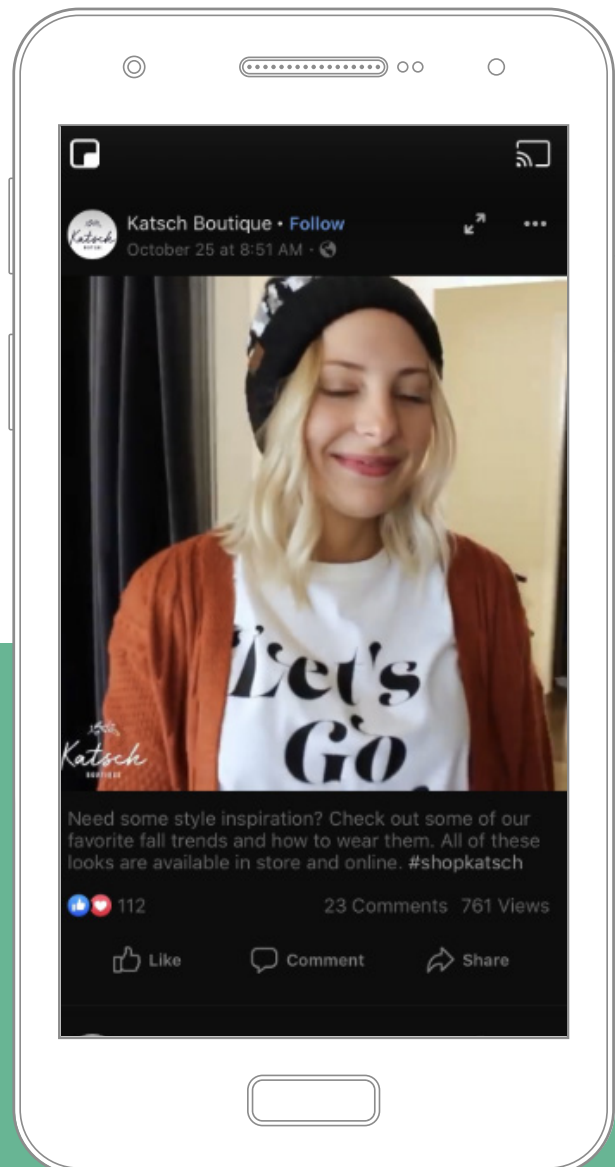
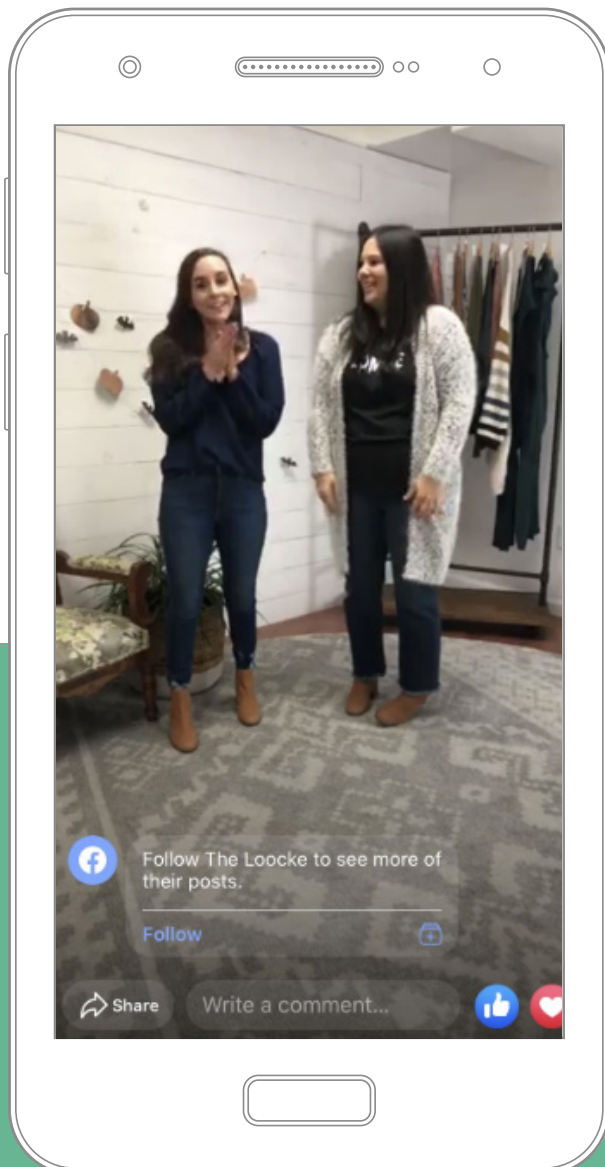


