



SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICE GUIDE FOR CAOS ARTISTS

**OR HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR WORK,
MAKE MORE MONEY AND HELP US
TO PROMOTE CAOS!**

By Kate Marsden

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THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

You may have decided that you do not like social media, you may have tried it before and given up because you did not see immediate results, but most of your existing and potential customers are there and it's (mostly) free to use. Some people spend A LOT of time there, and you want them to find you!

There is a school of thought that any artist who needs to promote their work has failed. This is not the case. If you are not using the power of social media to promote yourself other artists are, and your potential customers will never get the opportunity to see your work.

Used thoughtfully, social media enables you to build deep and lasting relationships with customers, the media and your peers. Most of the work I have obtained over the last few years has been as a result of direct or indirect interactions on social media. By way of example:

- We had hundreds of visitors to our Carshalton Artists' Fair in November – all of whom found us through the power of social media
- The most successful locations on the CAOS trail are those with artists who are active on social media
- Fairfield Halls contacted me after I posted an image of my Croydon design to Instagram and now my wallpaper features prominently in the foyer – I did not approach them

The image is a collage of three screenshots from social media and event management platforms.

Top Left Screenshot: Event Management Page
 This screenshot shows an event page for "Carshalton Artists Open Studios 2020". The main banner is purple with white text that reads "carshalton artists OPEN STUDIOS 27,28 june | 4,5 july 2020". Below the banner, there's a section for "JUN 27 Carshalton Artists Open Studios 2020" with details: "Public · Hosted by Carshalton Artists Open Studios · 2 co-hosts pending [?]". On the left, there's a sidebar with "Events", "Calendar", "Birthdays", "Discover", "Hosting", and a "+ Create Event" button. At the bottom, there's a "Tweet" button.

Top Right Screenshot: Insights Dashboard
 This screenshot shows an "INSIGHTS" dashboard. It features four main cards: "2.3K People reached +0 last 7 days", "75 Responses +0 last 7 days", "Track ticket sales" with an "Add ticket link" button, and "Audience" showing "Women 35-44 28% of total reach". There are also buttons for "Boost Event", "Share", "Edit", and "Promotions".

Bottom Screenshot: Twitter Profile
 This screenshot shows the Twitter profile of "Carshalton Artists" (@Carshalton_art). The profile has 562 tweets, 124 following, and 436 followers. The bio reads: "Visual Arts Networking & Carshalton Artists Open Studios (CAOS). Join us for CAOS 2020! 27,28 June & 4,5 July. For updates add your name to the mailing list...". A tweet is visible, mentioning "London Potters" and a "Great Pottery Throw Down" event.

- I sold my work at the Royal Academy after sharing it on Twitter
- I won Theo Paphitis' Small Business Sunday on Twitter
- My first ever commission came following an approach on Instagram
- Newspaper and magazine features (usually through Twitter)
- I was asked to do a radio interview and a podcast - both following conversations on Twitter
- LOTS of sales and commissions.

I have also met lots of people who have ended up becoming friends in real life. Social Media is a fantastic (and safe if like me you don't feel very comfortable with in person networking) way of building relationships which in turn has led to many opportunities.

THE JUST A CARD CAMPAIGN

The Just A Card campaign, which I volunteer for, has achieved almost everything through free social media and now we're working with stars of stage and screen!

The Just A Card campaign aims to encourage people to support, value and buy from artists, designers, independent shops and small businesses by reinforcing the message that all purchases, however small, even 'just a card' are so vital to their prosperity and survival.

Find out more at justacard.org

HOW CAN YOU HELP US TO PROMOTE CAOS?

And how does it benefit you? Promoting any event promotes you too. Every time you post you're promoting your own work, so don't view promoting an event like CAOS as something you're just doing for the benefit of others.

We will all be working very hard to promote the event and you can help us to do this very simply. Yes of course mention us frequently in your lovely shiny new social media posts, but also please like, comment and share ALL of our posts if you can – this will significantly increase our reach for free. If you all do this so many more people will see our message.

Making sure you are following us across all social media platforms goes without saying of course. So, that is the first thing you need to do...

