

# TURNING VISUAL CONTENT INTO BRAND EQUITY

A Hashtag Strategy Guide

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# TURNING VISUAL CONTENT INTO BRAND EQUITY

A top priority for B2C marketers is to create engaging content. Online shoppers receive more than 5,000 marketing messages per day. With the increase in digital content and adoption of mobile devices, shopper's attention spans have never been shorter. This makes it difficult for brands and retailers to reach and influence the shoppers that are in-market for their products. Rather than long-form text-based messages, consumers are demanding content in compelling and quick-to-consume formats such as photos and videos.

One of the ways B2C marketers can be successful reaching their consumers is by creating and implementing a hashtag strategy — incorporating visual imagery and compelling content that reaches topics consumers are actually searching for.

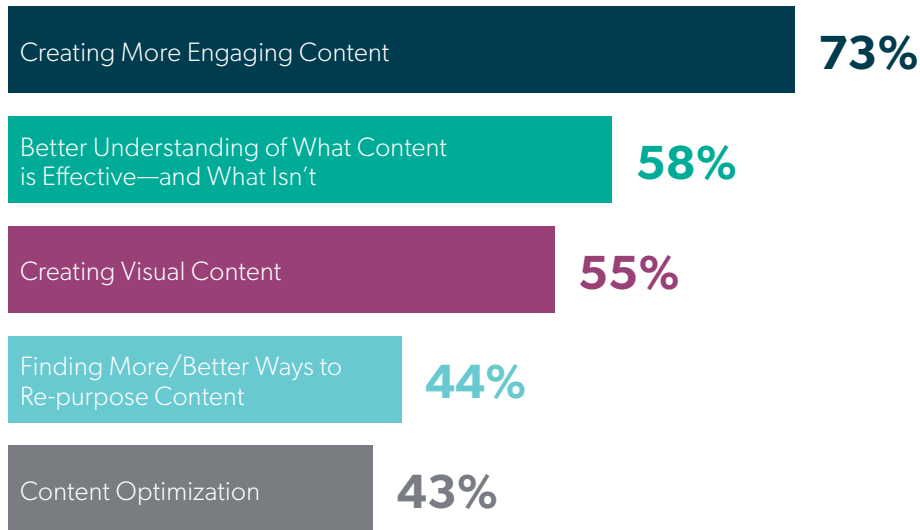
This guide will walk you through the top 5 strategies to effectively source visual content and use it on your e-commerce site to improve engagement and drive sales.

**The human attention span is 8 seconds, shorter than that of goldfish.<sup>1</sup>**

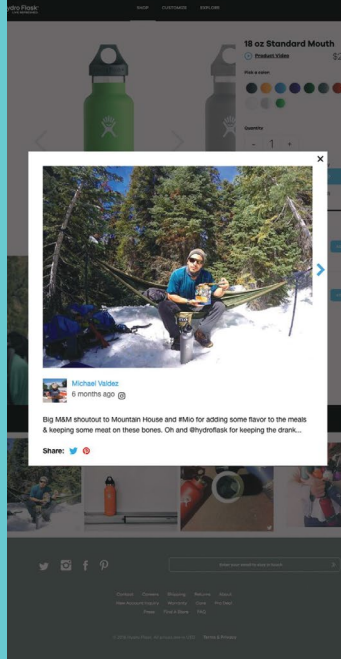
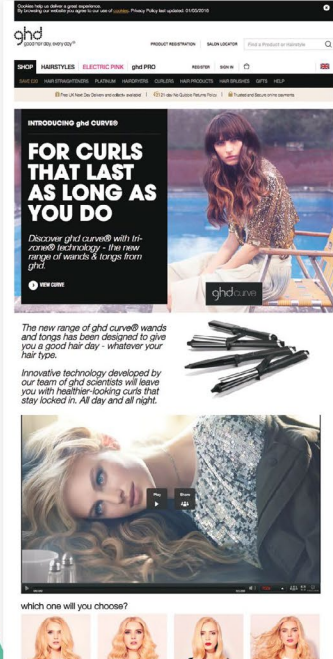
**Content with relevant images get 94% more views than content without relevant images.<sup>2</sup>**

# MARKETERS NEED CONTENT THAT BREAKS THROUGH AND INSPIRES

Top priorities for B2C content creators.