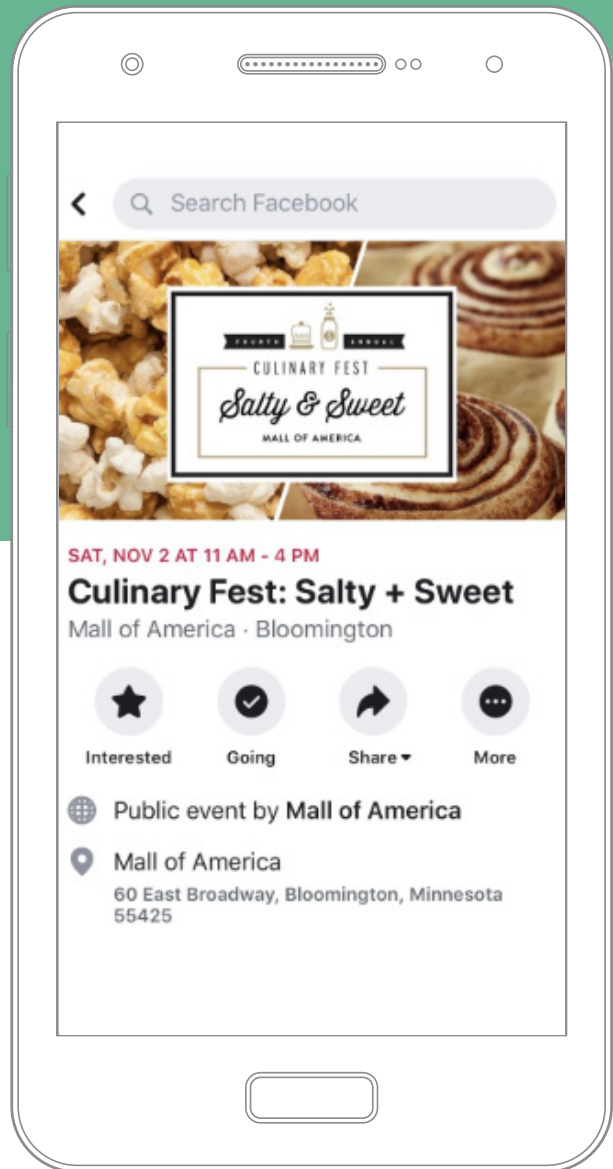
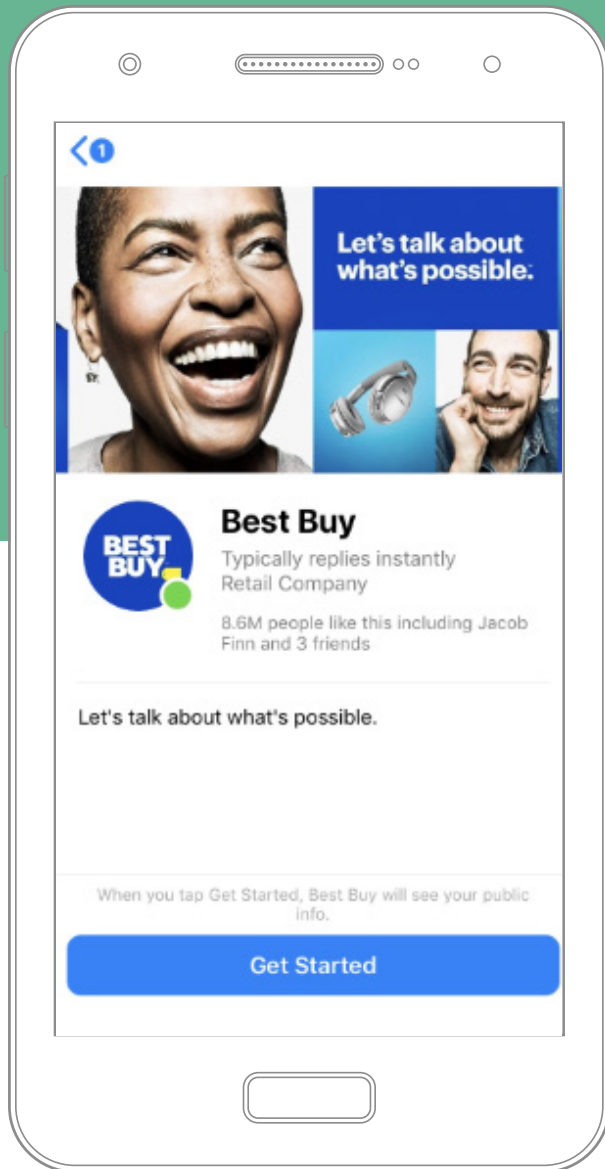
## Build an Audience Through Live Content

Facebook Live is a low-cost way to host Q&As, show behind-the-scenes moments, introduce followers to your team, showcase an event, or offer exclusive engagement opportunities.

### What You Can Do

- Try out different live video experiences—including Q&As, product demos, and streaming in-store events—to figure out what connects with your customer base and drives the highest engagement.
- Consider rewarding viewers with discounts or other incentives for keeping up with your brand's latest news.