Twitter

@Carshalton_art

Instagram

@carshaltonartists

Facebook

Carshalton Artists Open
Studios

Use the hashtag

#CAOSArt20



Follow our partners @suttonheritage @anssutton @cryerarts and your fellow artists – support each other.

If social media algorithms see that a post is proving popular they will show it to more people. This is how you see those posts with tens of thousands of likes. The more people who see CAOS popping up in their feeds, the more visitors we will get, and the more sales you will make. Easy.

But what about your customers elsewhere, I hear you ask? Well, posting regularly and seeing what you're doing will still encourage them to engage with you. Promoting the event helps you to sell whether people actually come to see you at CAOS or not.



DURING CAOS

Make sure all of your social media handles are on your business card and/other publicity materials and actively encourage people to follow you.

They may not be in the market for art at the time, but if they are following you on one of the social media platforms, and you are posting regularly, they will remember you when they are. I have received many local commissions this way.

Have a mailing list sign-up sheet. You can't harvest email addresses from the CAOS one (GDPR folks - see a link for more information at the end of this guide - it's very important!). Make it clear to people when and why you will email them and ensure that you are GDPR compliant.

Email marketing is THE BEST way to get sales in the long term - these people actually want you to contact them! Make the most of it.

KEY POINTS

- Follow us on all social media platforms
- Like, comment on and share our posts
- Use the hashtag #CAOSArt20
- Follow and engage with our partners and your fellow artists
- Share your social media handles on your business cards



PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE THEY KNOW, LIKE AND TRUST

In this guide I will focus on the three main social media platforms: Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. It can take a little time to work out where most of your people are, but it's wise to have some sort of a presence on all three – so if people search for you there they can easily find you.

The most important thing to remember with social media is that it's called **social** for a reason. If you want people to engage with you, you need to engage too. A great way to start doing this is to ensure you are following Carshalton Artists on all three social media platforms and start retweeting, sharing, liking and commenting – preferably on all of our posts.

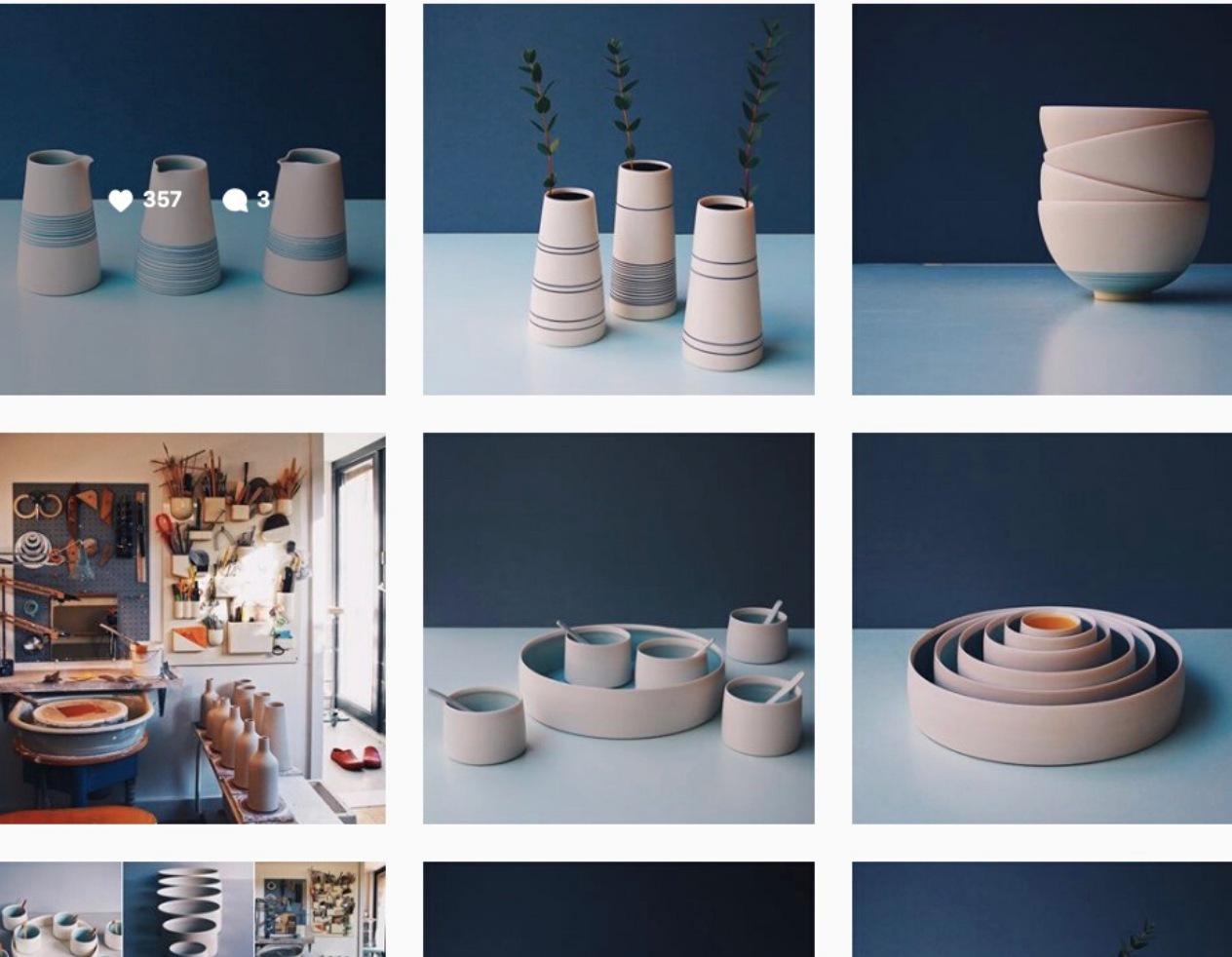
This increases our reach and shows the dreaded social media algorithms that you are active (and social). In turn this will help engagement for your own posts.

