



MOORE THAN SEO  
*Social Media Done Right™*

# THE #HASHTAG GUIDE

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## HASHTAG

Merriam-Webster Definition:

A word or phrase preceded by the symbol # that classifies or categorizes the accompanying text (such as a tweet).

The hashtag has been around for many years, but is often misunderstood by many. Forget everything you think you know about this little symbol, and understand that the "#" has a lot of power to help businesses locate and participate in real-time conversations through social media. What began as a classification method in Twitter has expanded to perform a similar function in a growing range of social media networks. Today, the hashtag is used in some fashion by networks like Twitter, Instagram, Google Plus, Pinterest, Facebook, and even LinkedIn.

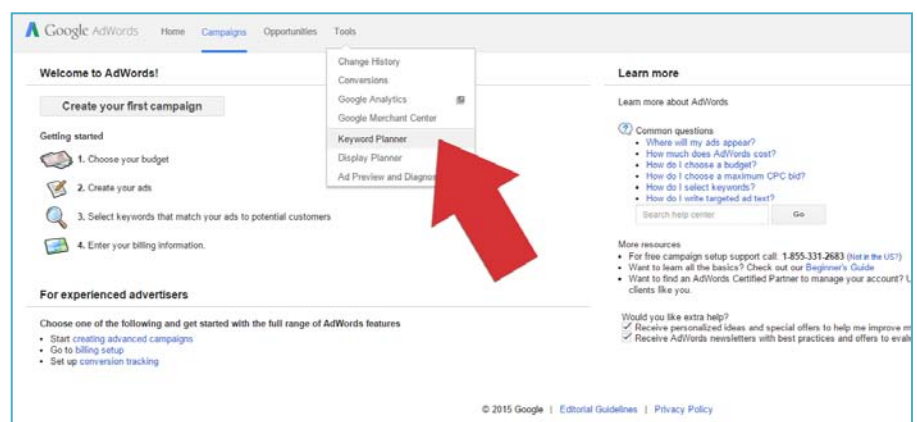
### Hashtags - The Big Picture

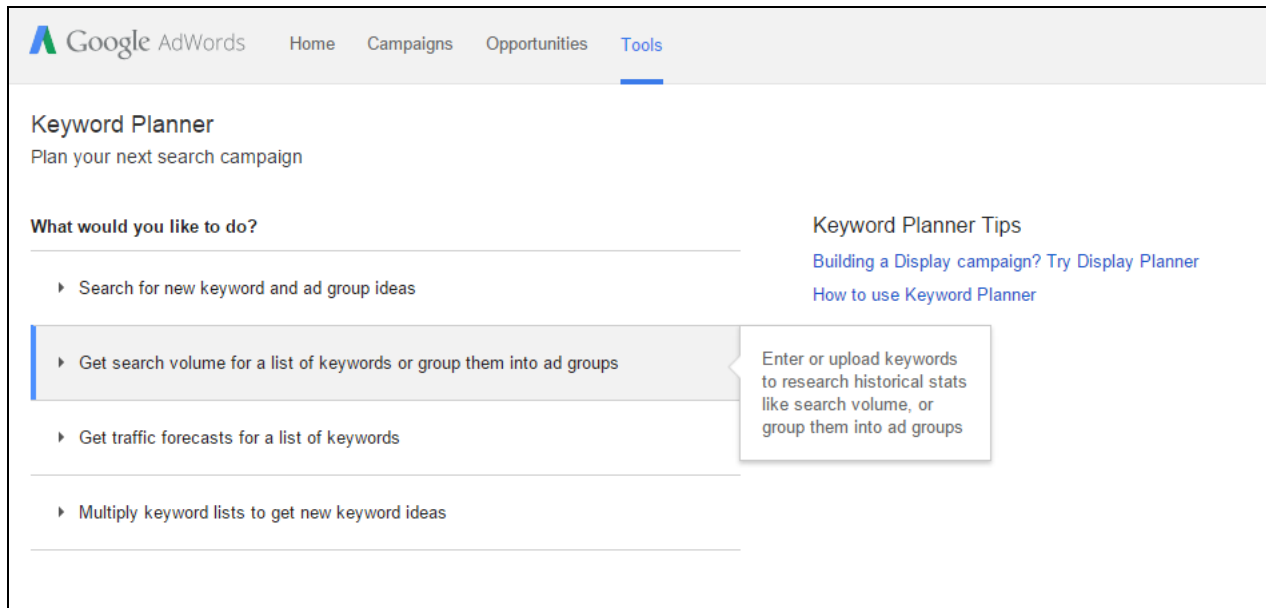
The most important aspect of understanding the hashtag is in the notion that using these terms strategically in social media posts will enable your company to jump into a meaningful conversation. Some businesses also use hashtags to collectively group online conversations about an event - think trade show, major holiday, or entertainment (#Oscars). High traffic hashtags will also help you to find posts within a specific geographical region. For example, if you live in Fresno, California, you might choose to search #Fresno on Instagram to see what's going on locally. Once you understand this basic idea, it's just a matter of learning the technical details and how to research to find the best target keywords & phrases.