## Utilize Tools to Promote Events, Chat with Shoppers, and Push Social Sales

Facebook's platform has a number of tools to help create and manage new engagement opportunities, whether it's organizing and promoting events, chatting via Messenger, or enabling social selling capabilities. Third-party tools can improve your promotional capabilities and leverage your Facebook presence for even greater social selling.

## What You Can Do

- Use Facebook to promote events your brand is associated with, including in-store product demos or workshops, pop-up events, or local markets.
- Make sure you stay on top of Facebook Messenger as a direct engagement channel where you can answer quick customer queries and provide better customer service. Customize your brand page in the Facebook Messenger app to create a first point of contact that will encourage users to start a conversation.
- Third-party tools such as [CommentSold](#) make it easy for followers to make purchases directly from Facebook without having to leave the site. Consider integrating these tools to harness the selling capabilities of Facebook. Consult each tool developer for step-by-step instructions on how to launch their solution.

**Third-party tools can improve your promotional capabilities and leverage your Facebook presence for even greater social selling.**

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## Invest in Paid Advertising

Facebook advertising is useful for boosting the exposure of your organic posts. Facebook's powerful advertising platform allows you to launch highly targeted ads, including retargeting campaigns that use social media to chase down shoppers who looked around but left your site without checking out.

### What You Can Do

- Carousel ads make it easy to showcase a number of products from your online store through a single Facebook post. Consult [Facebook's advertising guide](#) for tips on creating and optimizing carousel ads.
- Targeting on Facebook can take many different forms, including dynamic ad insertion, custom Facebook pixels, use behavior, location, and other data points to find your audience and create selling opportunities—no matter how niche your brand may be.
- Experiment with different filters and audience profiles as you seek out better conversion rates and ROI for these campaigns.

**Facebook advertising is useful for boosting the exposure of your organic posts.**

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# Twitter

Though Twitter lacks the in-platform social selling tools that allow Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest to function as a social storefront for your brand, it's an excellent tool for building brand awareness and driving referral traffic to your online store.

According to its own research, 70 percent of Twitter's audience is interested in retail engagement, including exposure to brands and products and information about new deals or shopping experiences.<sup>5</sup> Twenty-four percent of that audience uses Twitter to search for shopping deals. An equal number use it to seek out the latest information on new products.

It's also a valuable channel for customers to contact your store and seek out customer service support. About 80 percent of all Twitter users have used the platform to mention retail brands in their tweets, which shows the importance of building an active Twitter presence and engaging directly with your followers.<sup>6</sup>

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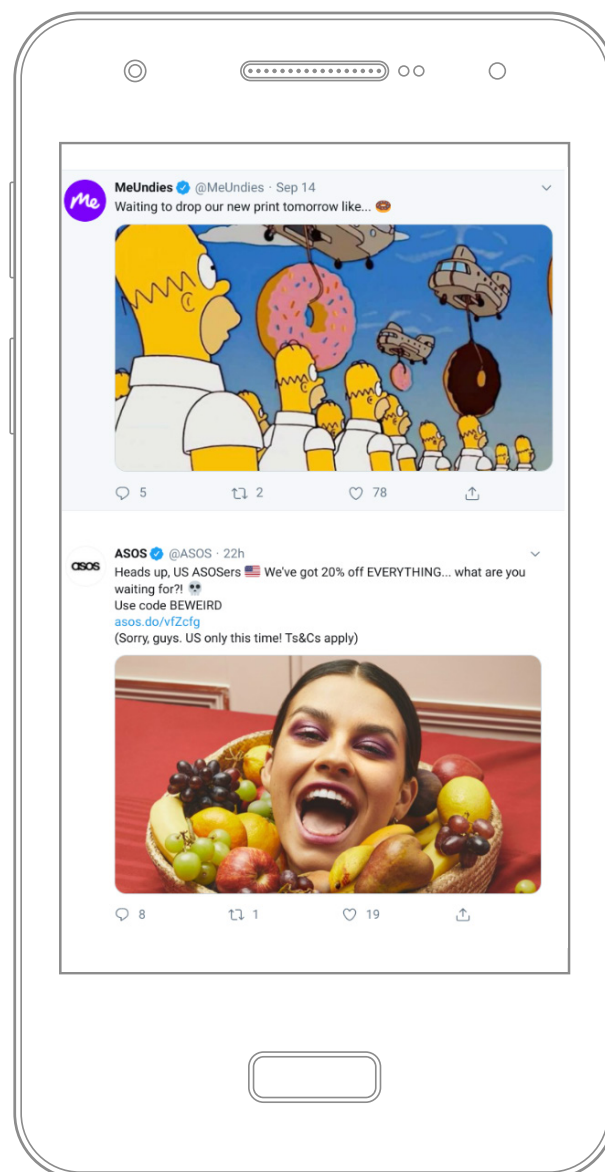


## Create Content That Sparks Engagement

Twitter polls, videos, website cards, a mix of website links and product imagery, and fun, voice-driven content such as gifs and memes are great ways to build organic awareness and engagement. Brands should view Twitter as a valuable channel for generating visibility and showcasing their voice through diverse content and engagement.

