

2016 INSTAGRAM STUDY

Comparison of Top 100 National Architectural Firms

UNDERSTANDING THE MARKET

The purpose of this study is to analyze Instagram use, types and frequency of posts of the Top 100 National Architectural and A/E firms as ranked in 2015 by *Architectural Record*.

Why Instagram?

With over 300 million people posting, liking, and commenting on pictures, or simply just viewing and following their favorite accounts every month, it's easy to see why Instagram has become one of the top social media platforms. Due to the visual nature of the architecture and design industry, Instagram is the ideal social platform to share professional project photography, office candid, industry trends, general inspiration, and ideas.

Instagram, and social media in general, collects information in real time. You can hashtag our firm. You can collate our work. You can geolocate our project. You can tip our hat to a colleague. You can tell us what you're reading. You can recruit employees ... and much, much more. In doing so, architectural firms contribute to a broader dialogue about what makes a good experience.

For new buildings, it can initially draw viewers in with sketches, and keep them coming back for snapshots of models, site visits, and completed buildings. Instagram can document the long forgotten buildings of major cities like Detroit. With broken windows, peeling paint, and dilapidated exteriors, poignant photographs can shed light on the impact of urban decay. It is an easy way to instantly capture and share the architectural forms and details that surround us everyday.



Of the Top 100 Architects:

- 67% use Instagram
- 4% of the firms have multiple offices with their own Instagram site; the rest have a corporate account only

TOP 100 ARCHITECTS INSTAGRAM POST TOPICS AND FREQUENCY

Types of Posts:

Artists	2%
Awards.....	14%
Building Design	53%
Careers / Recruiting.....	4%
Community Events	6%
Conferences.....	8%
Construction.....	10%
Employees.....	54%
Food.....	2%
Fundraising / Charity.....	20%
Furniture	2%
Holidays	9%
Inspirational Photos / Quotes.....	3%
Interior Design	4%
Materials.....	3%
Mentoring.....	2%
Newsletters.....	2%
Office Events	26%
Sports	2%
Sustainability.....	3%
Trade Events.....	10%
Tributes.....	2%
Volunteering.....	2%

Frequency of Posts:

0-2 Weeks	70%
3-4 Weeks	15%
5-7 Weeks	3%
8-10 Weeks.....	2%
10-12 Weeks.....	1%
13+ Weeks.....	9%

“That balance, between the high and the low, the obvious and the obscure, makes life and design much more interesting to post.”



WHAT OUR ASPIRATIONAL FIRMS ARE DOING

The following spreads provide insight into information regarding each firm's level of commitment and use of Instagram.

2015 Top 100 Architects Architectural Record

Firm Name	Top 100 Rank	Corporate Account	Followers	Last Post (at time of study)	Style of Post (Paragraph or Twitter)	Multiple Office Sites
Gensler	1	●	14,900	2 Days	Paragraph	●
Skidmore Owings & Merrill	10	●	40,100	2 Days	Paragraph	--
Perkins + Will	4	●	13,600	7 Days	Both	●
Perkins Eastman	12	--	--	--	--	--
HOK	8	●	1,040	2 Days	Both	●
HKS Architects	9	--	--	--	--	--
NBBJ	14	●	1,524	1 Day	Both	--
Arup	NR	●	7,895	5 Days	Twitter	--
AECOM	2	●	3,874	28 Days	Paragraph	--
HDR	7	●	1,221	4 Days	Both	--
SHoP	NR	●	48,200	4 Days	Twitter	--
Stantec	16	●	1,847	1 Day	Twitter	--
SmithGroupJJR	20	--	--	--	--	--

NR = Not Ranked in 2015 Top 100 Architects by Architectural Record

Multiple Office Statistics:

Gensler – Out of 46 offices, 32 offices have individual Instagram accounts

Perkins + Will – Out of 25 offices, 6 have individual Instagram accounts, and 21 hashtag sites

HOK – Out of 23 offices, 13 have individual Instagram accounts, and 2 hashtag sites

HDR – Out of 199 offices, 6 hashtag sites

WHAT DETROIT AREA FIRMS ARE DOING

The following spreads provide insight into information regarding each firm's level of commitment and use of Instagram.

