

Media Audit

Kindred Collections LLC is hoping to make improvements to their existing Instagram page, as their Facebook is thriving and active, unlike that of Instagram. The hope of this shop is to increase brand recognition on the platform of Instagram specifically. For this media audit, three different social media accounts run by local vintage retailers on Instagram, one that is a similar outlet like Kindred Collections, one vintage clothing retailer and a vintage furniture store, all located within Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Trellis Marketplace

Trellis Marketplace is located in Elizabethtown Pennsylvania and is open 5 days a week. This marketplace sells a variety of items include handmade items and art, very similar to that of Kindred Collections LLC. Trellis Marketplace uses their Instagram feed to showcase product and events for its 931 followers with over 200 posts on their very active account (Figure 1). The vast majority of postings that can be seen on their Instagram are photos of different shop items. Occasionally, they will include a graphic that discusses an upcoming event, giveaway or changed store hours. By including so many different photos, the viewer can see the seasons change throughout the shop, so they also know that inventory is changing, as they showcase different items each season.

Despite their decent following, Trellis Marketplace only receives an average of 25 likes per post and minimal, if any, comments. They do a great job of including hashtags at the end of each post, but there is no way of telling whether this has an impact on their like numbers. One other thing to note about this Instagram, is they utilize both the Highlight and Story features that can be found on Instagram. Currently, they have five different Highlights that are labeled;

“Accessories”, “Tasty Treats”, “Furniture”, “Inspiration” and “Artisan Market.” These serve as storage locations for some of the stories they put up and also serve as a stopping place for viewers to get a quick glance at what the market has to offer. The way Trellis Marketplace runs their Instagram is very efficient and it is enjoyable for the viewer to see the shop transitions from season to season in an effortless way. The usage of graphics is minimal yet effective in showing important details to events and other happenings that are different from their usual product photos.

The Scarlet Willow

Another Instagram looked at during this audit was that of The Scarlet Willow, located in Lancaster. This store specializes in clothing for all people. This Instagram has 2,011 followers and over 700 posts on the platform (Figure 2). This seems to be a very active platform for this business, with regular postings multiple times a week. Again, despite the high number of followers there is only an average about 30 or so likes per post. This account utilizes photos almost exclusively, showing off the products available in store. The photos that are used seem to be taken with a cell phone and lack any real editing before being posted.

The captions on each of these photos simply explain what is in them with a fun flair. The usage of hashtags is apparent, and again it is unsure as to whether this has an influence on the traffic to the page. Each of the hashtags is very specific to Lancaster country, which is likely where most of their clientele comes from, as a store front located in Lancaster. This account also utilizes the Highlight feature, but very minimally. There is one Highlight that is labeled “#VOTE” and another “Velocity 2019.” There is only one story in the vote Highlight, but it is possible that this Highlight will grow with the upcoming election season. As for the other

Highlight, there is a lack of information on what “Velocity” is, but it is possible that it is something that is known by customers. The Scarlet Willow includes their website and Etsy shop in their bio, and frequently uses their platform as an advocate for change, something that is on the rise today.

Space Lancaster

The final Instagram that was explored in this audit was that of Space Lancaster. This Instagram account has 3,488 followers and nearly 2,000 posts. In their bio they are described as having “mid-century furniture, decor, lighting, & lots more!” (Figure 3). This bio seems to fit this feed perfectly. As the viewer scrolls, there are different photos that showcase the space as a whole as well as the products that are within it. As noted because of the photos, the place seems to be colorful and patterned, which is exactly how this feed looks. Despite this colorful feed at the large amount of followers, the like numbers are low, only hitting around 100 per post. It is important to mention however, that the comments seem to be very active on this page. Even with the low like numbers, the followers that are paying attention seem to be active and engaged.

Space Lancaster also utilizes the Highlight and Story features found on the Instagram platform. Unlike the other accounts that have been seen during this audit, there is a large amount of highlights, eleven to be specific (Figure 4). In theory, the usage of the highlights would be positive, but most of them contain only one photo which can be overwhelming to view as the follower. This feed strictly keeps it photos, but unique to them compared to the other feeds audited, is that the owners post funny posts of workers in the shop and candid moments. This has not been seen on the other feeds, and adds a personal touch as well as a funny moment for the viewer.

Conclusion

There were three different Instagram accounts that were analyzed and audited. Each of these feeds had their different strengths that were used to curate their content. Each of these feeds utilized photos primarily to show the products they provide to their customers. In the vintage market, many buyers want to see what they are coming to the shop to buy, so it is logical that this would be the case. One negative theme that was noted throughout this audit was the low like amounts in comparison to the follower count. It seems as though despite remaining active and switching up what is posted, these accounts can not gain high like amounts in comparison to their high follower count. Consistent across all of these accounts is the usage of hashtags, something Kindred Collections has begun to do. Without analytical data to show how these hashtags affect traffic, the highest level of interaction was seen on the account of Space Lancaster. The high levels of comments seem to cancel out the low like numbers.

It is important to remain active on the Instagram platform and to utilize the Highlights feature offered, as that was something seen across all of the accounts. The photos that were best for the viewer were those that were clear, edited nicely and use striking flat lays. It was also appealing to see the photo feed broken up with the occasional graphic, this was a technique used and makes the important information stand out to the viewer and adds interest. It is so easy to have a feed bogged down with the variety of items that can be available at this type of store, so curating purposeful content that spotlights and shows what is offered is ultimately the most important thing.