### What You Can Do

- **Experiment with different types of Twitter content that put your brand's voice on display.** If you're a small boutique that hasn't formalized its concept of brand voice, it's worth having a meeting with your core team members to discuss the voice and tone of your brand and to identify existing branded accounts that you can emulate.
- **Be patient in the early days of your Twitter activity.** Engagement tends to come gradually, and the quality of your content may not be reflected in the volume of engagement you receive.
- **Focus on creating content that is authentic to your brand,** and trust that results will come over time.



**Brands should view Twitter as a valuable channel for generating visibility and showcasing their voice through diverse content and engagement.**

## Target Moment-Based Shopping Behaviors

Brands can also use free and paid strategies to target moment-based shopping activity, ranging from large campaigns such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday to smaller, more calculated strategies that leverage flash sales, product drops, or limited-time opportunities.

### What You Can Do

- For this type of social selling strategy, timing is everything: Paid, in-platform solutions such as [Tailored Audiences](#) and [Event Targeting](#) will help you effectively launch a selling strategy that increases ROI through more efficient, action-driven strategies.
- Tools such as [Hashtagify](#) can help you optimize your reach by identifying the best hashtags to reach an audience eager to discover and purchase new products.
- Alternatively, time-optimizing publishing tools such as [Buffer](#) can help you publish new tweets during windows of peak engagement. Or you can schedule tweets to appear at specific times based on your own research or understanding of when your customers are most likely to be using Twitter and/or shopping online.

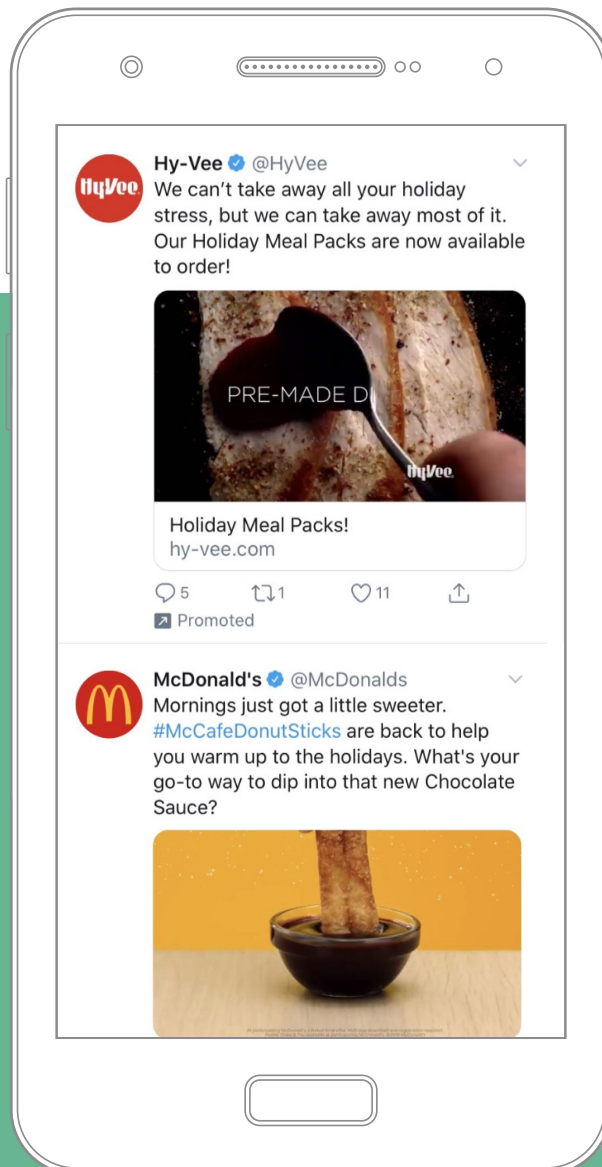


## Invest in Promoted Tweets

Promoted tweets can also be an effective ad strategy, especially if you're wanting to generate more engagement from content that has received high organic engagement from your existing followers.

For boutiques, Twitter advertising can be attractive because campaigns can be launched at a low cost, fitting even resource-strapped marketing budgets.

Twitter's platform offers promoted tweets as well as custom Twitter ads, which appear in users' feeds and can be targeted based on specific business goals.



## What You Can Do

- Brands must first decide which type of ads they want to run. Promoted tweets are available at a flat monthly rate, whereas Twitter ads are more highly customizable.
- From there, the Twitter platform will ask you a series of questions about your targeting goals, your subject matter, and other information that will improve its ability to target your desired audience. You can follow the step-by-step guide by [visiting Twitter's business and advertising hub](#).

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## Connect with Twitter Influencers

Influencers on Twitter can be a great tool for expanding your brand's reach through paid partnerships with personas and accounts that engage with an audience similar to your own.

You can pay influencers to showcase your brand through social ads or other content designed to drum up interest and potentially lead to sales.