Detroit-Area Architects

Firm Name	Top 100 Rank	Corporate Account	Followers	Last Post (at time of study)	Style of Post (Paragraph or Twitter)	Multiple Office Sites
Gensler	1	●	14,900	2 Days	Paragraph	●
Harley Ellis Devereaux	75	●	89	4 Days	Twitter	--
HKS	9	--	--	--	--	--
AECOM	2	●	3,874	28 Days	Paragraph	--
Rossetti	NR	●	251	36 Days	Twitter	--
Ghafari	NR	--	--	--	--	--
Integrated Design Solutions	NR	--	--	--	--	--
Neumann Smith	NR	--	--	--	--	--
Albert Kahn	NR	--	--	--	--	--
Hobbs + Black	NR	--	--	--	--	--
OHM Advisors	NR	--	--	--	--	--
Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr	NR	--	--	--	--	--
Hamilton Anderson	NR	●	312	3 Days	Twitter	--
SSOE	70	--	--	--	--	--
<hr/>						
SmithGroupJJR	20	--	--	--	--	--

NR = Not Ranked in 2015 Top 100 Architects by Architectural Record

USING INSTAGRAM: WILL IT SURVIVE?

Instagram has seen incredible user growth in the last five years — it reached 400 million users in September 2015. Instagram announced in March 2016 that it is changing its algorithm to resemble that of Facebook's: user feeds will no longer display content chronologically. Instead, the posts they see first will be the ones that the app thinks they are interested in. This will include everything from popular posts to posts that are based on user prior engagement, such as likes, comments and profiles they have frequently visited.

After the update, posts from less popular accounts will likely get buried in user timelines. For small businesses, this will most likely result in a drop in engagement.

Other bad news to consider, however, is that follower growth — and interaction rates, in particular — are not only down, but are continuing to fall. While that could be due to the platform maturing, the numbers still paint a cautionary

trend. Follower growth is slowing, and the pattern shows this will continue throughout 2016. Even though the average profile still sees monthly follower growth of 16 percent, at the current rate, follower growth will fall off within the next 24 months.

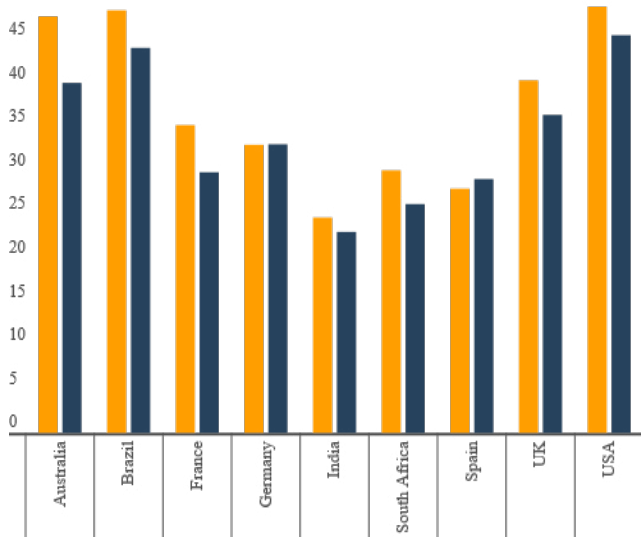
Perhaps even more worrying, interaction rates are much lower than at the start of 2015. The average interactions per post are now almost 20-30 percent lower than before, and recent studies show that those profiles with significant audiences have much lower interaction rates than those with under 1,000 followers.

Across the board, people are spending less time on their social media apps. In a study conducted using data gathered on apps, marketing intelligence firm SimilarWeb compared app data from Q1 2015 to Q1 2016, and found that in almost all countries, time spent on the four leading social media apps was down (see charts on next page).