### Deciding On The Right Keywords & Phrases

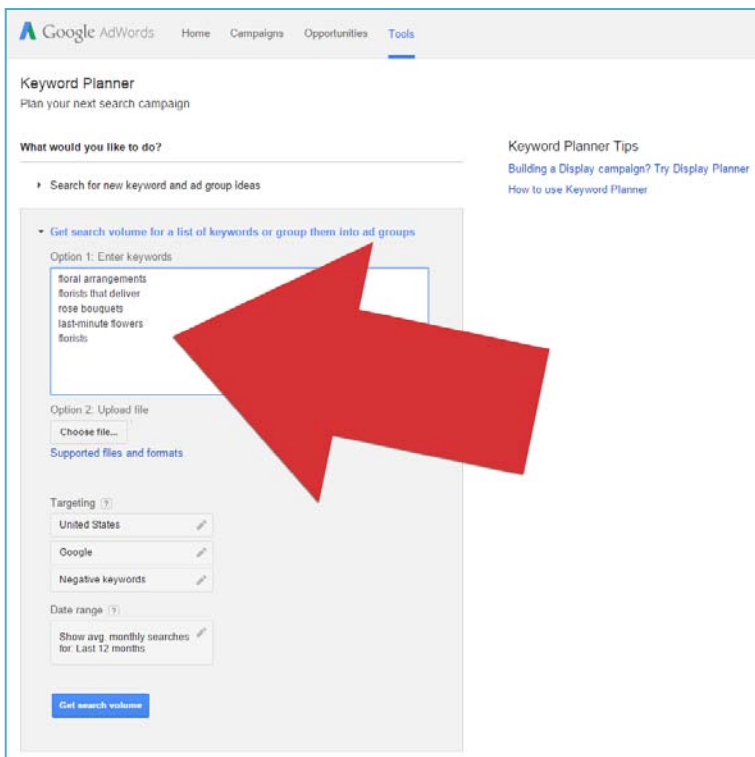
More and more people are including hashtags in their social media posts. However, most tend to use this as an additional form of expression - rather than a strategic marketing keyword. To get the most out of your business hashtag use, you'll need to know how to research keyword phrase ideas for search traffic performance and competition. Too many companies rely on their own perception of how an individual might search for them on Google. After well over a decade of digital marketing, we can assure that your prospect will surprise you. It's easy to check keyword potential on Google AdWords and every business owner should give this a try. Let's take it for a spin together, type [www.adwords.google.com](http://www.adwords.google.com) into your web browser. Once you arrive at the Welcome Screen, click on Tools/Keyword Planner.

Your screen should refresh, providing you with options to consider when using the Keyword Planner. Since you're going to be relying on data to make some decision, select the second choice, "Get search volume for a list of keywords or group them into ad groups."



