



Instagram is one of the fastest growing social media platforms in the world! With over 500 million users, it's not surprising that there is a HUGE community of dancers who are active on Instagram, every day. This presents a major

opportunity for you to connect with the dance community on Instagram, in a way that can help you grow your personal brand or business, and ultimately make more money, at no additional cost! That's kind of a big deal!

The only challenge is, Instagram has a new algorithm in place, so now it's not as easy as it was in the past, to grow your following and business, using Instagram. You have to know the secrets of what works, what doesn't, and how to make sure the people you want to connect with, can find you on Instagram.

So how do you do that? I'm about to break it ALL down for you!

My name is Ashani Mfuko, I am a Social Media Strategist, Professional Dancer, and Digital Marketing Specialist for the dance industry.

I've spent the past 7 years consulting with dance studio owners, dance companies, dance business owners, dance wear companies,

choreographers, and more, to create powerful and profitable, results-driven social media strategies. I've worked with some of the top brands in the dance industry, including Bloch Dancewear, the Joffrey Ballet School, Camille A. Brown & Dancers, D(n)A Arts Collective, the Triple Threat Talent Tour, and many more!

In some cases, I also stepped in to implement the strategy, and manage my client's social media accounts, including Instagram.

In the year 2015, I helped Bloch Dancewear USA grow their Instagram following from around 12,000 followers, to over 25,000 followers, in just 6 months (they now have over 55,000 followers, using my same strategy). But the truth is, without a comprehensive strategy in place, and knowledge of the best practices on Instagram, you will not be able to get these types of results.

Fortunately, you don't actually even need to have tens of thousands of followers on Instagram to get

great results, grow your business, or make more money. You can still get some amazing results on Instagram, even if you only have a thousand followers (or less)! It all comes down to your strategy, and how you go about connecting with your target audience on Instagram every single day.



## **\*The Secret Recipe To Massive Success On Instagram\*:**

## High-Quality Photos + The Right Hashtags + Daily Engagement = **MASSIVE SUCCESS!**

Before I break down the elements of this **“Secret Recipe To Massive Success On Instagram”**, I need you to first answer one, very important question:

**What is your goal/purpose for being on Instagram in the first place?**

Every dancer, choreographer, teacher, or dance business owner has a different reason for being active on Instagram.

**Some common goals are (one or more of the following):**

- Increase brand awareness.
- Build trust and thought leadership with your online audience.
- Highlight your expertise and competitive edge.
- Create more personal connections and relationships with your target audience online.

- Build an online community of happy, loyal, and engaged customers.
- Increase sales.
- Increase the number of students in your classes or program.
- Increase the number of e-mail subscribers on your list.
- Increase traffic to your website.
- Create brand partnerships and get sponsors.
- Connect with brand ambassadors, or become one.
- Become known as the go-to expert in your niche market.

Whatever your goal or purpose is for being active on Instagram, there are some key elements that you need to have in place, in order to get a return on the investment of time you spend on Instagram.

Let's break them down.

1. **High-quality photos** - Looks matter on Instagram! Your photos need to be eye-catching, clear, beautiful, and visually appealing. No crazy filters necessary. Just make sure that your photos are not blurry, or over-exposed, and you should be good to go. The basic photo editor on your iPhone or

Android should provide all the editing power you need. However, the VSCO cam app is one of the BEST photo editing apps you can use, to make your photos even more fabulous than they already are.

2. **The Right Hashtags** - Hashtags are EVERYTHING on Instagram! They literally will make or break the success of your Instagram account. If you're not using the right ones, the right people will not be able to find your photos, or your account, and the wrong ones will spam you, until your head explodes. No bueno! I have an entire section in this guide, with all you need to know to create your hashtag strategy, plus, the BEST hashtags for dance brands to use on Instagram. So look out for that as you keep reading this guide.
3. **Daily Engagement** - You've heard it a million times already, but I'm going to tell you again, **ENGAGEMENT IS KEY!** This is pretty much true on every social platform, and Instagram is no different. The more you engage with your target audience on Instagram, the more they will engage with you, and the more success you will have. If you're not spending at least 15-20 minutes a day, engaging with your target audience on Instagram, you're missing out on a HUGE opportunity to grow your following, and grow your personal brand or

business. But don't just reply to comments on your posts, that's not enough. You need to be searching for and seeking out your ideal clients and customers on Instagram, and liking and commenting on their photos too.

