



Introduction to Instagram for Small Museums



Benefit of Instagram for Museums

Using Instagram to promote a small museum offers numerous benefits, especially for visually-driven storytelling and connecting with a younger audience. Here are the key advantages:

- Visual storytelling
- Reaching younger audiences
- Engagement through Stories and Reels
- Community building and interaction with loyal followers
- Showcasing unique perspectives of the museum
- Highlighting events and exhibits
- Insights and analytics
- Enhancing brand aesthetic
- Boosting web traffic and ticket sales



Your Museum's Instagram Profile

Choosing the right profile picture

Use your museum's logo or an eye-catching image that represents your museum's identity.

Adding essential information about your museum

Craft a concise bio that reflects your museum's mission. Include your museum's location, website link, and operating hours. Add a call-to-action like "Visit us!" or "Explore our latest exhibit!"



smithsonian

Follow

Message

+

2,524 posts

1M followers

192 following

Smithsonian

We're more than a museum. We're 21 of them and the National Zoo. Legal: <http://s.si.edu/legal>
1000 Jefferson Dr SW, Washington D.C. 20024

sprout.link/smithsonian

Followed by [daphnesilverbooks](#), [lmccorm79](#) + 55 more



Solstice Sat



Colors



Pollinators



NAHM



Portraits



NASM



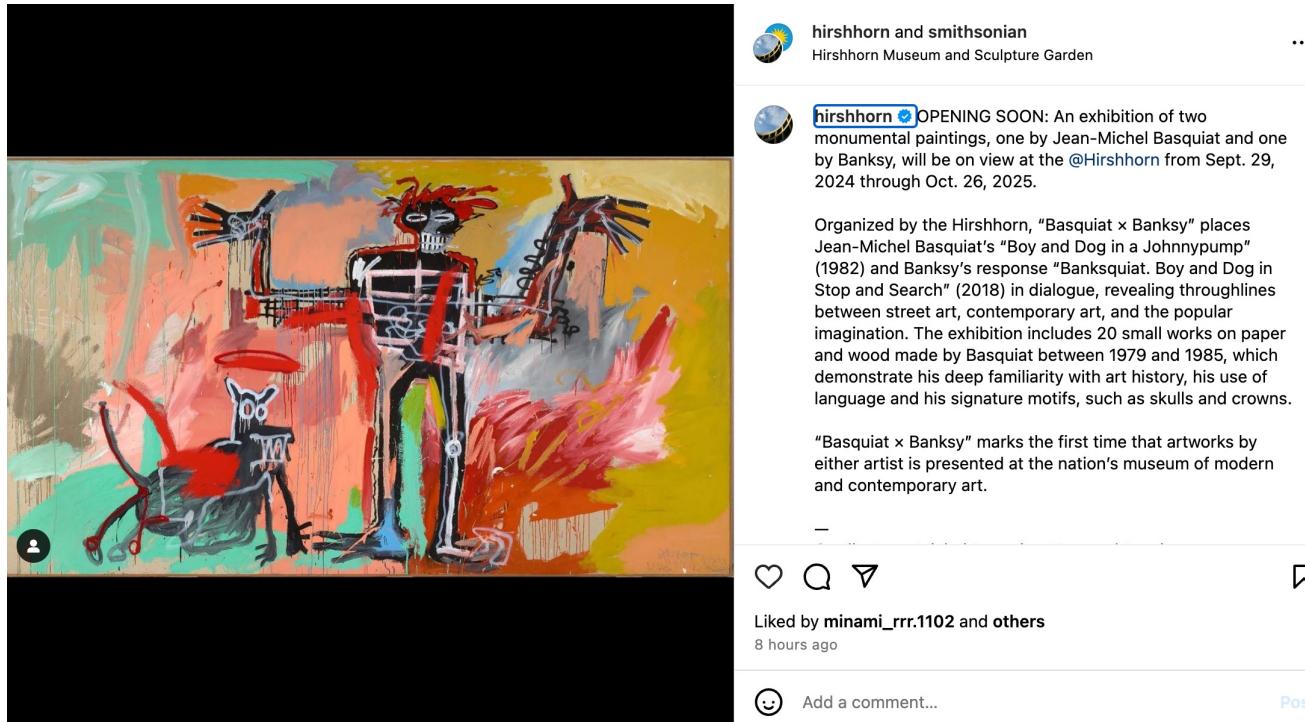
HHM



Understanding Instagram's Features

Instagram is primarily a platform for sharing visual content. Your posts can include photos, videos, and carousels (multiple images or videos in one post).

Example: If your museum is featuring a new exhibit, create a series of posts highlighting specific artifacts or interactive displays. Pair each image with informative captions that tell the story behind the artifacts.



hirshhorn and smithsonian
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

hirshhorn **OPENING SOON:** An exhibition of two monumental paintings, one by Jean-Michel Basquiat and one by Banksy, will be on view at the @Hirshhorn from Sept. 29, 2024 through Oct. 26, 2025.