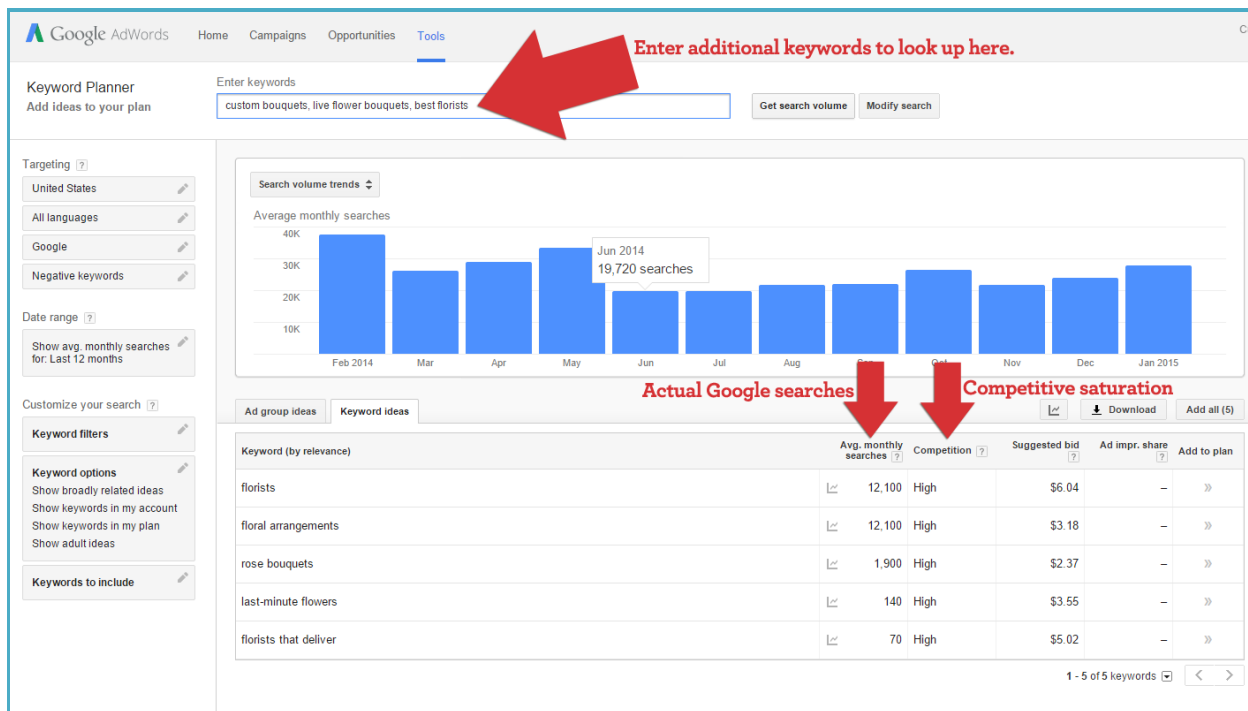


Type in some keyword & phrase ideas in the section marked, "Option 1: Enter keywords." Enter a range of ideas here, then click on the Get search volume button at the bottom of the screen.



The data results will display at the bottom of the screen on the "Keyword ideas" tab. You can search additional keyword ideas by entering them in the search box above the bar graph. Enter more than one by separating with a comma.

The goal in developing good marketing keywords is to identify search terms & phrases that yield a good volume of search traffic with low competition. Brainstorm to develop a good list of phrases to research & check the results in the AdWords Keyword Planner. If you find that a specific keyword provides 0 monthly search volume, then you know it's not worthwhile to pursue. Work to develop a growing list of target SEO (search engine optimization) keywords for your business. You'll use



some of the intel gained here to guide your hashtag decisions in the future. And, now you have a better idea of how prospects really search for your business. Google data rarely lies, so this is a solid way to qualify ideas that shape your web presence's overall reach. Once you know your power keywords, you'll want to integrate them into your process - in social media posts, blog articles, and more. Remember to use keywords wisely - using them only when relevant and working to ensure the writing still flows. You don't want to begin simply stuffing and cramming these into everything willy nilly, but using them strategically will help to position and shape Google's perception of your business services or products.