Yes, YOU have to go the extra mile, and do the extra work, if you really want to see massive growth for your account on Instagram, and ultimately more students in your dance classes, more people buying your dance wear, visiting your dance blog, or hiring you for jobs. That's just how it works.

**Hard Work = RESULTS!**



## **17 Instagram Marketing Tips Every Dancer Needs To Know**

1. **Optimize your Instagram Profile** – Create a detailed, and descriptive bio (using keywords that people may be searching for i.e., “dance intensive” “dance studio in California”, “dance blog”, etc.) with what your company is, what it does, and a call-to-action to get your free lead magnet (free offer for joining your e-mail list), i.e., “Get Your Free, 10-Step Checklist To Nail Your Next Audition Here”, and a bit.ly link.
2. **Use a customized [bit.ly](http://bit.ly) link on your profile** in order to track clicks to your website, from your Instagram account. Create your customized link here-> <http://bit.ly> (I recommend creating one like, [bit.ly/MyDanceBizNameHere](http://bit.ly/MyDanceBizNameHere)). You only get to put one clickable link on your Instagram profile, so make it count!
3. **Follow a consistent posting schedule** on your Instagram account. Post at least 1-3x per/day. Create your photos/videos

and captions for Instagram, in bulk, ahead of time, so that you don't feel overwhelmed by maintaining a consistent posting schedule.

4. **Create an overall, brand-specific visual aesthetic** for your profile, by using similar colors, and similar settings/filters on your images. **ONLY post high-quality images**, that tell a story that aligns with your brand's mission and purpose. Check out these accounts on Instagram for examples/inspiration ->  
@ashanimfukodance,  
@rachelnevillephoto,  
@worldwideballet, @alvinailey,  
@abeautifulmess, @blochdanceusa,  
@iamsocialmediasolutions

5. **Add your logo to your brand's images**, as a watermark. You can do this in Canva, or using the Watermark app for iPhone.



**6. Optimize your images for Instagram.**

Use [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) to create Instagram images that are optimized specifically for Instagram.

**7. Create branded, motivational quote images** (with your brand's colors and logo/watermark) to post on your Instagram account, using Canva (on your computer), or the Typorama, or Spark

Post app on your iPhone. Be sure to use similar fonts for the text on your images, to create a cohesive look. You can search Instagram or [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com) for motivational and inspirational quotes to use, to create your own branded motivational quote images, and/or use your own.

8. **Always add your Instagram handle** (@username), and your website, to each custom, branded image that you create.

9. **Use the proper hashtags** on every image that you post. The bulk of your hashtags should be added as the first comment on your post. Only use 2 or 3 max, within the caption of the photo. (My researched, dance industry-specific hashtags for you to use are at the end of this guide.)

10. **Use the maximum hashtags.** You can use up to 30 hashtags with each photo/

video posted to Instagram. Be sure to post 30 hashtags for each post. Too many hashtags in the caption is very distracting, and not visually appealing to your followers, so only post two within your caption. The two hashtags in your caption should be your specific brand's hashtags. Add the other 28 hashtags as the first comment on each of your posts.

11. **Maintain a similar theme** and visual aesthetic and consistency to your images. Think of your IG profile as an online portfolio, whereas, all of your images/videos should have a cohesive look together, but also, still be eye-catching when viewed as an individual image in the news feed.

12. **Mix up the magic.** Mix beautiful dance photos (remember that you can share other people's content too, just be sure to add the photo credit, and tag them when sharing), with motivational quote

images, lifestyle photos, dance tips and advice, funny dance memes, etc. to keep your account interesting and interactive. Mix it up, while keeping a consistent flow, and visual appeal.

13. **Repost images** and quotes from other popular accounts that your target audience is already following, and be sure to tag the account when sharing their photos (and add the photo credit), and use the appropriate hashtags with the image or video (this can help to increase the visibility and engagement on your IG account). Just make sure that the visual aesthetic of the image flows well with the visual aesthetic of your IG profile.

14. **Do “Follow Friday”, “Friday Favs”, or “Feature Friday”** posts on Fridays, to highlight other accounts that you think your target audience would be interested in following, and to build relationships, and camaraderie with

similar (popular), dance-related accounts on Instagram.