Second, you need to be consistent and turn up. Post regularly, ensure the images you post are consistent in content and look. Ideally you want people to know it was you who posted it before they read your name. I like to post to Instagram for example before 8am as that tends to result in the highest engagement, followed by 6pm when my audience are on the train or the bus home. If you play with it you will soon work out the best times to post, and each platform provides you with insights too. These will tell you when your audience is there, and when you'll just be shouting into the ether...

There isn't a magic formula (although, as I say, consistency is key). If you find that something isn't working change it but give it some time. Results are not immediate, and the mistake most people make is to give up too early because nothing seems to be happening.

I also recommend that you ensure that your work related feeds are for your work and only your work. Save the cat photos for your personal account. However, do show your face and share a little personal information (however much you are comfortable with). **People buy from people they know, like and trust.** They are less likely to buy from a stranger on the internet with no photo, or someone that they feel they know little or nothing about.

ARE YOU TOO BUSY FOR SOCIAL MEDIA?



If you're making so much money from your art that you really don't want or need to sell any more, then don't worry about social media (and well done!). If you're not and want to sell more you need to find the time – if you really care about it, you can find it.

One way to save time is to carefully curate your feeds – as in which accounts and people you are following. You need to follow a certain number of people (and interact with them), or social media really will not work for you.

But if politics (or cat videos) make you anxious, or distract you, or send you down a hole of reading multiple posts for hours, think about who you're following, or mute certain words (I did this before the general election and it was fantastic). By curating your feeds (especially on Twitter) you're also more likely to spot opportunities – perhaps an exhibition or event to apply for, or the person who's asking if anyone knows of an artist who does exactly that thing you do, or a press request for images of the thing you've produced images of.

You can help your chances of being featured in magazines, newspapers and on influential blogs by following the right journalists and bloggers (and liking and retweeting their posts) – and maybe they'll think of you for a feature or article – something that has happened for me lots of times.

Once you have reduced your feed to something manageable, you can also save time by linking your Instagram, Twitter and Facebook accounts so that one post automatically goes to all three. See the useful links at the end of this guide for more information about how to set this up.

Oh and keep on showing up so people don't forget that you exist!



TALKING ABOUT CONSISTENCY...

Try to ensure that you look consistent across all social media platforms too. Use the same profile picture and imagery – lots of people will end up following you on all three.