### What You Can Do

- Brainstorm among your core team to identify potential influencers and micro-influencers with a strong Twitter presence that could amplify your company's message and drive more prospective customers to your Twitter page.
- Look for influencers with at least 1,000 followers and strong engagement with their tweets.
- Consider using third-party tools to find relevant influencers who could be valuable collaborators with your brand. Solutions such as BuzzSumo and Socialbakers offer limited free services as well as subscription-based tools to find high-quality influencers for your business.



**You can pay influencers to showcase your brand through social ads or other content designed to drum up interest and potentially lead to sales.**

# Pinterest

Pinterest users are often on the lookout for new products—three-quarters of its user base is on the platform for that very purpose.<sup>7</sup>

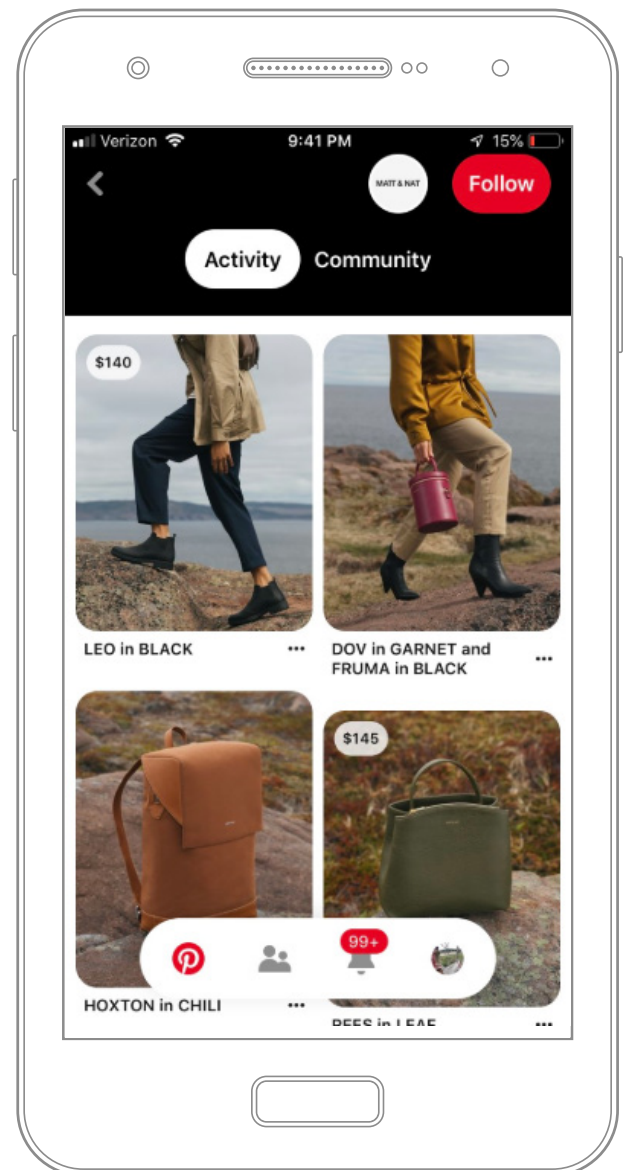
It's also a popular platform for planning out future purchases, especially around the holiday season; holiday-related searches are conducted 2x earlier on Pinterest than similar searches on other platforms.<sup>8</sup>

## Create Content with Pinterest Mobile in Mind

Before you launch any social selling campaigns, make sure your Pinterest content is optimized for mobile use, because 80 percent of pinners will be viewing your content on a mobile app.

### What You Can Do

Create images with dimensions of 600 x 900 pixels when possible—this ensures the best mobile rendering. Test fonts and other elements to ensure images and content are easily viewed on screens of multiple sizes.



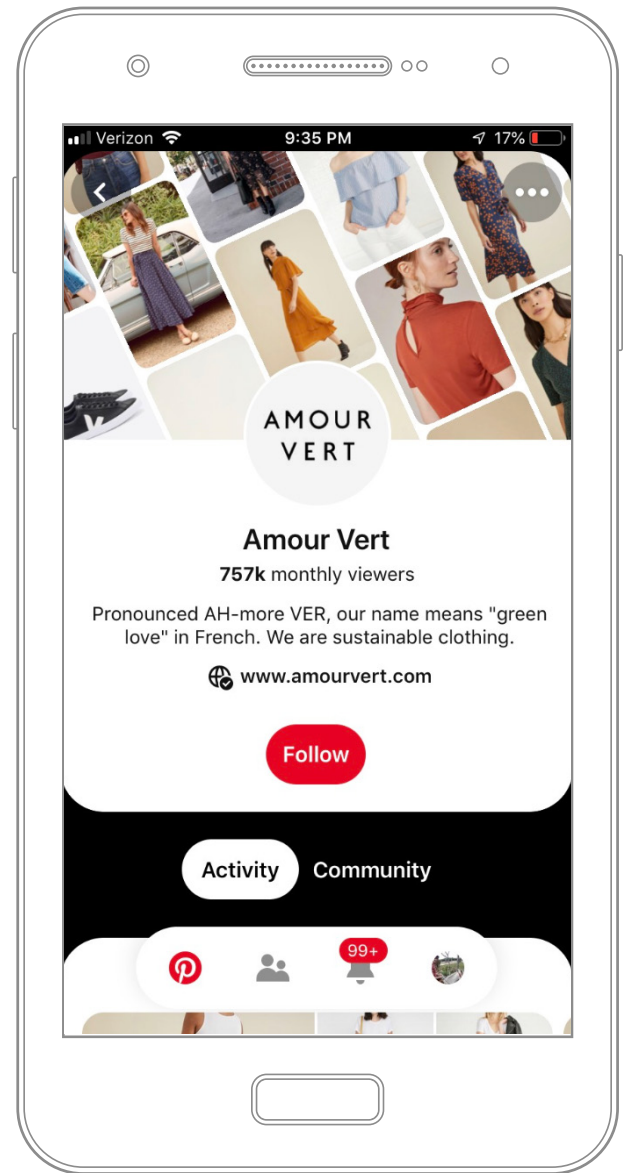
## Optimize Your Profile for Pinterest Search