15. **ENGAGE!** Spend at least 15-20 minutes a day interacting with, liking, commenting, and following other dance-related accounts on Instagram, that tie into your target market for your brand. This can be anyone from young dancers, choreographers, dance teachers, dance studios, dancewear companies, dance photographers, etc. Use popular hashtags in your niche market to search on Instagram, then like, and comment on at least 2-3 photos, on a few of the accounts that comes up in your search. Do this at least once a day. You can also discover new people to follow, in your target market by visiting the accounts of those who have commented on other popular dance accounts, like @sharkcookie, @worldofdance, @nycda, and @nycdanceproject, and liking 3 or 4 of their posts, and leaving a comment. This will help you begin to

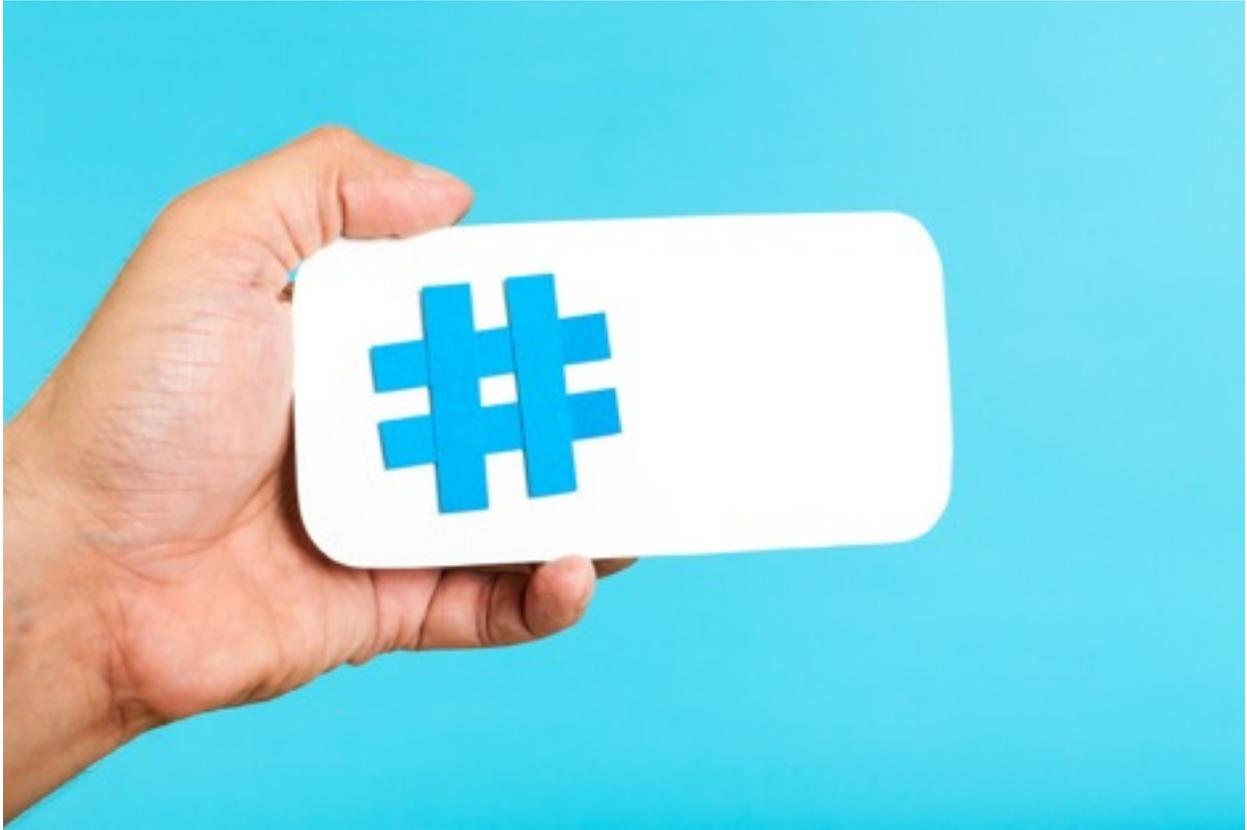
build genuine relationships with people in your target market on IG, gain the attention of other brands to collaborate with, and also help you increase your followers, and engagement on your IG account.

16. **Create a conversation**, and drive engagement by asking questions within your captions, and responding to those questions, to keep the conversation going.