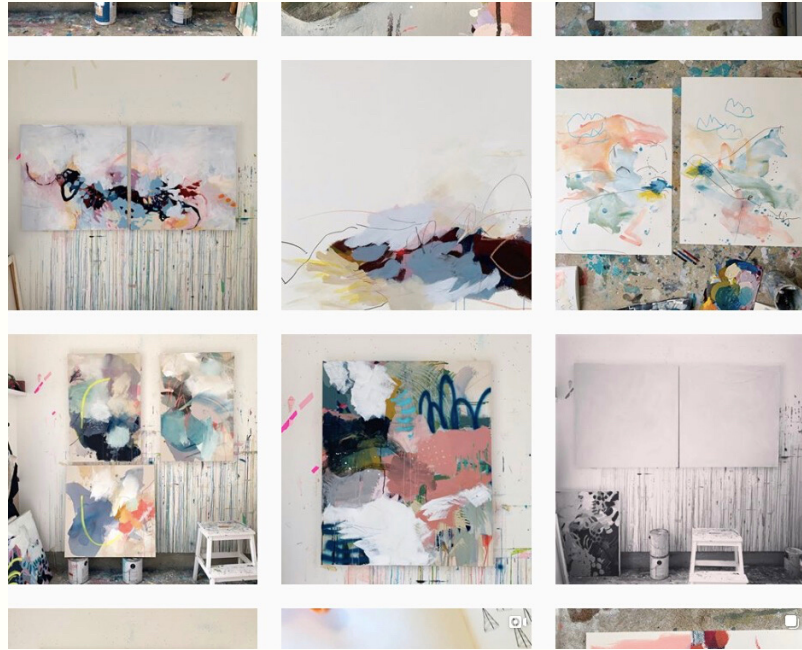
Think seriously about your bio – the word count you have varies across platforms but the tone and theme needs to remain the same. Think about what you want to say and what your priorities are and remember that bios appear in Google searches – what's the most important thing? Use your real name (people buy from people they know, like and trust) – don't hide away and do show your face.

Whenever possible also include a call to action (both in your bio and in your posts) – what do you want people to do? At the moment for CAOS I want people to join the mailing list (as email marketing is THE BEST) so it's currently in the bio. When my priority changes I'll change it.



TELL A STORY WITH YOUR POSTS

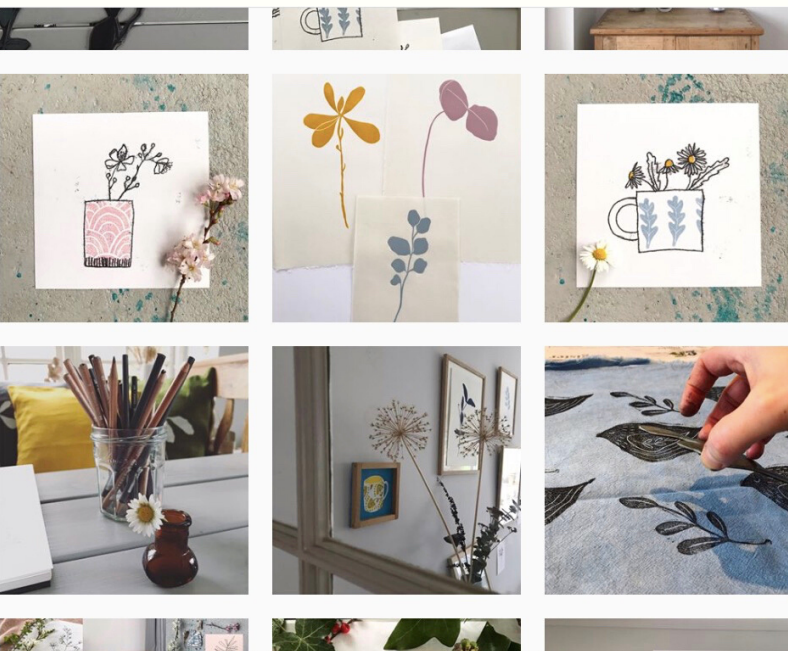
People love a good story. Even more so when they are considering handing over money for your art. Tell them what it is you do (no it isn't always obvious!), where you do it (doesn't need to be your home address, but rough location, home, studio wherever you work) and why.