Because Pinterest functions as a large search engine for users seeking content related to food, clothing, interior design, and a wide range of other subject areas, content needs to be easy to find through this search.

Just like SEO used for online search engines, brands need their content and profile to be optimized for Pinterest search.

### What You Can Do

- Customize board names, product descriptions, and product categories to maximize your exposure in Pinterest search. Use language that reflects the keywords and terminology your audience will be using to seek out products and solutions like yours.
- Retailers can build and feature select boards on their profile page to increase their exposure—these boards will be the first items users see when they visit your business page.



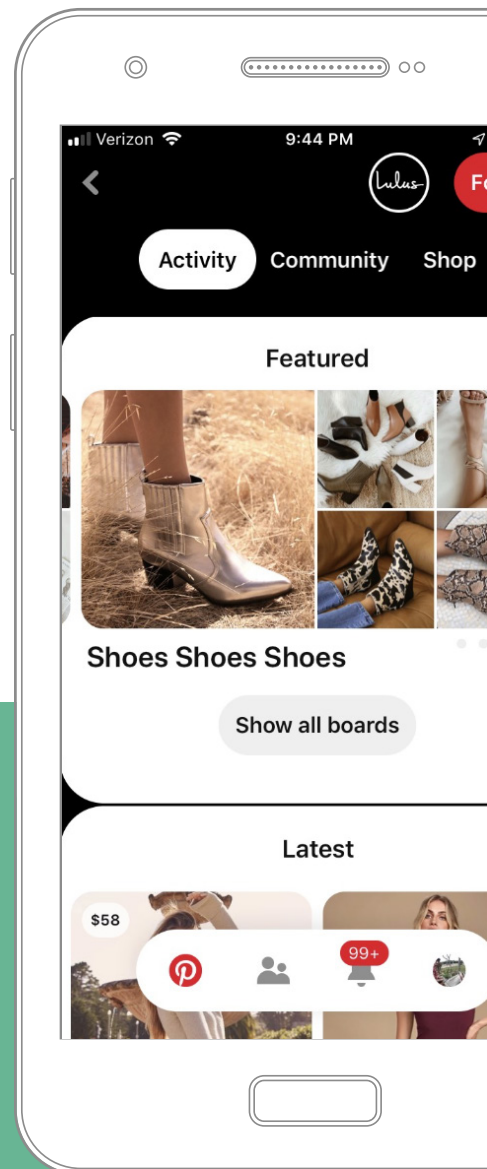
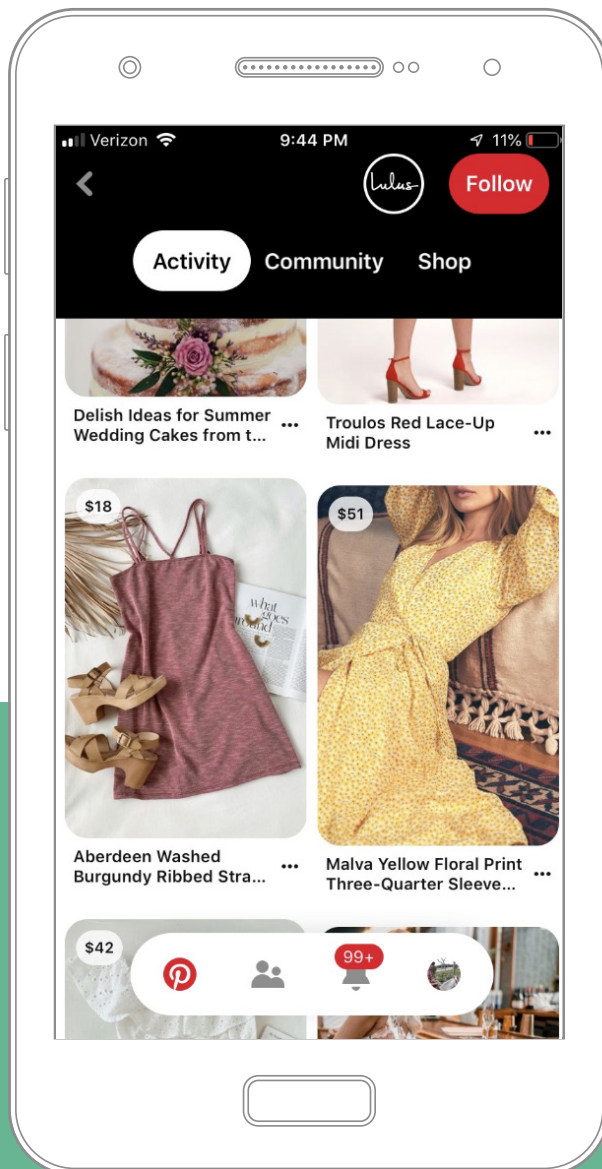
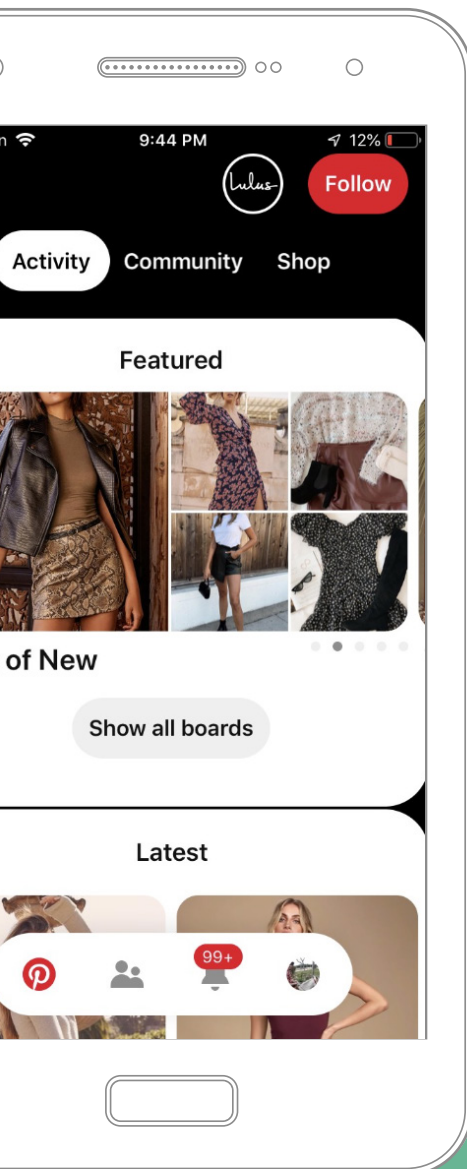
**Just like SEO used for online search engines, brands need their content and profile to be optimized for Pinterest search.**