17. **Captions are KEY!** Be sure to write detailed, well-thought out, helpful, witty, informative, motivational, educational, inspirational, entertaining, or funny captions for your images or videos on Instagram. Use them to tell a story, and really make a connection with your followers. Great captions make all the difference on Instagram.



## HASHTAGS



Let's talk about hashtags...

**Hashtags are one of THE most important components of growing a targeted following on Instagram.** Hashtags are the way that most people find your content on Instagram, and how you connect with your target audience, and gain new followers and customers.

## **If you're NOT using the right hashtags, here's what will happen to you:**

- You will gain new followers, but they will be random people, who are not really interested in your brand, products, or services.
- You will get lots of spammy followers and comments.
- Your content will get lost in a sea of photos and videos on Instagram, and no one will ever see it.
- You will miss out on opportunities for your target audience to find you through searches on Instagram.
- You will miss out on opportunities to be featured on other popular Instagram accounts in your niche market.

## **When you ARE using the RIGHT hashtags on Instagram, here's what happens:**

- Your ideal clients, customers, and target audience starts to find you, without any additional effort from you.
- You start gaining TONS of new followers in

your target market who are very interested in your brand, classes, performances, products, and services.

- You're found by other popular accounts on Instagram, and start getting featured on other accounts in your niche market.
- You start getting genuine comments on your posts.
- You start getting offers for collaborations and contests.
- You start getting free media coverage on popular blogs and websites.
- You start getting new e-mail subscribers, paying clients, customers, students, and patrons, directly from Instagram. BOOYAH!!



But there's something you need to know.

## **ALL HASHTAGS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL.**

Something I see every day on Instagram, from dance studio owners, dance teachers, choreographers, dance wear companies, and other dance-related brands, is the use of the WRONG hashtags for their account.

**How do you know what the wrong hashtags are?**

- **If a hashtag has more than one million tags on it.** This means the hashtag is over-saturated, and the odds of your target audience actually seeing your content, is very slim. So that means, #dance, is NOT a good hashtag to use, for example. Hashtags with 200,000 tags or less, are usually a good option. Don't bother using ones with more than

500,000 tags on it. It will be a waste of time.

- **If a hashtag doesn't have enough tags on it.** If a hashtag has less than say, 5,000 or 3,000 tags on it, it's NOT a good hashtag to use, because there aren't that many people using it or searching for it. Hence its lack of popularity.
- **If you randomly made it up.** You should absolutely have a specific hashtag or two (or even three), for your specific brand. I have 3: [#SHINEonSocialMedia](#), [#AshanisInspiration](#), and [#EmpowerDancers](#). If you search any of these hashtags on Instagram, you will see my original content show up. This is called a "Hashtag Hub". However, if you're using random hashtags, because they sound cute or funny, but they're not your brand's specific hashtag, or a hashtag that your target audience searches for on Instagram, it is NOT a good hashtag to use. There's just no point.
- **If your target market does NOT use it in searches.** The whole point of using hashtags is so that people with similar interests can find

each other on Instagram. How do they do that? They do that by going to the search box on Instagram, and searching different hashtags. So you want to make sure that you're using the SPECIFIC hashtags that your target market is searching for.

- **If it's too generic, or encourages random followings.** Hashtags like #dance, #follow4follow, #like4like, #beautiful, #igers, #happy, #cute, etc. are NOT the ideal hashtags to use, because they are just way too generic, too overused, and typically get a lot of spam. You don't want random followers, and you don't want tons of spam, or spammy comments on your posts. You want to connect with people who are genuinely interested in you, your brand, and what you have to offer. Remember, when you're on Instagram for a purpose, the last thing you want to do is waste time connecting with random people, and gaining random followers.
- **If the photos/videos you see within the hashtag hub are inappropriate, or**

**unrelated.** There are some hashtags that get overused for the purpose of posting inappropriate photos and videos. There are also some that get a lot of random photos and videos, unrelated to what the hashtag is supposed to be about. Stay away from those!

Remember, it's not about gaining a ton of followers on Instagram, and "looking cool" as a result. It's about growing a targeted following of people who are genuinely interested in your brand, building relationships with them through daily engagement, and turning your followers into paying customers, clients, or partnerships.

That's why hashtags are not something to take lightly, or to play around with.

So, all that being said, I've done some extensive research on what are the most popular (but not too popular), and most effective hashtags for dance professionals, and dance business owners to use, to connect with your target audience on Instagram.