### ***Hashtags...Similar to SEO Keywords, But Different***

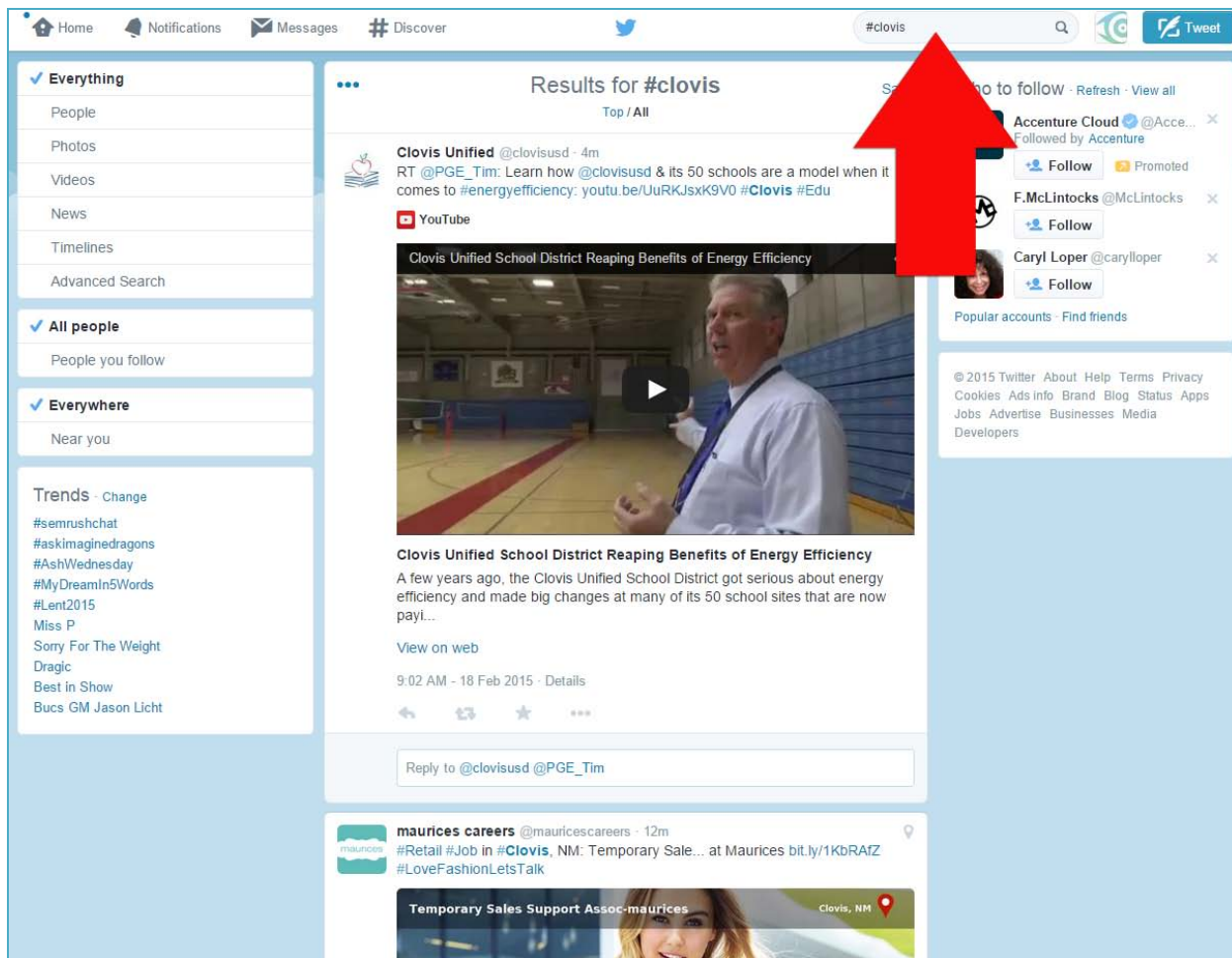
Although it's good practice to understand how to access and interpret Google AdWords data for search marketing keyword decisions, the information gleaned from this research may not always apply directly to a hashtag's anticipated performance. The power of this symbol is that it has the ability to develop its own momentum, if enough conversations relate & make use of a particular hashtag. So, when considering hashtags for business marketing, you'll need to cross-reference the AdWords data result with various hashtag searches in Twitter, Instagram, & Google. Another great tool for evaluating hashtag potential is [www.hashtagify.me](http://www.hashtagify.me)

