



Instagram 2026

# SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT »»

# INSTAGRAM FOR BUSINESS

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The truth will surprise you.



Everything you've been told about Instagram is **wrong**.

"Chase trends. Use Hashtags. Boost everything."

That advice is why your last "banger" post got buried by the algorithm.

Brands need a different playbook. Here's what the data **shows actually matters** in 2026.

Check it out >>>

# THE INSTAGRAM REALITY

Instagram is getting more expensive.

Advertising costs are up. Organic reach is down. The algorithm favors accounts that can **pay to play**.

But you still need to be there. Your audience hasn't left.

Here's **what actually works** when costs keep rising and reach keeps falling.





# 11%

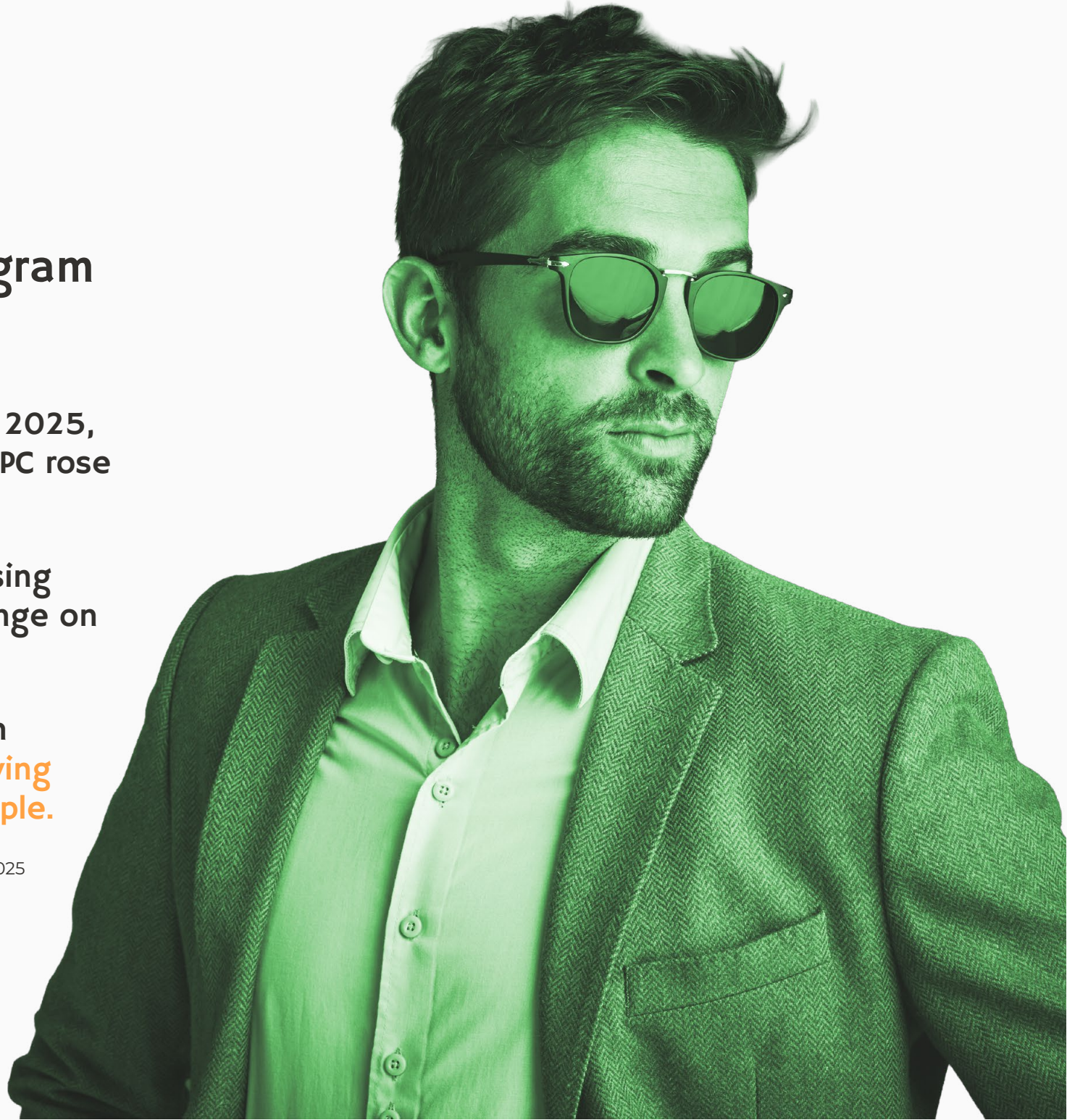
year-over-year  
increase in Instagram  
advertising costs

CPM climbed to \$9.68 in 2025,  
up from \$8.72 in 2024. CPC rose  
to \$1.42, up from \$1.30.

61% of marketers say rising  
costs are their #1 challenge on  
Instagram.

Meanwhile, organic reach  
dropped 12%. **You're paying  
more to reach fewer people.**

Source: SQ Magazine Instagram Statistics 2025







# 82%

of business  
accounts saw  
organic reach  
decline on  
Instagram from  
2023–2025.

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Instagram is getting  
harsher on brands—  
especially smaller  
ones.





# 3.5%

average reach rate on  
Instagram in 2025

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This means only 3.5% of  
your followers will see your  
posts.

Business accounts with  
10K+ followers often see  
reach **BELOW 1%**.

This represents a 12%  
year-over-year decline.