Organized by the Hirshhorn, "Basquiat x Banksy" places Jean-Michel Basquiat's "Boy and Dog in a Johnnypump" (1982) and Banksy's response "Banksquiat. Boy and Dog in Stop and Search" (2018) in dialogue, revealing throughlines between street art, contemporary art, and the popular imagination. The exhibition includes 20 small works on paper and wood made by Basquiat between 1979 and 1985, which demonstrate his deep familiarity with art history, his use of language and his signature motifs, such as skulls and crowns.

"Basquiat x Banksy" marks the first time that artworks by either artist is presented at the nation's museum of modern and contemporary art.

Liked by minami_rrr.1102 and others
8 hours ago

Add a comment... Post



How to Use Instagram Posts to Promote Your Museum

Use this section for regular updates and engaging content.

- **Exhibit Highlights:** Share close-up shots of artifacts, installations, or historical objects.
- **Events & Announcements:** Post about upcoming exhibits, workshops, or museum tours.
- **Behind-the-Scenes:** Show your audience how exhibits are set up or how artifacts are preserved.
- **User-Generated Content:** Repost visitors' photos with proper credit to show their experiences.



smithsonian and amhistorymuseum
National Museum of American History

smithsonian After the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, first responders found camaraderie and comfort at Nino's American Kitchen. The local restaurant transformed into a relief center, serving over 500,000 free meals over nine months to New York City's front-line workers.

This apron from Nino's showcases the patches of different units who shared a meal or took a break at the restaurant. While the restaurant was just a few blocks away from Ground Zero, this apron represents departments from across the country who came to New York to help in the aftermath. Some of these units include Jefferson County Kentucky's Emergency Medical Service, Iowa Law Enforcement Academy, and Washington, D.C.'s Metropolitan Police.

The apron is in the collection of our @amhistorymuseum.
Edited · 2d

ethelmermanfangirl Wow, to be honest I didn't realize first responders came to NY from across the country to help
2d 2 likes Reply

— View replies (1)

sdrpasusan Thank you all so much for the history that you all share in every post. I love your yearly posts surrounding this tragedy... they make your heart hurt... but still convey a strong message. I still get so emotional when you occasionally post the yellow note that Frank and Daria used to communicate their safety to one another. It still brings tears to my eyes. ❤️🇺🇸

Like Comment Share Bookmark

Liked by sarahmarsom and others
2 days ago

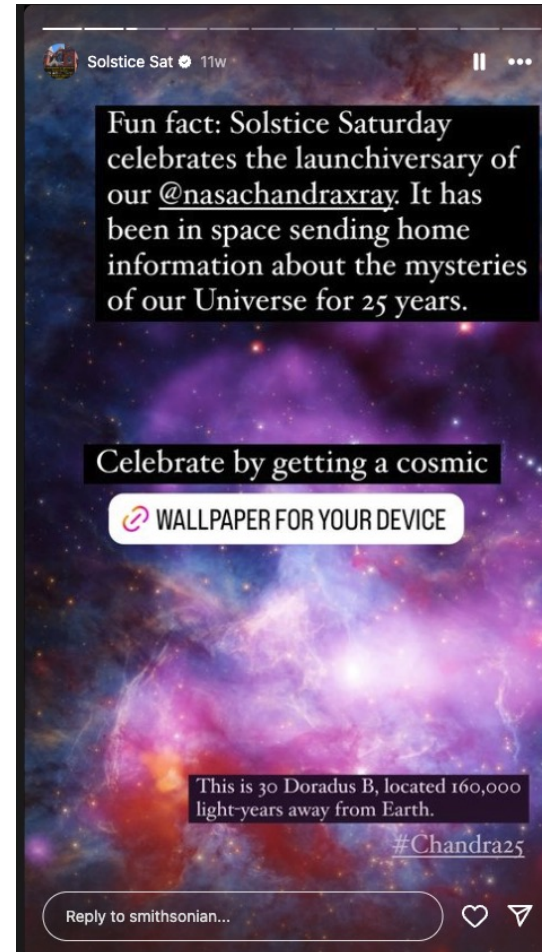
Add a comment...

Post

Understanding Instagram's Features: Stories

Instagram Stories are short, temporary posts that last for 24 hours. They're perfect for sharing real-time updates, sneak peeks, and interactive content.

Example: Share a story featuring a curator explaining the significance of a newly installed exhibit. You can also add interactive features like polls or questions to engage your audience.



How to Use Stories to Promote Your Museum

- Post teasers for upcoming events or exhibits.
- Tell stories about your collections.
- Use the "Swipe Up" feature (available if your account has over 10,000 followers) to direct followers to your website or ticketing page.
- Share visitor experiences by reposting their stories.
- Use stickers like polls, questions, or quizzes to encourage engagement.



Understanding Instagram's Features: Reels

Reels are short-form videos that are ideal for showing engaging, fast-paced content.