### ***Creating Hashtags - Basic Rules***

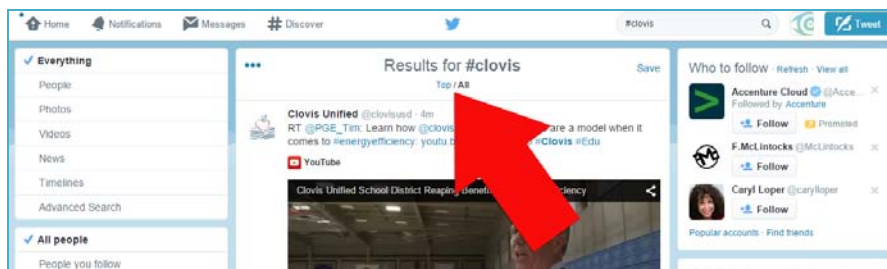
On most platforms, hashtags are only permitted to include numbers, letters, and the underscore symbol. Other symbols, including spaces, are not allowed. Try to keep your hashtags brief and don't share too many in a single post - save for Instagram, where using more hashtags seems to help drive engagement, rather than reducing it.

### ***Hashtags on Twitter***

Twitter is the original home of hashtags and a place where their use is still thriving today. To search a hashtag for potential, simply enter "#anything" in the search bar located at the top-right of the Twitter screen.



The results for any entered hashtag will display in the resulting feed, located in the middle of the Twitter screen. In the example pictured above, we have searched the location hashtag #Clovis.