Start using these hashtags to begin to make some genuine connections with your ideal dance audience (your potential students, clients, and customers) on Instagram. Then, do your own research to find even more hashtags, specific to your brand, or your location, to incorporate into your hashtag strategy.

Here's the criteria you need to use when researching what hashtags you should use for your brand's Instagram strategy. You need to answer yes to all of these questions:

- Does this hashtag relate to what my brand/ Instagram account is about?
- Is this a hashtag that my target audience is searching for on Instagram?
- Does this hashtag have more than 3,000, but less than 500,000 tags?
- Is this hashtag used by my competitors, or other people, in my niche market, with similar interests, products, or services?
- Are the photos within this hashtag hub appropriate, and not spammy?



**\*Please Note: If you own a dance studio, a dance wear store, or other type of local business, you should do your own, additional research, and be sure to use location-specific hashtags in your posts as well. It is very important to use the proper hashtags to**

**connect with people in your local area.**

## **INSTAGRAM-OPTIMIZED HASHTAGS FOR THE DANCE INDUSTRY**

**You can use up to 30 hashtags on Instagram, so use 30, not 10, not 15, 30.**

**\*Choose your top 30 hashtags, based on your specific brand, and target audience. Then, save them in the Notes app on your phone, or as a Shortcut. That way, you can easily copy and paste them into the first comment on your photo or video, immediately after posting it, with no hassle.**

**Only post one, or two (ideally your brand's specific hashtags) in your caption. Post the other 28 hashtags as the first comment on your post.**

**#dancerslife #dancerproblems  
#dancersofinstagram #dancersworld  
#dancelife #danceteam #danceclass  
#danceshoes #dancewear #tinydancer  
#dancecompetition #danceclass #jazzdance  
#dancecomp #contemporarydance #danceworkshop  
#worldwidedance #balletclass #toddlergram  
#danceclass #toddlerballet #dancerslife  
#dancerproblems  
#dancersofinstagram #dancerforlife #dancelislife #danceteacher  
#lovetodance #dancersofinstagram #livelovedance  
#momsofinstagram #fitmomsofinstagram #dancephoto  
#dancephotographer #danceeducation #modernndance  
#contemporarydance #dancestudio #preschooler  
#toddlersofinstagram #instaballet #instakid  
#instatoddler #balletmom #tinydancer #ballerina  
#miniballerina**

**#prettybrowndancers #praisedance #tapdance  
#tapdancer #balletdancer #balletlove #balletlife  
#balletpost #balletshoes #balletfeet #balletgirl  
#balletboys #balletphotography #worldwideballet  
#lovetodance #dancefitness #dancelislife #blackdancers  
#blackballerinas #hiphopdance #babyballerina  
#littleballerina #browngirlsdoballet #balletpost**

**#instaballet #dancersofig #dancephotography  
#dancevideo #dancecrew #contemporarydancer  
#contemporaryballet #instadance #hiphopdance  
#hiphopdancer #streetdance #urbandance**

\*Side note: I purposely did not touch on Instagram stories in this guide, because I did not want to overwhelm you. There's PLENTY of info here for you to kickstart your Instagram presence, or take your Instagram strategy to the next level. I will create a completely separate guide, discussing strategies for dancers to use on Instagram stories.

So that's it! You now have all of the foundational info you need to start significantly growing your dance brand on Instagram!

But that was a LOT of info! So I'm sure that you have questions, right?

Not a problem!

**I've created a secret Facebook group, especially for my dance friends who have purchased this [Dancer's Guide To Instagram](#), so that I can answer all of your questions!**

## [Here's how to join:](#)

E-mail me at **[ashani@ashanimfuko.com](mailto:ashani@ashanimfuko.com)**, and provide me with the e-mail address associated with your Facebook account. I will then add you to the group, using your e-mail address, and you can post questions there for me to answer.

If you found this Instagram guide helpful, and you want to share a testimonial with me, e-mail me at, **[ashani@ashanimfuko.com](mailto:ashani@ashanimfuko.com)**, or just post a comment on my most recent photo on Instagram, **<http://Instagram.com/AshaniMfukoDance>**.

If you want to share a link, to purchase this Instagram guide, with your dance friends and colleagues, here's the link to share:

**<http://bit.ly/DancersGuideToInstagram>**