How to Increase the Library’s Impact on Instagram

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A LIBRARY FOR ALL

HELSINKI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IS THE LARGEST UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN FINLAND.

WE PROVIDE SERVICES TO AN INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC COMMUNITY OF MORE THAN 50,000 STUDENTS AND STAFF ON FOUR CAMPUSES AND ONLINE.
LIBRARY ON 4 CAMPUSSES AND ONLINE

MAIN LIBRARY
KAISA HOUSE

CAMPUS LIBRARY
IN KUMPULA

CAMPUS LIBRARY
IN MEILAHTI

CAMPUS LIBRARY
IN VIIKKI

ALEKSANDRIA
THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

“This is an Instagrammer’s dream” – travel YouTuber @JenniferOBrien in a video “Helsinki Kaisa University Library Architecture Tour” from 2018.
THE SOCIAL MEDIA CONCEPTS AT THE LIBRARY

Instagram @helunilib: Focus on producing content about library services and events specifically aimed at @universityofhelsinki students.

X (formerly Twitter) @HULib: Focus on promoting open science (in Finland and internationally) & engaging with @helsinkiuni research communities.

Facebook @hulib: Focus on the patrons using the library facilities.
Respondents to the survey were people aged 13-29 living in Finland.

A total of 2,653 respondents from all over Finland participated in the survey.

The survey data was collected through an online questionnaire between February and March 2022.
WHY ARE WE ON INSTAGRAM?

- Engagement with the target audience
- Promoting the library
- Collaboration
- Building community
THE LIBRARY INSTAGRAM CONCEPT

The library tone of voice
Immediate, approachable, a "library is nice" vibe

Instagram stories
Student-focused 24-hour content about library services and resources, series: tips&hacks, Q&A, "A day on campus", highlights pinned on account profile page.

Instagram feed
"A visual showcase for the library", aiming for an eye-catching and interesting images/videos that attracts visitors to the space. Bring new audiences to the stories as well.
The account has 2000+ followers (October 2023).
WHAT DOES AN INSTAGRAM TAKEOVER MEAN?

• Instagram takeover means taking over someone else's Instagram account for a certain period of time, for example, for 24 hours.

• During the takeover, the Instagram account is used to create original content such as photos, videos and possibly live streams.

• Takeovers are a popular way of interacting on Instagram. The visitor can get new views (and possibly new followers) for the content they create.

• Instagram account @helunilib 2000+ followers versus @universityofhelsinki 43 000+ followers!

• If you are visiting someone else's account, remember to tag your own account to gain traffic for your account too!
The library joined Instagram in 2014.

The library took over the university’s main account first time in 2019.

The takeover helped the university to promote our library as a visitor attraction that is open for the general public.
RESULTS OF THE TAKEOVER IN 2022

- The library took over the @universityofhelsinki account as a part of a campaign (Ask me!)
- The first story was viewed by 2751 unique users
- The feed post announcing the takeover received 483 likes
- The library's account @helunilib gained more than 30 new followers in less than a day

Examples of feed posts and stories during the takeover in 2022 on the university’s main Instagram account. The students were able to ask questions about the library and the library team answered them.
In 2020 the students representatives introduced themselves on the library account.

In 2022 the students representatives on Viikki campus took over the library account for 24 hours.
WHY ARE WE MAKING INSTAGRAM REELS?

TikTok has gained popularity with short-form video content and audio-based clips, and Instagram reels is Instagram's response to the trend.

By creating reels, you show that you are keeping up with current social media trends and staying relevant in the eyes of your followers.

Taking advantage of this feature can boost your visibility and increase the chances of your content being discovered.
REEL EXAMPLE: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE LIBRARY?

• In March 2022, the library promoted its online customer survey with a Instagram reel, in which students told what they think about the library
• The video was viewed by 1642 users
The ghost reel was published on our library account in October 2022 and has received 78 likes.

The video has been viewed by 3214 unique users, which is more than we have followers!

The video received 78 likes and was still watched many weeks after it was posted.

Reasons for popularity: ghost theme, posting time in autumn and #darkacademia
HOW TO INCREASE VISIBILITY?

- Takeovers
- Trends, such as reels
- Relevant content
- Interactive elements in stories
- Tag and mention others
CONCLUSIONS

1. Stay relevant and embrace trends

Social media changes quickly. Explore elements such as reels and takeovers. Students may be using Instagram now, but it can change in the future. Don’t only relay solely on one platform.

2. Make content for people, not for algorithms

Make content to engage with your target audience in a meaningful way. Build interactions and foster connections rather than chasing ever-changing algorithms.

3. Don’t just post randomly, but be strategic

You are not able to do everything so it is important to prioritize what you do in social media. Define your social media goals and objectives.
THANK YOU!

#HULIB

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