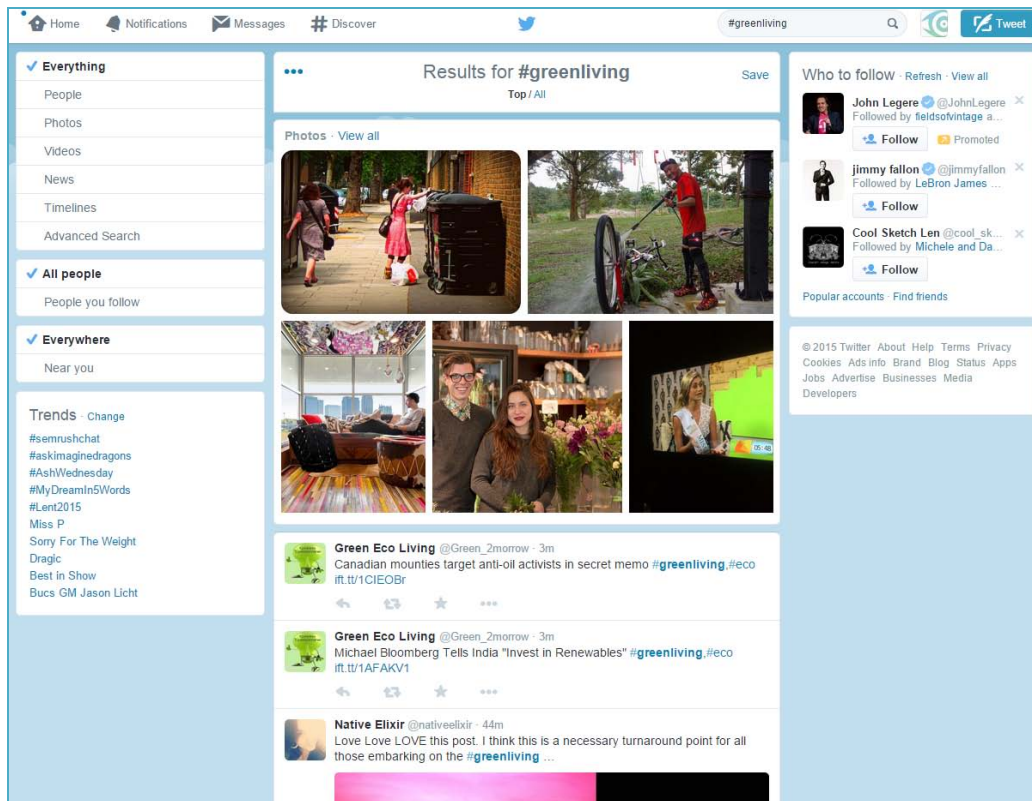


You can change the setting for featured results to display all related tweets or simply the top related tweets. Be sure to evaluate the stream of information to determine if a hashtag has frequent use and appeal. If you search for something that displays no results or very outdated results, you may not wish to use that hashtag.

Let's check another hashtag on Twitter to determine its marketing potential. This time we'll search for #greenliving to see what turns up. The results of this search appear to be very favorable. #Greenliving is used frequently and would make sense for a business focused on green, organic, and eco-friendly products or services.

It's important to limit the overall use of hashtags in individual tweets. We recommend using only 2 to 3 hashtags maximum in an individual tweet. The more hashtags used, the more engagement may be reduced on Twitter. It's a

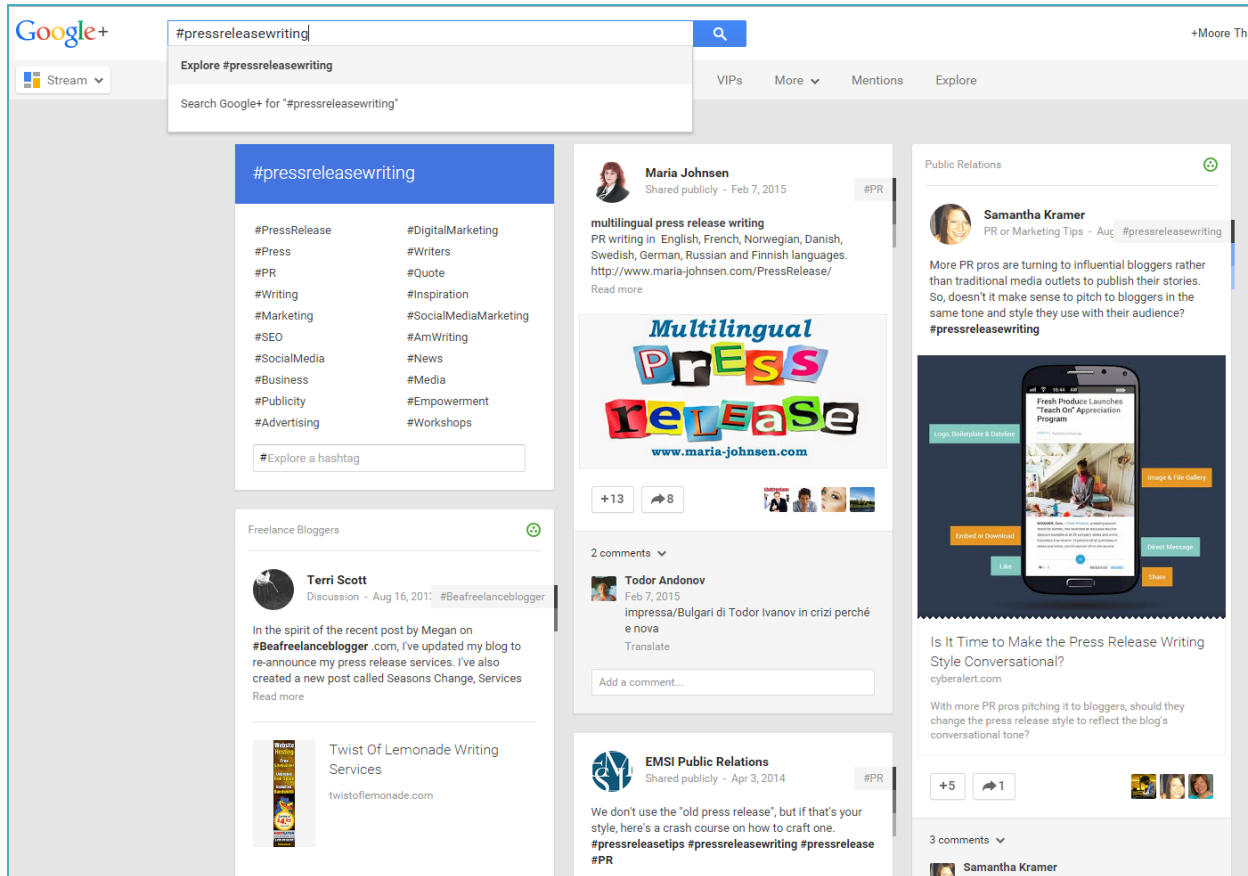
balancing act to integrate just enough hashtags for new exposure opportunity while keeping the overall tweet size manageable enough to accommodate re-tweets.





