

(HOW TO) communicate with staff

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**Business**

# Startup

## LIGHTING THE WAY

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MAKING HOMEWARE  
SUSTAINABLE WITH  
THE URBAN YOGI

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ON A MISSION TO  
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*plus!*

A BEGINNER'S  
GUIDE TO  
COLOUR  
PSYCHOLOGY

How the founders of  
candle shop Hooof  
hope to set a shining  
example for the UAE's  
entrepreneurs

EVERY ISSUE

*The  
Socialite*

MAKING HASHTAGS  
WORK FOR YOU

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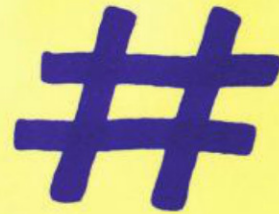
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# HASHTAGS IN BUSINESS: A how to guide

HASHTAGS HAVE BECOME A CRITICAL WAY TO COMMUNICATE AND LINK INFORMATION EVERYWHERE FROM PINTEREST, TO FACEBOOK AND TWITTER. MILA ARAUJO DEMYSTIFIES HASHTAGS AND EXPLAINS HOW BUSINESS CAN BECOME MORE EFFICIENT BY USING THEM.

## **H**ashtag explanation made easy

Let's face it, hashtags are throwing business people off. The best way I can explain a hashtag is that it is a critical way of grouping information together, almost like a file folder.

If you opened your filing cabinet and wanted to find everything about dogs, you would click on #dogs. But the search results might be too large. So, you might then want to create a new hashtag or find one in use that specifies the type of dog, for example #JRT, #JackRussell, or even #Puppy.

The cool thing about hashtags is that you can combine them,

so if you put all of the above in one tweet, or post on Facebook, you will be indexed in with the related items in all three categories.

## **How do you use a hashtag for business?**

First, you need to identify where your posts or subject fits in. Chances are there is already a hashtag being used for your area of communication.

Find someone who is already active in your field, and then see what hashtags they are using. If you see one you like, click on it. A new list will open in your Twitter, or Facebook or Google+ that will only include all posts with the given hashtag.

Look at the other hashtags being used as well.

Create a list for yourself of hashtags that you would be a part of, and start using them.

## **Why are hashtags important?**

The beauty of a hashtag is that it brings you into the communication lines of people you don't know.

When you post without hashtags, you access the people you already know. But when you use hashtags, you get the following benefits:

- You make your information searchable by anyone
- You appear in the stream of the hashtag in question
- You meet new people

- You find new resources
- You discover new opportunities
- You help people keep track of your relevant posts
- Build an audience and community
- Cut through the clutter

Hashtags also help people sort through a series of posts to zoom in on what is important to them. For example, if you go to my instagram page, you will find photos of soccer, food, scenery, and business.

Let's say you only care about pictures of my puppy. Well, you'll click on the custom hashtag and you will just see the results from the photos I tagged with my custom hashtag. Custom hashtags make it easy for people to get through all the junk out there. Whether it be on one page, or throughout the social networks.

In business for example, I can create a hashtag for insurance, but what will make it easier for people looking to save money on home



▲ Searching other hashtags will help you establish your own.

**"Share the hashtag with valuable and relevant information."**

insurance is if I tag a series of posts #Home #Insurance #savings or #homesavings combined with #insurance. Starting to see the possibilities?


#### **Number one rule for hashtags & brands: Be consistent**

Sometimes you can use a hashtag, and then no one else uses it. So you can get discouraged and think, I won't use this anymore. Don't do that. If your hashtag is well thought out, and you want it to stick, keep using it. Everything takes time. Be patient, keep posting items with your hashtag.

#### **Introduce others to your hashtag by sharing their posts using your hashtag**

For example, let's say you find an article that is hashtagged and it is in an area that your own readers (or prospective readers) would find interesting

Share the post keeping the original hashtags and originators identity (don't delete the source – that's poor etiquette). And add on your hashtags.

People who find the article interesting in the original group may also notice the additional hashtags added, and click through to see what's going on there. They may not check out the other hashtags at first, but eventually if they see the hashtags often enough they will investigate. If they like what they find, or want to contribute to those "files", then they may adopt the hashtags. Don't give up, be consistent, share the hashtag with valuable and relevant information and people will start to join you in your "hashtag community" 

#### ► About the author:

Focused on leadership, branding, employee engagement, non-profit and social media policy, Mila Araujo is often cited and speaks at events and conferences. She contributes to a number of internet sites, including Social Media Today, Business 2 Community, 12 Most, Grow, The Online SafeHouse, and maintains her own blog, Perspectives. She is currently working on a book social on media policy.