## Find Multiple Ways to Showcase Your Products

Product content can come in multiple forms, from up-front promotion of new and in-demand products to lifestyle-focused content that shows how products integrate into daily life.

Food retailers do this all the time by creating recipes that feature their products. Apparel brands, by contrast, could create Pinterest content about fashionable business clothing that features the latest releases from their brands.



## What You Can Do

- Use several different approaches to displaying your products in content, and monitor performance to figure out which approaches are most effective at driving engagement and/or sales.
- Consider A/B testing your content by using different images to promote the same products. Be sure to use the same keywords and optimizations with each piece of content to isolate the images, and compare the results to learn more about how your brand can succeed on Pinterest.

## Retarget Existing Customers

As you target new customers on Pinterest, you can also engage existing customers through retargeting campaigns offered by the Pinterest ad platform.

## What You Can Do

- Upload mobile IDs or customer emails and match them to active Pinterest profiles. This can help you use Pinterest for retargeting and other engagement strategies, increasing customer loyalty and the lifetime value of those shoppers.
- To take advantage of these advanced targeting capabilities, you'll need to work with a Pinterest partner authorized to provide these services. You can find a directory of partners [here](#).

**As you target new customers on Pinterest, you can also engage existing customers through retargeting campaigns offered by the Pinterest ad platform.**