@andreasooart

The **why** is really important. What does making art mean to you? Why do you do it?

What is it that makes you different, special and unique? How are you different from the other artists out there? What need do you fulfil for your customer? Get this message across in all of your posts if you can.



@kathyhuttonprints

Some really good examples of Instagram accounts which make me want to shop are:

Our very own Kathryn Sherriff:

<https://www.instagram.com/bythelinepottery/>

Kathy Hutton:

<https://www.instagram.com/kathyhuttonprints/>

Fiona Wilson: <https://www.instagram.com/fionacw1/>

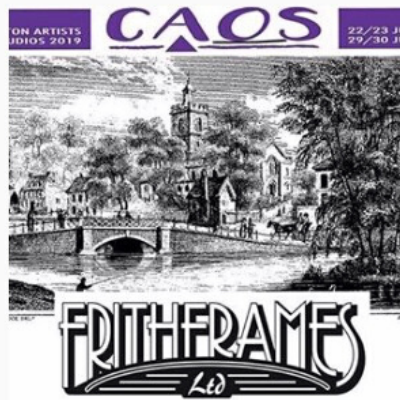
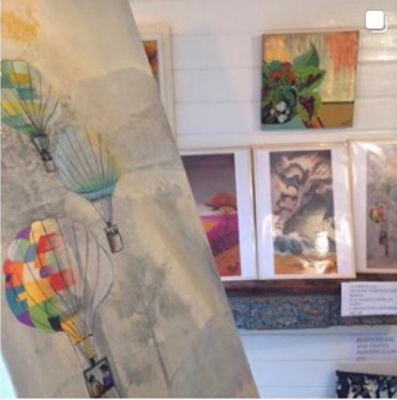
Lucy Tiffney: <https://www.instagram.com/lucytiffney/>

Andrea Soos: <https://www.instagram.com/andreasoosart/>

Jane Foster: <https://www.instagram.com/janefosterdesigns/>

These are examples of Instagram accounts but the principle applies to all platforms.





INSTAGRAM

It's likely that Instagram will be your favourite platform as it's the most visual. Do not however underestimate the importance of a good caption (with that all important call to action!). Ideally you will post to Instagram about once a day – but no more. The Instagram algorithm seems to like directing traffic to one popular post and the effect tends to be diluted when you post multiple times (I also find it really annoying when my feed is full of posts from just one person – I tend to switch off or unfollow).

Your images need to be as good as they possibly can be (if you're no good at taking photos you either need to learn or pay someone else to take some!). This applies to all platforms of course, but is vital for Instagram as it is the most visual platform. You want people to stop at your post and not just scroll on past.

Hashtags are also important – without them your post will only be seen by your followers – and then only those who Instagram chooses to show it to. Hashtags enable users to search for things within a theme, for example #artistsstudio or #ourstudiotime.

Take a look at the accounts above for some hashtag inspiration and have a look at other images you like to find ones which could work for you. As a rule you should try and use a selection of different tags (up to 30 per post) and should try not to use the same set every time – it makes you look like a bot and you may end up limiting your reach rather than increasing it. To save time here I have a selection of notes saved with bundles of hashtags – I just copy and paste whichever set suits my image. Make sure you start using our hashtag #CAOSArt20 too!

Once you are comfortable with posting regularly to your feed, you may want to start using Instagram Stories. These posts remain active for 24 hours and are a great way to promote an upcoming event, either with still images and text or video. They can be particularly useful if you're working to curate a particular look on your feed but need to share something which wouldn't otherwise fit – so flyers for an event or perhaps a photo which tells a story but maybe wouldn't be good enough to make it into your feed. If you do want to keep one of your Stories and enable people to continue to view it after the 24 hours has ended you can add it to the top of your feed as a Story Highlight.

TWITTER

Twitter is my favourite social media platform – without it I wouldn't be doing what I do today.

So much inspiration and so many of the connections I have made over the years and I've remained loyal to it even when others have left. As I mentioned before, curate your feed and mute things you don't want to hear about, and be nice.

