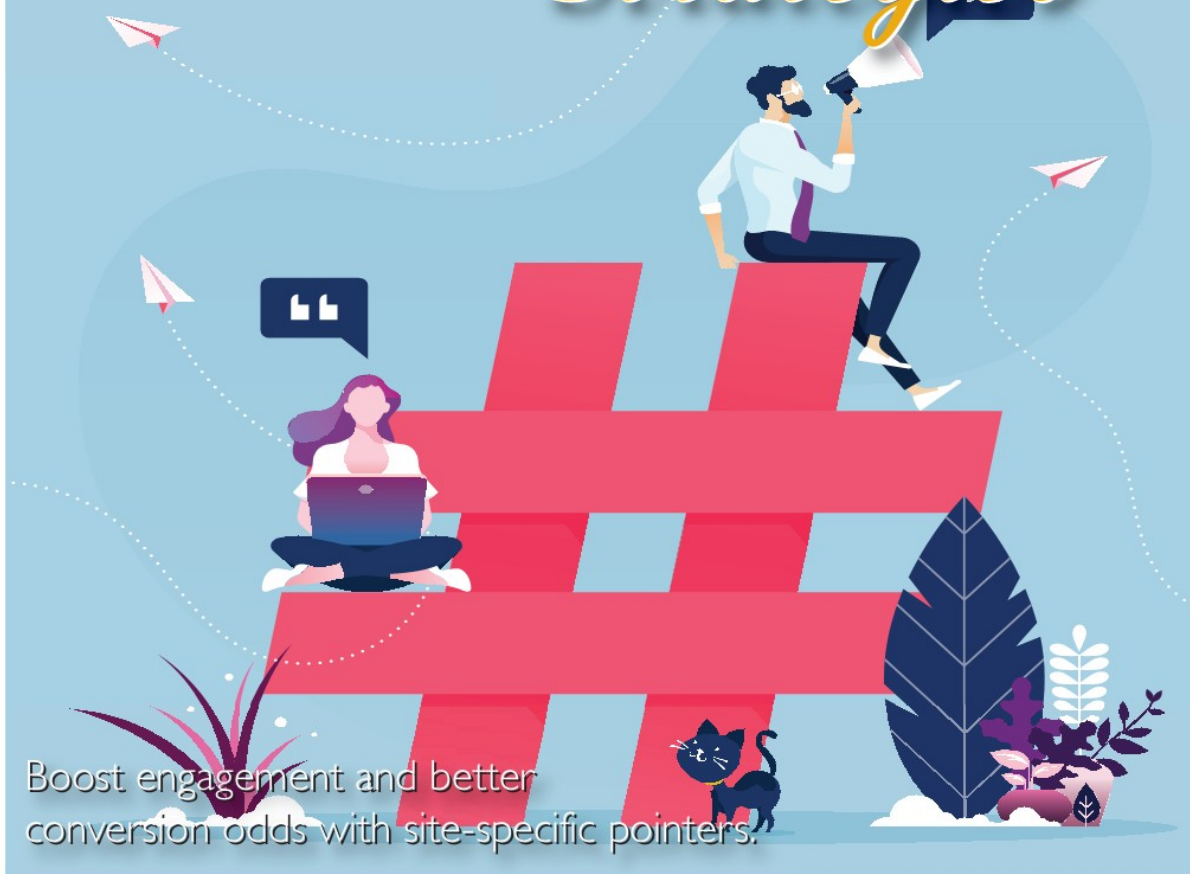


# #Hashtag Strategies



Boost engagement and better conversion odds with site-specific pointers.

**We all know** what a hashtag is: Type a # symbol in front of a keyword (or several) with no spaces, post to social media, and you've got a hashtag in action.

But are hashtags that important to your social success? Can they really generate leads, build engagement, develop customer loyalty, and convert social fans and followers into real sales?

The answer, in short, is yes. But you must understand strategy and context; after all, if you don't know what you're doing, hashtagging can feel a bit like throwing darts at a dart board, just hoping they hit the bullseye. So take charge! The

*Every boutique needs a brand-specific hashtag.*

following strategies can help boost your on-target odds, both in general and with specific sites.

#### **For ALL sites**

**Pick a hashtag that consistently brands your business.** Ideally, this will combine your business name or tagline with a location, such as #BellaBridesNewOrleans. If you use this hashtag on every post, it boosts brand recognition and al-

lows brides to pull up all of your prior posts in one click. Adding a location is important because it allows you to target your reach by geographic location. When people search for that city, your posts will appear.

**Do your research.** Find out what's popular, trending and already being used within your audience and industry leaders/influencers so you can decide which streams you want to engage with. Know what hashtags your competitors are using, too, including popular ones (e.g., #love) and specific (#trunkshowApril22bridal), as

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SCAN QR WITH PHONE CAMERA



limited area available,  
please check for eligibility





The original, super streamlined caption posted by @weddingstudiocarmel includes only one strong hashtag #remigown. But in a new comment added by the store, a long list of various hashtags build reach without detracting from the post.