Appendix:

Figure 1:

@trellis_marketplace on Instagram

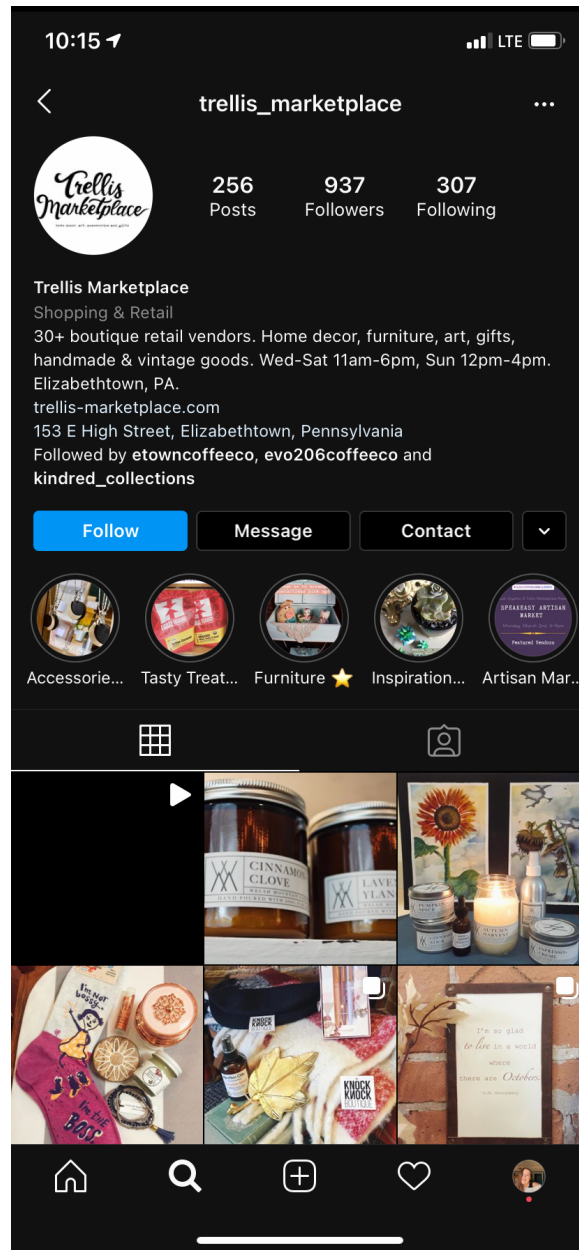


Figure 2:

@thescarletwillow on

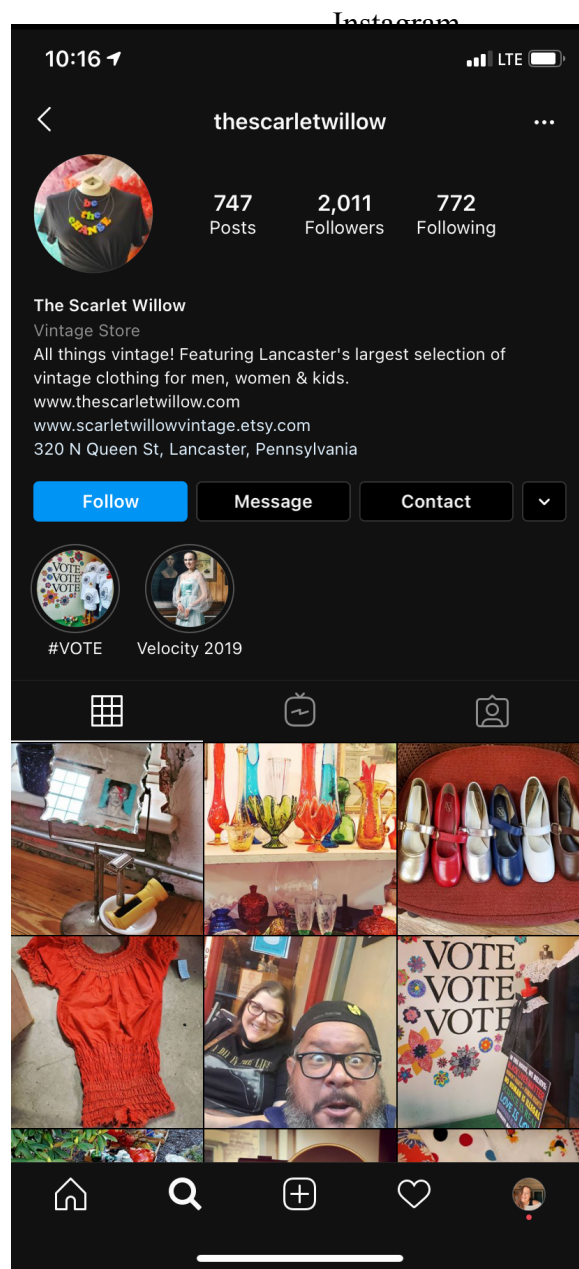


Figure 3 and 4:

@spacelancaster on Instagram

