Instagram Reels

Link to digital tool	https://www.instagram.com/
Level of knowledge	Intermediate
Learning objectives	LO1: Be able to create, design and implement relevant contents (non-conventional city tours) through relevant channels. LO2: Be familiar with the concepts, tools, and strategies of gamification and storytelling, and apply them to content creation. LO3: Identify and use different communication strategies according to the specific engagement target.

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Linked to module	3, 4, 5
Description of the tool	**Instagram Reels** are a free feature on the Instagram app that you can use from mobile devices such as a smartphone or tablet. With Reels, you can record and edit short videos up to 60 seconds; add music, effects and voiceovers to the clips you record; manage who can see your reels or use your audio; and discover creators on Instagram. They are very similar to TikTok video formats, however, they can also be combined in your profile with many other features of the Instagram app, such as stories, longer videos and photos, while currently TikTok is mostly focused on contents built on that kind of shorter format. There are plenty of tutorials on how to get the most out of Instagram Reels online, and basic instructions can be found on the Instagram platform itself.

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How to use the tool as part of the course	For our purpose of Storytelling and Engagement of the public, Instagram Reels are extraordinarily engaging and can boost your virtual urban tours. **For Storytelling** 0) Whether you choose to have a dedicated Instagram account or use your own personal account, you can easily create Reels about virtual urban tours and collect them into the Reels section of your profile. To get the most out of it, and according to our purpose of creating a virtual urban tour accessible to a wider audience, we suggest making sure that the profile you are posting on is set as public. 1) First of all, you have to choose what kind of "story" is behind the tour video, and how you want to tell it. You can do this following different approaches. According to the learning objectives of Module 3, our suggestions for organizing your virtual urban tour through Instagram Reels are:

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	- If the narrative behind your profile is to tell the story of a "user/ profile" that explores/travels/works in different locations, you will create one or more Reels related to a certain location. (i.e., organise them by neighbourhoods such as "Corviale Rome", "Ortica Milan", "Stoke Newington London" or topics: "discover", "to-do lists", "events of "...) - If the narrative of your profile is to tell the story of a "place/community", each Reel in your profile can be focused on single aspects of the specific location. The collection in this series will be composed of the chapters and sections of the whole virtual tour. The whole Instagram TV section of your profile will be considered the digital urban tour. (i.e., the profile name could be "DiscoverYourPlace" and each series may be "history of YourPlace", "traditions in YourPlace", "fun facts of YourPlace", etc.) Whatever your narrative is, **make sure to include a cover image with a headline showing the title as a graphic element**. This will allow your public to easily recognise the topics of your Reel among the

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dedicated section in your profile, as they will automatically be collected in chronological order. Currently there is no possibility to reorganise them.

For Engagement

In order to keep your niche engaged and to gain new audiences, the main suggestion is to keep consistency within your content, in terms of both your topics and the regularity of your posts. It is also recommended to stay updated on formatting trends on the platform. To stay current on trends, you should check others' Reels in the Reel Feed that you can access from the central icon at the bottom of your screen, or from the explore section that you can access touching the lens icon at the bottom of your screen.

Furthermore, due to the strong similarities between Reels and TikTok, you can also check on TikTok to stay updated on new trends.

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	Other aspects you should consider including in your story to keep a good rate of engagement could be: 1) **Incorporate relevant hashtags in your captions.** 2) **Incorporate audio tracks that are popular:** - You can find out popular audio tracks directly from the Reel Feed. While you are watching content, you can look at the audio track on the bottom left side of the screen: if there is an arrow going up next to the name of the track, that means that the visualisations of that track are growing as a trend. - If there is no arrow, click on the name or icon of the audio track, and you will be able to see then the number of visualisations for content created on that track. The higher the number you see, the higher the chances that if you use that audio track in your video, the content will engage more users.

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	3) Integrate special effects or filters that are popular: ● To find out popular filters, just as for the audio tracks, while you are watching content you can see if any filter or effect has been used because a tag with the name of the effect will be shown on top of the caption of the video. If you click on the tag, you will be able to see the number of visualisations for content created with that effect. The higher the number you see, the higher the chances that if you incorporate that element in your content, it will engage more users. 4) On top of that, **remember to include in your content both voiceover and written texts**, in order to be inclusive for people with auditive or visual disparities and to engage the wider public. You should think to include as often as possible: ● An engaging headline to catch the attention of the viewer at the beginning of your video content (technically a hook).

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	● A call to action to engage other users to take action at the end of the video. Here, you can get creative. You can invite them to read the caption for more information, follow your account for more tours, or to comment below the video and share their opinions, ideas, suggestions...You can also invite them to share their videos using a specific hashtag, you can engage them in Q&A sessions, inviting them to ask you questions, to which you will reply with further Reels or content.

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