Satin Hanger gets it right by making sure its posts include its branded hashtag, #satinhanger, plus a regional one, #springfieldnebraska. The hashtag #nationalsaleevent makes it clear this bride said yes at said sale.

*The name of the success game? Mix it up!*

they might be tied to a specific event you don't want to accidentally replicate. Not sure what's trending today? Google it! No surprise, #love is No. 1!

**Use new hashtags, and often.** Don't just copy and paste the same hashtags in every post – this will limit your reach and potentially flag you as SPAM (which would result in being penalized by platform algorithms). Rather switch things up from post to post to keep your current audience interested and engage new audiences as well. As a rule of thumb, you might save five different groupings of approximately 10 hashtags each that you can cut and paste between posts. Each time you do this, however, change out 2-3 hashtags with fresh ones. The only hashtag you want to consistently use in every post is your brand hashtag (e.g., #BellaBridesNewOrleans).

**Mix it up.** Post a variety of hashtags that have big, medium and small audiences to maximize potential views. One mistake many boutiques make is only sticking with the most popular hashtags, such as #weddingdress or #bride. The problem with this is these hashtags' audiences are so large – the former has 44.6M posts on Instagram, whereas the latter clocks in at 70.8M – that your post is almost certain to get immediately buried in the social-media sphere. That's not to say you should ignore them altogether – you never know who might see what! – but they should not make up the bulk

of your hashtags. Include hashtags with medium (100k-500k) and smaller-sized (below 100k) audiences to ensure your posts remain visible for longer periods of time.

**Know where to place (and hide!) them.** Hashtags are naturally distracting. Place them within a secondary area of content or at the end of a post. And if you'd rather hide them altogether, such as within a photo caption, create a comment and place them there.

**Use a hashtag calendar.** Get organized about what you're going to post and when. Look at your store and marketing calendars—what events are coming up? When new orders start to arrive, what new trends/looks can you plan to hashtag promote? When you plan out your hashtags, you can easily set up posts in advance and also cross-promote them, printing them on traditional media, on your website, in newsletters, ads and more.

**Mind activity and respond.** It may sound obvious, but when there's action around a hashtag, make sure you respond and engage. Pay attention to what's getting traction and show your human side by responding to people's comments, likes and responses. Real connection is what gets you in front of these audiences, providing the chance to educate, inspire, delight, help and invite, all of which can lead to real customers scheduling appointments and actually walking through your door. Above all, when that connection and engagement takes place, don't hold back when it comes to a call to action (CTA). If a bride is online

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A best Instagram practice: creating spaces between captions and hashtags to effectively “hide” hashtags from the main post. This **Bespoke Bride** post also got lots of likes and comments due to the wide variety of effective hashtags.



**Bridal and Formal Boutique House of Tux** has created an effective, branded tagline using the acronym that represents its store: #BeABFBride.

## Cater to each social site's unique algorithm.

and lovin' what you're suggesting, telling, or helping her with...encourage her to book an appointment today!

### Site-Specific Strategies

While all hashtaggers should follow the forementioned general best practices, each site has a unique algorithm that requires a targeted approach.

**Facebook:** no limit on the number of hashtags you can use.

**Tip #1:** Make sure your post containing hashtags is set to public. Hashtags don't work on private posts. Got old Facebook posts that are unnecessarily/accidentally private and lack hashtags? If they're still powerful and relevant, go back and make them public and add hashtags. Leverage what you've got!

**Tip #2:** Find popular hashtags in use by typing in the search bar (same as on Instagram). On the mobile Facebook app, Facebook will actually make suggestions for you once you start typing in the post. Remember to include a mix of popular and more niche hashtags. Popular = 1+ million, Niche = 100K or less.

**Tip #3:** Stick with three or four hashtags per post. No need to overdo it. Hashtags aren't quite as popular on Facebook as they are on other sites and should be used minimally. Think quality, not quantity here.

**TikTok:** No hashtag limit per se, but captions may only be 100 characters total.

**Tip #1:** Find relevant hashtags

via TikTok's Discover tab. This lists trending and popular hashtags; you can also consider using a third-party finder tool like TikTokHashtags.com, which gives you the number of overall posts and overall views, helping you make an informed hashtag choice.

**Tip #2:** Adapt those hot trends to bridal. For example, branded hashtag challenges and contests that are highly visual, like the "mannequin challenge," can translate to bridal with a "wedding dress challenge" or "cutest-ever flower girl challenge." Bottom line: play and have fun!

**Tip #3:** Learn TikTok 101. The three most popular hashtags on TikTok are #foryou #foryoupage and #fyp. All refer to what is essentially TikTok's homepage, dubbed the ForYou Page, which is a customized screen where a user is shown videos that TikTok thinks he/she will enjoy most based on previous interactions. If your video is shown on the FYF, it could become an instant hit and gain you a ton of followers, which is why so many people use this hashtag (and you should too!)