## Hashtags on Google Plus

Hashtag use is also widely encouraged on Google Plus. In fact, this platform will often suggest hashtags when writing a post. To search for posts related to a particular hashtag, simply enter that term in the Google Plus search bar (top-left) of screen.



You'll want to evaluate the results for future useability based on relevance and how current the related posts are for each hashtag searched in this manner. You can also filter the results to display "All" posts - or restrict those displayed to accounts you follow. When reviewing the potential of various hashtags, you will likely want to make certain you've specified "All" for the purest stream of information.

When creating a post on Google Plus, you have the option of allowing this platform to auto-hashtag or specify terms you believe important. For the best control, we prefer typing in our own, preferred hashtags for maximum control.

More general marketing hashtags tend to do better on Google than those geared towards specific events and locations. Additionally, Google Plus hashtag search results are most often displayed and ranked by popularity.

Google Plus is also an excellent place to brainstorm ideas for new hashtags to use in your content development and marketing. Simply search for any hashtag to see a quick list of relevant, top ranking choices.

It's important to note that you can add hashtags in comments as well as posts on Google Plus. This nearly doubles your opportunities for being found.

#socialmedia	#Greenliving
#SocialMediaMarketing	#Green
#Marketing	#Ecofriendly
#Social	#GoGreen
#SocialMediaTips	#Eco
#Twitter	#Sustainability
#Facebook	#Environment
#DigitalMarketing	#Energy
#ContentMarketing	#Sustainable
#Business	#Solar
#socialmediastrategy	#Cleaning
#SEO	#SustainableLiving
#Blogging	#SolarEnergy
#Advertising	#Recycle
#Instagram	#RECYCLING
#Tips	#Renewableenergy
#Strategy	#GreenBuilding
#OnlineMarketing	#HealthyLiving
#SMM	#SolarPower
#SmallBiz	#Natural
#SmallBusiness	#EnvironmentallyFrien...
#Explore a hashtag	#Explore a hashtag

## Hashtags on Facebook

There may be less people searching for hashtags on Facebook than Twitter, but there is still great value in making use of this unique digital marketing tool - especially when promoting an event. As more sharing from Instagram to Facebook occurs, it is very likely that hashtag adoption on Facebook will continue to grow.

For a fast search of any hashtag, simply enter [www.facebook.com/hashtag/XXXXX](http://www.facebook.com/hashtag/XXXXX) in your browser address window. (Replacing the X's with a hashtag of your choice, of course.)