# 5.5X FOLLOWER GROWTH FROM POSTING 10+ TIMES PER WEEK

More posts = more growth.

6-9 posts = 3.7x growth.

3-5 posts = 2x growth.

More content = more chances to hit Explore and Reels feed.

Bottom line: Post at least 3-5 times minimum.

**More is better** if you can maintain quality.

Source: Buffer analysis of 2M+ posts





# 12%

more engagement for  
carousels



Carousels win for engagement quality—more comments, saves, shares.

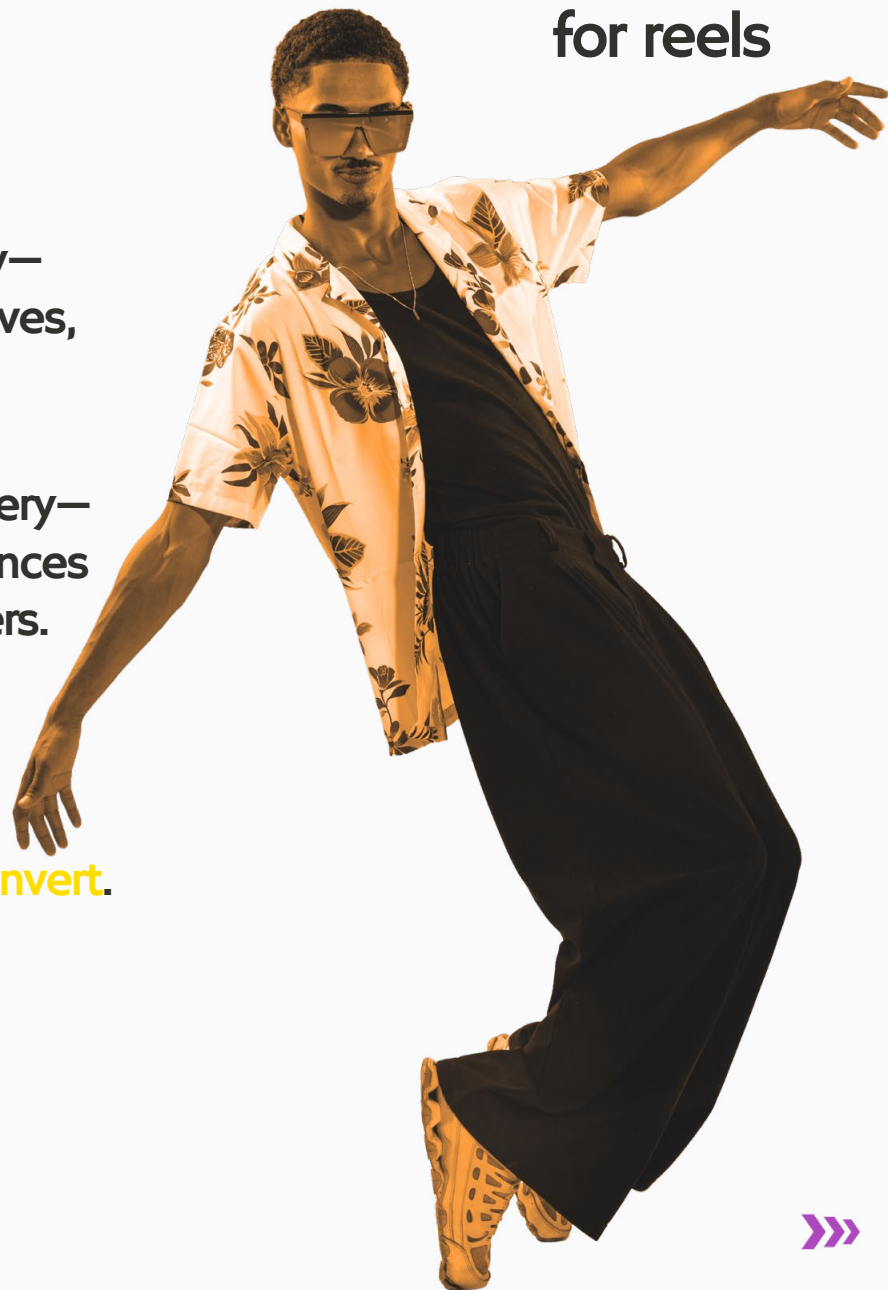
Reels win for discovery—reaching new audiences beyond your followers.

Use Reels to **grow**.

Use Carousels to **convert**.

# 1.36x

more reach  
for reels





# THE 3 SIGNALS

that determine your reach



**Watch Time**



**Likes Per Reach**



**Sends (DM Shares)**

These 3 drive the algorithm. Everything else is noise.



# WHAT GETS YOU PENALIZED

**WATERMARKS** from TikTok/CapCut get buried

**RECYCLED CONTENT** gets deprioritized

**VIDEOS OVER 3 MIN** won't be recommended

**ENGAGEMENT BAIT** "Comment below!" and  
"Tag a friend" hurt reach

Stay native. Stay original. Stay under the limits.







# Know Your Brand

Just because everyone is on Instagram doesn't mean they're seeing results.

Costs are rising. Organic reach is falling. The algorithm favors accounts that can afford to pay.

What works: post more original content, keep videos under 3 minutes, and focus on formats that match your goals—Reels for reach, carousels for engagement.

Brands that thrive on Instagram don't chase vanity metrics. They focus on what actually drives business impact and adapt to how the platform works today.



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Color Outside The Lines