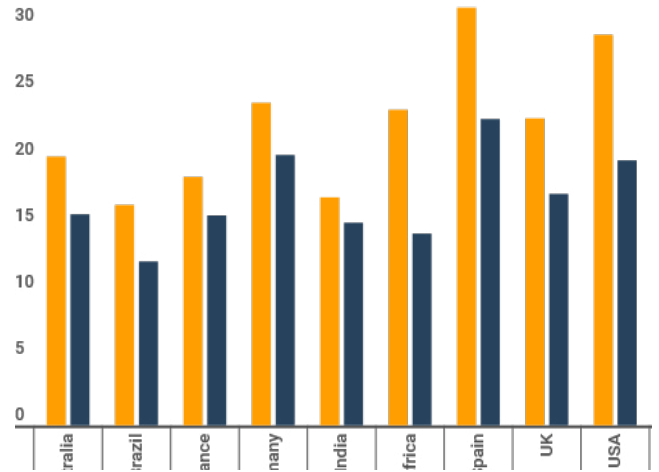


2015 2016

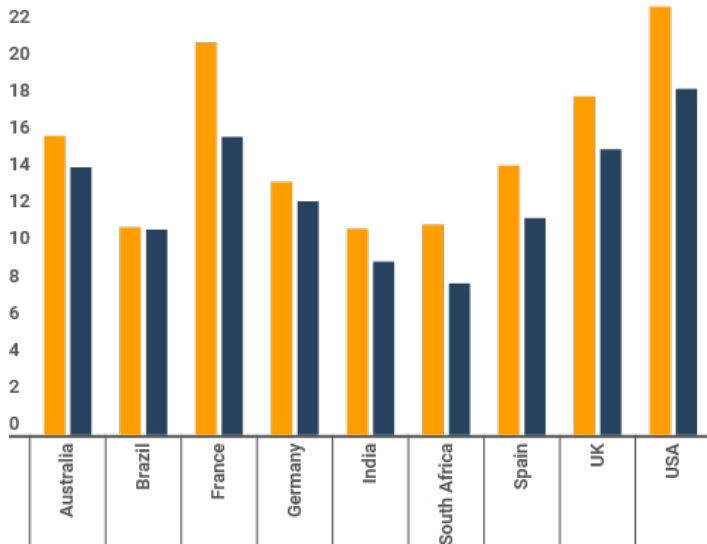
Facebook: Time Spent in App
Q1 2015 vs. Q1 2016



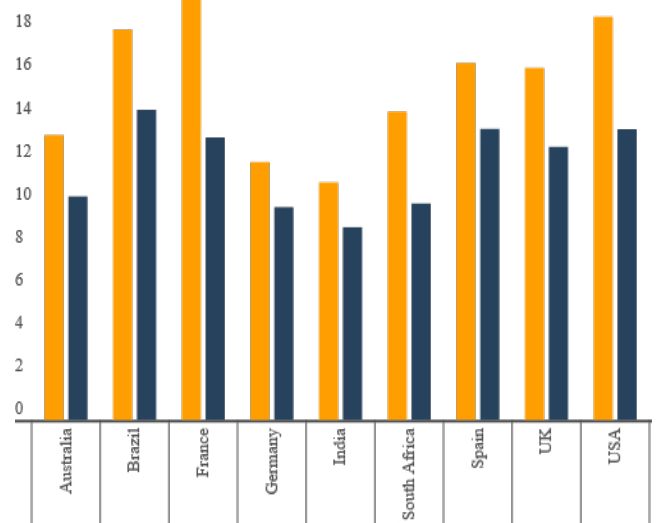
Instagram: Time Spent in App
Q1 2015 vs. Q1 2016



Snapchat: Time Spent in App
Q1 2015 vs. Q1 2016



Twitter: Time Spent in App
Q1 2015 vs. Q1 2016



Notes:

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/06/people-are-spending-much-less-time-on-social-media-apps-said-report.html>

<https://www.quintly.com/blog/2016/06/instagram-study-interactions/>

There is a bright side to the update, however. To stay competitive, businesses with the most targeted followers and highest-quality content will be the ones to stand out from the pack. Here are some suggestions.

1. Make an extra push to increase engagement now.

The easiest way is to increase exposure and optimize engagement. This means we need to get more eyes on our profile and do it at the right time. Using a tool like Schedugram or Iconosquare to identify the best times for us to post for our brand and increase exposure. Another tool to consider is Bettr, a scheduling and analytics app for Instagram. Bettr offers advanced capabilities like automatically posting at scheduled times and insights to reveal top engaged followers, unfollowers, follower ratios and more. It is suggested that we also make regular use of calls to action, such as asking followers to double tap, comment, and tag friends on posts. Similarly, to increase followers and engagement on Instagram, we should also leverage other marketing channels — such as Snapchat, Facebook and Pinterest — with calls to action.

2. Use hashtags

If there's anything that has stayed the same with Instagram, it's hashtags. Hashtags will continue to be a way to help Instagram users discover new content, so we need to use that to our advantage. Alternate between 10 to 15 hashtags that are relevant to our brand to put our content in front of the right people. In addition to our own brand and industry hashtags, monitor trending hashtags to see if any of the applicable and relevant hashtags are popular, which will give us the opportunity to become part of the real-time online conversation.

3. Use our email list

Email marketing is one of the most effective ways to market our business, and that includes our social media accounts. Since we haven't been using Instagram to grow our email list, now is the time to start driving traffic back to other channels. Our email list is the only database that we control, and we can use it at our own pace to market and promote our business.





SMITHGROUP JJR