2016 B2C Content Marketing Trends-North America:Content Marketing Institute/MarketingProfs



With more than 75% of all Internet users active on social channels — sharing opinions, ideas, thoughts, and pieces of their lives — hundreds of thousands of brands and products are mentioned every minute. On Instagram alone, there are more than 500 million active monthly users sharing an average of 95 million photos and videos per day.<sup>3</sup>

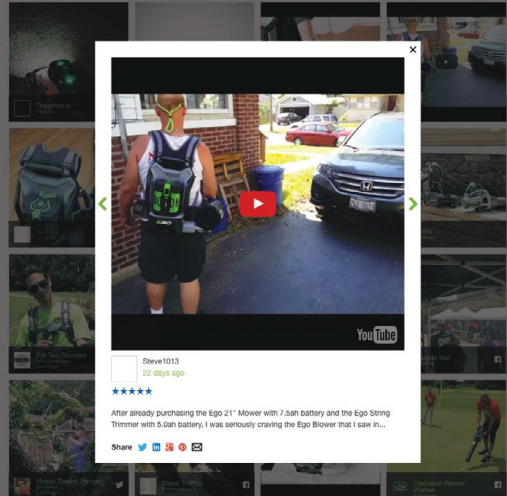
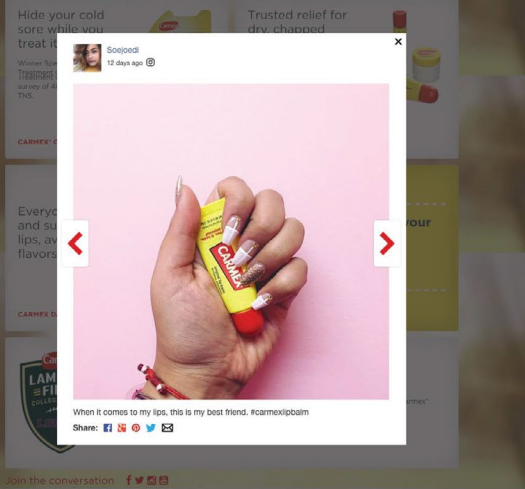
## USE VISUAL CONTENT FROM EVERYDAY PEOPLE TO ADVOCATE ON YOUR BEHALF

Social media provides a wealth of personalized visual content. Capturing and leveraging this content is one of the most effective marketing strategies to drive conversion, yet most e-commerce businesses have yet to do this.

Imagine the authentic brand story you can tell with photos and videos of your consumers loving and using your products. This level of genuine communication drives higher engagement and brand loyalty.

# THE ART OF CURATING THE BEST SOCIAL IMAGES TO CONNECT WITH MORE SHOPPERS

What does it take to distinguish meaningful photos from irrelevant ones that don't add value to the e-commerce experience?



# 1

## It starts with knowing what's out there. Do your research.

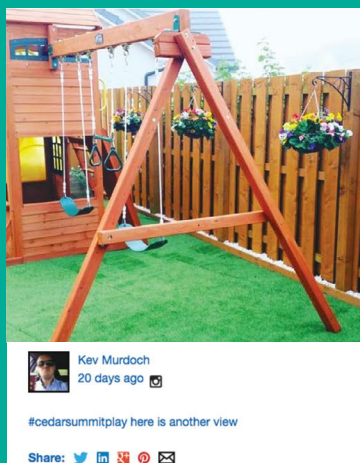
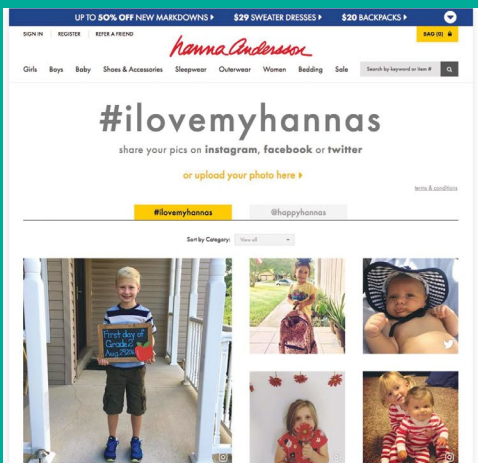
- It's simple — search for your #brandname and #productname to get a sense for how people talk about your products on the social channels most relevant to your target audience, such as Instagram, Twitter, or Pinterest.
- Look for associated nicknames or hashtags your fans are using in conjunction with your brand hashtag. You can use these terms to talk about your brand in a way that culturally resonates with your customers.
- Identify which social media channels are most popular with your fans and focus your efforts on the platform that is most organic to your customers.
- If you are a brand that sells products, you'll likely be surprised by the amount of content that already exists.