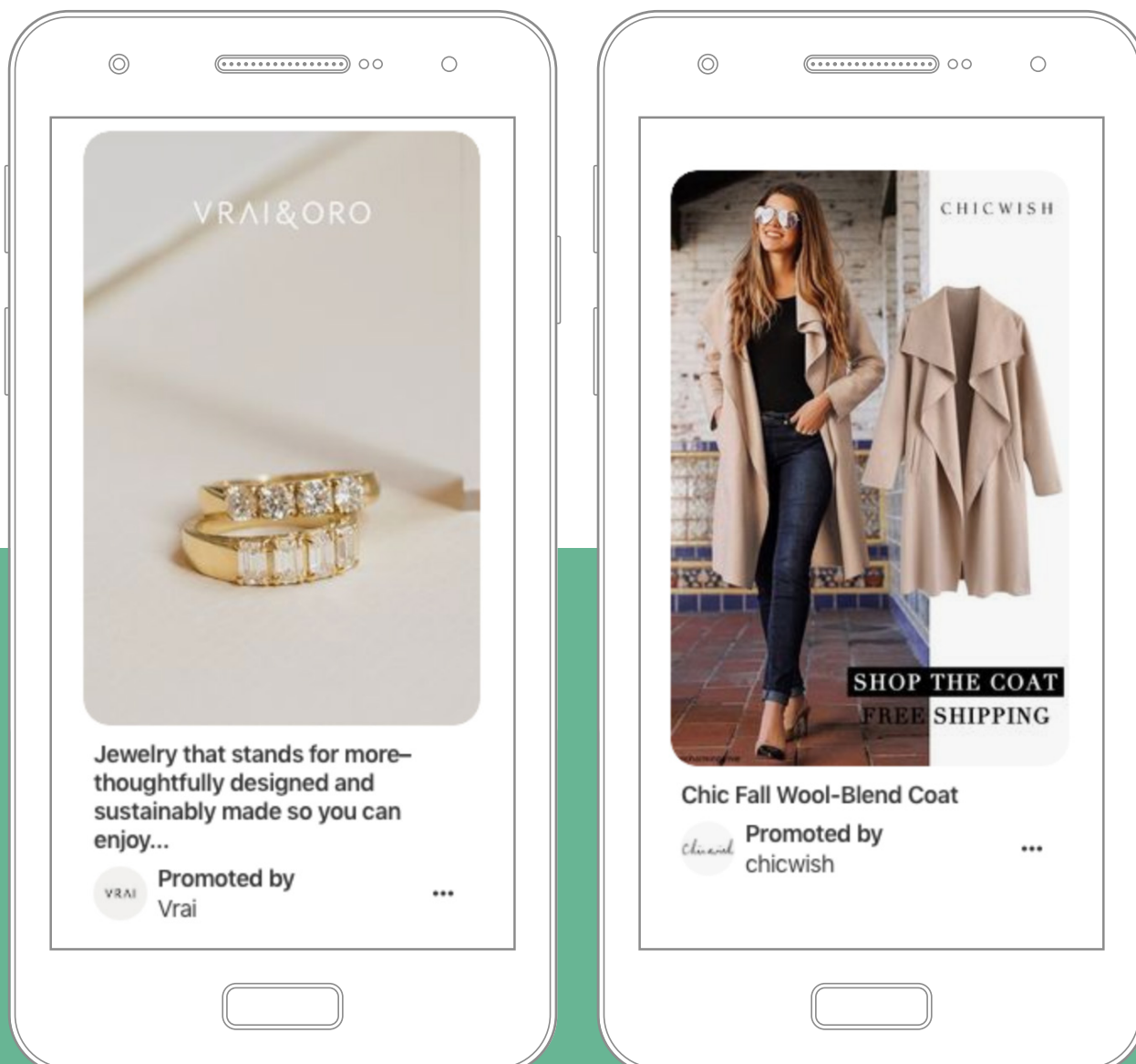
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## Invest in Promoted Pins and Other Paid Ad Strategies

Use paid advertising to target sales from both existing and new customers. Promoted Pins is a reliable channel for expanding your customer base: Research shows that 70 percent of Promoted Pins conversions come from first-time customers.<sup>9</sup>

Apparel, interior design, and other brands should also consider [Shop the Look Pins](#), which offer in-content tagging and shopping referrals similar to the functionality of shoppable Instagram posts.

This is a great way to showcase multiple products at once, and in a context that articulates their style and value.



## What You Can Do

- Anyone with a Pinterest business account can quickly promote a published pin in four easy steps. [Visit the Pinterest business hub](#) to walk through this process and promote your first pin.
- Other Pinterest ads can be created by building a campaign and defining a target audience. You can create your first ad by visiting the [Pinterest Ads Manager](#).

**Use paid advertising to target sales from both existing and new customers. Promoted Pins is a reliable channel for expanding your customer base.**

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# Conclusion

You already use social media to connect and interact with your audience. But it's time to start making social media work for you, too! By putting these strategies and tools into practice, you can make the most of your social presence and start generating higher sales.

No matter your budget or your resource constraints, your business can launch a social selling strategy that delivers ROI and helps your business grow. You have everything you need to get started—now it's time to take the first step.

## About accumula

**You know the ins and outs of social selling. Now it's time to maximize your customer relationships and harness data to grow your business.**

**Schedule a demo with us today to find out how we can help.**

[SCHEDULE A DEMO](#)



## About Accumula

Accumula unites in-store, online, and backoffice operations so that retailers can focus on their Customers, not their software.

By seamlessly integrating point of sale, Ecommerce, digital marketing, ERP, and custom applications, SME and DTC retailers can get closer to their Customers and create brand-defining experiences across every channel.

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