**Pinterest:** You get up to 20 hashtags per Pin (Although Pinterest recommends only using a few).

**Tip #1:** Understand that it's different. Expect to find hashtags in Pin descriptions not clickable—they're not going to take you to any kind of feed or build a community of followers per se. They are basically interchangeable with keywords so have value from a searchability standpoint. So #BellaBridalNewOrleans would be no different than BellaBridal-NewOrleans as content within a Pin description. This is because

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 **Cherished Wedding Boutique Ltd** Yesterday at 4:31 AM · 🌐

Congratulations to our beautiful [#cherishedbride](#) Kerri who found her perfect dress with us this week ❤️❤️

It was a pleasure welcoming you all in to the boutique! We are super happy we had what you were looking for here at Cherished! That smile says it all!! You weren't expecting to find your dream dress but you did and it was truly perfect for you. Happy tears all around! Thank you for coming to Cherished for your dress and we look forward to seeing you back in the boutique soon ❤️❤️

[#bride](#) [#bridetobe](#) [#family](#) [#shesaidyes](#) [#dreamdress](#) [#sytttd](#)  
[#beautifulbride](#) [#weddingdressshopping](#) [#2022bride](#)  
[#shopboutique](#) [#mansfield](#) [#eastmidlandsbride](#)  
[#whenyouknowyouknow](#) [#findyourdreamdress](#) [#eastmidlands](#)  
[#cherishedfamily](#) [#ivebeencherished](#) ❤️❤️

Cherished Wedding Boutique Ltd. connects with 17 very different communities through various hashtags, everything from family to bridal shopping to the East Midlands region of the United Kingdom.

## Minimize Pinterest hashtags; go big on Instagram!

Pinterest has moved away from outright encouraging hashtags and takes the stance they're optional. They're not super functional apart from their searchability and the fact that they tie to your macro hashtag strategy, communicate aspects about your brand values, offerings, events, etc. Think of them as mini-advertisements and search aids that push people toward your brand.

**Tip #2:** Think New! As of April 2021, you get hashtag suggestions only one way...by creating a New Pin in the mobile app. (The hashtag suggestion feature is not on the desktop version.) On the mobile version, type a hashtag into the search feature and suggestions and their number of pins pop up.

**Tip #3:** Offer variety. Use your personally branded hashtag plus niche hashtags. With this social media, specificity helps but don't go overboard with detail.

**Instagram:** You can include up to 30 hashtags per regular post and up to 10 per Story.

**Tip #1:** Go big! Instagram encourages large-scale hashtag usage; it's common to see 20 or more in a single post. This increases your odds of being seen by browsers and makes it easier to spot trends, patterns, etc.

**Tip #2:** Be bashful. Hashtags can undermine the power of beautiful pictures and compelling words. You can "hide" them by creating a comment under the post and putting the hashtags in the comment. Or, create a lot of space between the main content and where you eventually put

### Be brief and powerful on Twitter: 1-3 hashtags max.

your hashtag list. In Stories, you can shrink hashtags, make them transparent (so not as visible) or put an emoji over them.

**Tip #3:** Try Instagram's Related Hashtag feature. This will allow you to discover trending niche hashtags that can get you fresh exposure to people who are really wanting something specific that you offer. For example, you might find hashtags like #COVIDbrides or #WeddingDressStains or #ModestWeddingGowns.

**Twitter:** No hashtag limit per se, but you only get 280 characters total.

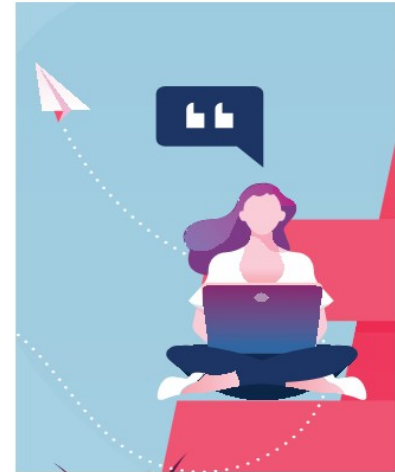
**Tip #1:** Focus on quality, not quantity. Twitter was the first platform to officially adopt the hashtag in 2009, and its power is in its brevity. One to three strategic hashtags will do, focused on news, events and announcements. Think

breaking news bar: Get out what's important, punchy and impactful (e.g., #BridalSaleNovember21, #MonCheriDressesArrived).

**Tip #2:** Do your research. Because you're using minimal hashtags, make sure you've got the ones you want. Check what is trending and search any hashtags you are considering using to make sure they don't have an alternate, unintended meaning. With no edit button, your margin for error is small.

**Tip #3:** Host a Twitter Chat. Set a time and date when you'll be live on Twitter about a particular topic, and create a specific hashtag to promote it. During the chat, tweet out each question or fact using this hashtag, and respond to

any comments you receive in real-time. It's a great way to earn credibility, connect with leads, and invite people to your store to experience your service and solutions. You can even invite guest Tweeters (designers, sales reps, manufactures, etc.) to leverage multiple audiences and their followers.



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