Example: Create a reel that takes viewers on a quick walkthrough of your latest exhibit or a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's preparations for an event.



smithsonian and smithsonianpnp
Original audio

smithsonian Dr. Rhea Combs, director of curatorial affairs at our @SmithsonianNPG, recently joined Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch III on a tour of the new exhibition "This Morning, This Evening, So Soon: James Baldwin and the Voices of Queer Resistance." This exhibit explores writer James Baldwin's relationships with other creatives and thought leaders, including musician and activist Nina Simone. #Baldwin100atSI #JamesBaldwin100
5w

waterandlaughs Excellent sis!! How long will the exhibit be open?
5w 1 like Reply
View replies (1)

alliemy50 How long is this on display?? 🙏
3w 1 like Reply
View replies (1)

brittiseitz You only see a very small percent of what the Smithsonian has. So much of it is kept from public. So much is hidden.
2w Reply

kimbaresartscapes Traveled from Ohio to see this amazing exhibition - so interesting and profound - as was the American Women in Paris. Thank you for continually bringing engaging works to artist & art enthusiasts alike ❤️

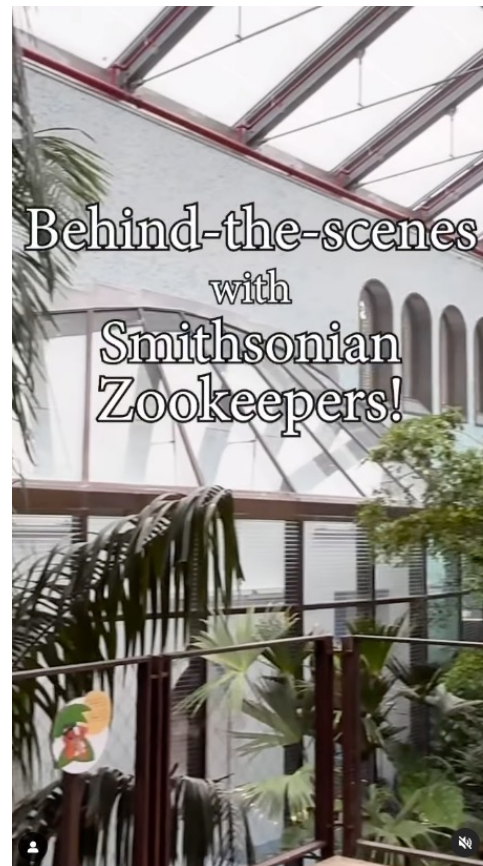
Liked by nyemaw and others
August 7

Add a comment...



How to Use Reels to Promote Your Museum

- Highlight key exhibits or special events in quick, engaging snippets.
- Use trending audio or hashtags to increase visibility.
- Provide educational content, such as fun facts about historical artifacts.



smithsonian and smithsonianzoo
Original audio

smithsonian 🌞 It's #NationalZookeeperWeek! Learn more about a day in the life of Shelby and Stacy, animal keepers at our @SmithsonianZoo's Bird House.

Do you have a favorite bird?
7w

keelybakken Tell us about Mimi!
7w 1 like Reply

— View replies (2)

bustdownmaxiboi2.0 Yes all the time
7w 2 likes Reply

emctvedt They're the best!!
7w 2 likes Reply

smithsonian 🌞 Video Description: Two people in matching polo shirts bring the viewer to different locations within the bird house. These spaces include an aviary which is open to the public, as well as the kitchen and hand-rearing room which are not open to the public.
7w 1 like Reply

bustdownmaxiboi2.0 I love the bird area
7w 2 likes Reply

lawrenwied 🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥

Liked by estherleigh and others
July 24

Add a comment...



Creating Engaging Visual Content

- **High-Quality Visuals:** Ensure that photos and videos are well-lit and clear. Use close-ups of artifacts to capture detail.
- **Consistent Branding:** Maintain a cohesive look by using the same filters, colors, and tones across posts.
- **Graphics:** Use tools like Canva to create eye-catching graphics for announcements or informational posts.



Crafting Compelling Posts and Captions

- Keep your captions concise and engaging. Ask questions to encourage interaction.
- Include relevant hashtags like #museum, #art, #history, and hashtags unique to your museum or local community to increase discoverability.
- Use location tags to make your posts visible to users in your area.



Building and Engaging Your Audience

- Promote your Instagram handle on your website, email newsletters, and physical signage within the museum.
- Encourage visitors to follow and tag your museum in their posts or stories. You can incentivize this with contests or giveaways.
- Respond to comments and messages promptly to build relationships with your audience.



Analytics and Insights

- **Track Engagement:** Use Instagram Insights to see which posts perform best. Analyze likes, shares, and comments to adjust your content strategy.
- **Optimize Posting Times:** Post during peak engagement times, which can vary depending on your audience's habits.



Best Practices for Instagram Marketing

- **Dos:** Post regularly, use high-quality images, and engage with your followers through comments and direct messages.
- **Don'ts:** Avoid overly promotional content—focus on storytelling and educational value.
- **Collaborate:** Partner with other museums, local organizations, or influencers to cross-promote content and expand your reach.