Using hashtags in posts on Facebook provides an increased means for exposure to new users and audiences that may have an interest. Some users may decide to click-through hashtags of interest - discovering new, relevant content and pages to follow.

For even more exposure, try working hashtags into the occasional comment in addition to posts on a business page. This increases the chances for your business page to be exposed to new Facebook users and may help to generate new interest in your content long-term.

## Hashtags on Instagram

Hashtags on Instagram are a critical component of discovery on this social media platform. Posts with more hashtags tend to generate increased interest and engagement. This is the exact opposite of other social networks where less hashtag use generally results in better interaction. It's possible to include up to 30 hashtags on a single Instagram post. It's even possible to tag an image after posting - if you add this information to the comments.

This method of categorizing information has become so common on the Instagram platform that there are a wide range of themed hashtag games that perform well, like #TBT, #ManicMonday, or #OneWord. In fact, if you spend some time exploring, you'll likely find a popular hashtag for every day of the week.

Location-based hashtags work very well on Instagram and many locals regularly browse these feeds when deciding what events, restaurants, and more they would like to visit during an upcoming weekend.

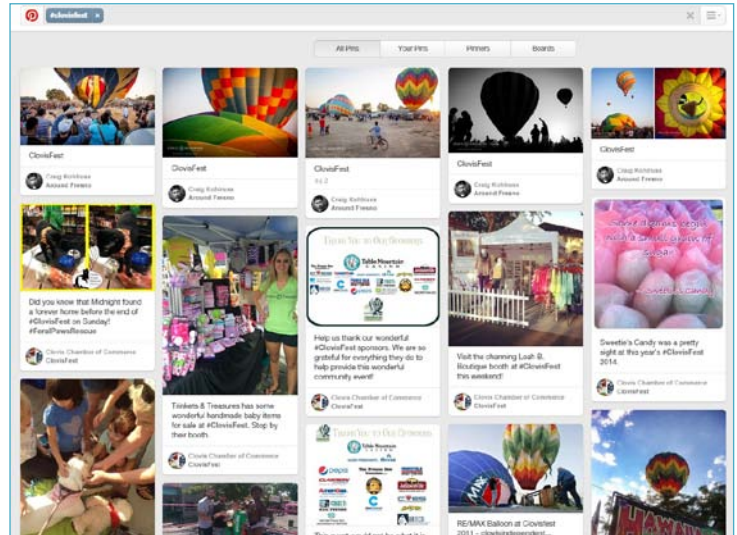


If you're not an adept mobile user, you may be a bit more put off by Instagram. However, depending on your target audience, industry, or product/service it may be a place that is full of marketing potential that you are totally missing. If you would prefer to conduct some of these searches on a desktop, rather than a smart phone, visit [www.websta.me](http://www.websta.me) for a fantastic, free Instagram web viewer.

## Hashtags on Pinterest

Pinterest is another social media network that provides functionality for hashtag use. It's possible to search hashtags by all pins, your pins, pinners, and boards when typing #hashtag in the primary search bar.

Hashtags on Pinterest do best when focused on relevant marketing or industry terms, as well as official events or holidays. For example, the Clovis Chamber of Commerce wanted to help enhance the outreach of vendors participating in ClovisFest 2014. A quick search on #ClovisFest reveals a large number of pins surrounding this event.



You can even include hashtags in board descriptions, which makes it very easy for new users to find accounts & boards to follow. The rules on Pinterest are very similar to all other social media networks.

## Get Help From Experienced Social Media Experts

Craft your own content marketing program to maximize brand awareness and social selling potential. Moore Than SEO gets to know your company as well as its goals and target audiences. Our team develops a marketing strategy and plan that's based on reputable data and analytic thinking to help you better connect with prospects. We develop the content, create corresponding visual graphics, then execute and manage your brand's digital presence with professionalism & good ethics. Contact us to discuss how we might help your business at (559) 978-4096 or email us at <mailto:info@moorethanseo.com>.