## 2

### Define how you talk about your brand.

You need an unused hashtag that you consistently promote. Choose one that includes the name of your brand, primary marketing campaign, or something more unique. Make sure it's one you can rely on in the long term. Unless you have a very unique brand name, avoid using #brandname for your new hashtag as most have already been heavily used with content from resellers or other companies with the same or similar name. By choosing something unique but memorable, you will spend less time filtering through irrelevant content to find what is most meaningful to your brand.

- Make your hashtag easy to remember and not too lengthy
- Use this hashtag every time you talk about your brand on social
- Encourage consumers to use your hashtag





# 3

## Launch campaign-specific hashtags.

Seasonal hashtag and marketing campaigns can be successful because you can connect with what consumers are feeling and thinking about during the year. You may also choose to do a campaign based on a product launch or company mission.

- As you did with your brand hashtag, explore existing hashtags and make a list of unused or rarely used tags.
- Choose one that you can align with your brand hashtag so consumers understand the connection with your brand, for example, #KohlsBackToSchool
- Think about timing - if you're only planning to use this hashtag for a month, it might be best to leverage your brand hashtag in short-term scenarios. When you create a new hashtag you need to commit to keeping it alive and/or using it year after year.
- In 2017, most brands will have to promote campaign hashtags if they expect to get social campaign traction among consumers. We are getting hashtag fatigue, so incentives, sweepstakes, responses from the brand account, etc. are encouraged.

Short-term campaigns keep brands top-of-mind, increase brand followers, and engage new users who may be interested in a topic rather than specific brand.

## TOP 3 THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING A HASHTAG CAMPAIGN:

### DO THIS

Use your brand hashtag if your campaign is a short duration (1 month or so). Hashtags that are the same as the companies' name do well (if it's not a generic name).

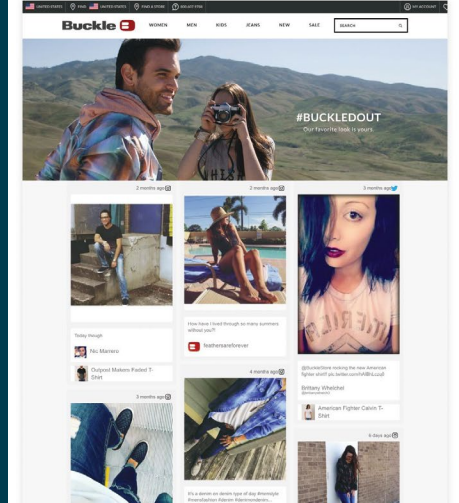
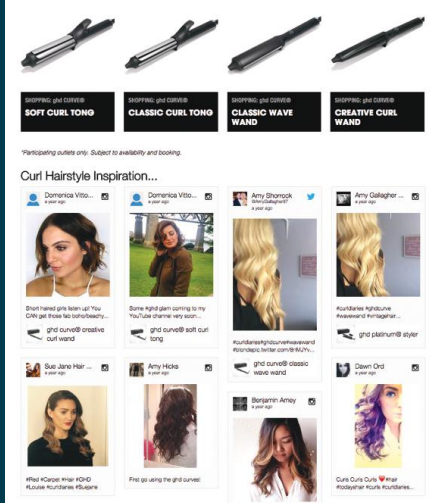
Use verbs, adjectives, or play-on-words to bring some active and fun language to your campaign (#shareacoke — Coca Cola, #tweetfromtheseat — Charmin, #tacotales — Taco Bell)<sup>4</sup>

Commit to keeping your hashtag alive by using it frequently and posting it on your owned online avenues.