You can post to Twitter a lot more frequently (I'd say as often as you like but try and turn up at least once a day if you can). Include an image with every post – unless it's not relevant. Add links to your website, shop, the organiser's page for your upcoming event, tag people to start a conversation.

Twitter is amazing if you use it properly – remember to stick to work, don't go off for a rant. It's particularly good for B2B (or business to business marketing – so if you want more corporate clients for example) and for networking. Remember to add the full web address (including the http://) when linking to webpages or it won't work...

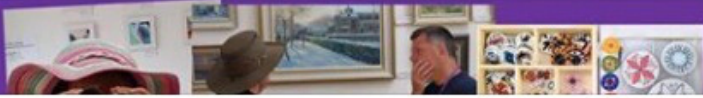


To save time with Twitter you may schedule posts in advance (but do make sure you return regularly to reply to any responses etc). I like using the Tweetdeck and Hootsuite apps both of which have free options.

In addition, you can create lists in Twitter to collect people who are connected by a certain type of work or you think may be useful to you. For example other artists working in the same discipline as you, journalists, local contacts. You can also set up direct message groups enabling you to chat with like-minded people about a particular topic. The useful links section at the end of this guide sets out more information about Twitter lists and groups.

carshalton artists OPEN STUDIOS

27,28 june | 4,5 july 2020



JUN 27 Carshalton Artists Open Studios 2020
Public · Hosted by Carshalton Artists Open Studios · 2 co-hosts pending [?]

✓ Interested ▾

Going...

➦ Share ▾

...

🕒 4 dates · 27 Jun – 5 Jul

[See all times](#)

JUN 27 Sat 11:00

JUN 28 Sun 11:00

JUL 4 Sat 11:00

+1

FACEBOOK

In my view Facebook is the least useful of the social media platforms.

It is however fantastic for promoting events.

Start off by setting up a business page. This will be linked to your personal account but your page followers will not have access to that. Many artists sell their work directly through their Facebook business pages and you have the option of paying to boost posts and to promote the page itself to gain more followers.

I recommend 1-2 posts to your business page per day (you can cross post from Instagram which is a time saver). Again, use images with every post!

This is also a good point to think about your customer profile – who are they and how old are they? Older customers are more likely to be on Facebook than Instagram or Twitter – so spend your time accordingly.

Set up events on Facebook to drive more traffic. The events I took part in on the run up to Christmas last year had an enormous reach thanks to people commenting and sharing them. Anyone reading this who was at an event with me at the end of last year will know that the turnouts were amazing. This was down in no small part to each of us using Facebook effectively.

You can pay to promote posts too but encouraging people to like and share can be just as useful, if not more so.

AND FINALLY...

- If you blog, shout about it – share the posts across all platforms, multiple times – your blog is yours – it can't be taken away if Facebook decides to shut down Instagram or Twitter goes bust. I could write a whole guide on blogging, so I will just leave this here!
- Make sure all of your art related accounts are set to public – I see so many that aren't and I'm not going to ask permission to follow you if I can't see what you post. Save the stuff you don't want the whole world to see for your personal accounts.
- Ask questions – another great way to get engagement – ask people what they think, what they want.
- If you don't post regularly your engagement will drop off and so will your motivation to post – remember to be consistent!
- And plan, but not too much. Planning out your posts will ultimately save you time and the whole “I have to post something but I don't know what, oh my cat photo will do” problem. But allow for some spontaneity – you need to show that you're human, because of course people buy from people they know, like and trust!!!

USEFUL LINKS

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

<https://mailchimp.com/help/about-the-general-data-protection-regulation/>

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection_en

Social Media Bios

<https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/blog.hootsuite.com/twitter-bio-ideas/amp/>

How to link accounts to cross post

<https://help.instagram.com/356902681064399>

<https://ifttt.com/connect/instagram/twitter>

Twitter Lists and Groups

<https://help.twitter.com/en/using-twitter/twitter-lists>

<https://grouptweet.com/blog/how-to-create-private-twitter-groups-twitter-group-dms-are-possible>

Instagram Stories

<https://meandorla.co.uk/30-fresh-ideas-for-instagram-stories/>

Facebook Business Pages

<https://buffer.com/library/how-to-create-manage-facebook-business-page>