### AVOID THIS

Avoid using hashtags that are too generic and not connected with your brand. This can often pull in irrelevant content and cost you time and money moderating content out. (#thisisgreat, #holidaysuccess)

Hashtags should not be too long, complicated, or mis-aligned with the brand. These things make your hashtag both hard to remember and hard to type on social media.



## 4

### Have little to no social content? Start the conversation.

We all have to start somewhere. If you find that consumers are not posting about your brand, the easiest way to build product-level content is to ask them to post! Sounds simple right? But it works! Add your request to marketing campaigns, website, brand social media accounts, email signatures, and any other owned communication outlet.

If you're already asking for product reviews to your website, using post-interaction emails (PIE), or other methods, consider adding a short blurb, such as: We would love to see how you use #yourhashtag. Show us a photo!

You can also do an incentive or contest in order to drive more social volume and increase awareness of your campaign/brand hashtag.

## 5

### **Partner with a social curations provider for maximum scale**

Once you activate your hashtag strategy, you can expect to generate a lot of content. Partnering with a social curation solution provider is recommended to scale your efforts and maximize the impact of your visual content strategy. A provider will help you identify the most meaningful and relevant content, publish this content to your website, and filter out any content that might not be suitable or potentially damage your brand.

### **Bazaarvoice Curations automates elements of your visual content and hashtag strategies:**

- Monitor hashtags for relevant content that Bazaarvoice will curate for you
- Automatically ask for the rights to the content
- Easily place this content across your website
- Improve brand engagement and drive more sales

## RESULTS

### **Visual content drives more than engagement, it drives sales.**

Curating compelling content at scale is only meaningful if it helps you connect with your consumers, improve on-site engagement, and naturally drive sales.

**On average, Bazaarvoice clients enjoy a 49% conversion lift when shoppers interacted with social images versus when they did not.**

At Bazaarvoice, we can help you capture the authentic voice of your consumers and use their photos and product reviews to tell a compelling brand story. The intersection of authentic customer reviews and emotive social content is the future of a truly social online commerce.

## CONCLUSION

There is not one linear path to using hashtags to build brand equity, but there are some tried and true techniques to ensure you can find, ask for permission, and use content across your website to build your brand story.



Do your  
research & define  
your hashtag strategy  
for your brand  
and marketing  
campaigns

Ask for content,  
put your social  
content online, and  
combine imagery  
with product ratings  
and reviews

Turn your content  
into revenue

**Ready to use social images from your brand advocates to enhance the power of your brand?**

**To learn more, visit [bazaarvoice.com/curations](https://bazaarvoice.com/curations)**

## RESOURCES

- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnet.com/news/goldfish-the-actual-fish-not-the-crackers-may-have-a-better-attention-span-than-humans/>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy#sm.0001ug24rmik4cq9zjo1umot831hq>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-statistics/>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://www.tintup.com/blog/7-examples-of-successful-hashtag-campaigns/>

## ABOUT BAZAARVOICE

Bazaarvoice helps brands and retailers find and reach consumers, and win them with the content they trust. Each month in the Bazaarvoice Network, more than one-half billion consumers view and share authentic consumer-generated content (CGC), including ratings and reviews as well as curated visual content across 5,000 brand and retail websites. This visibility into shopper behavior allows Bazaarvoice to capture unique first-party data and insights that fuel our targeted advertising and personalization solutions.

Founded in 2005, Bazaarvoice is headquartered in Austin, Texas with offices across North America and Europe. For more information, visit [\*\*www.bazaarvoice.com\*\*](http://www.bazaarvoice.com).

