

High Times: Social Media Audience Engagement Analysis

Kara Pedro

Plymouth State University, Communication and Media Studies



Abstract

The first edition of High Times Magazine was published in 1974 by Tom Forcade, and since then has been informing everyone between novice to expert marijuana enthusiasts on all things cannabis related. Whether it be fascinating articles on new growing techniques, updates on legislation, or exciting findings in medical research, High Times Magazine is covering it all. Since the first edition of the magazine, High Times has created a name for itself that entails much more than just a magazine publication. Included in their “about us” section on their webpage; High Times states the following about their brand, “High Times is much more than a magazine. Today, High Times transcends the print, digital and physical worlds through magazines, websites, apps, and live events.” (About High Times). After reviewing the presence of High Times Magazine on multiple social media sites including Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, it is clear they are highly advanced in recognizing how to reach their customers through each platform that is anticipated to have the most target audience engagement, by optimizing their posts High Times earns itself a large fan base with high ratings of customer loyalty and brand trust.

Key Findings

- High Times has transformed from a publication to an empire that supplies much more than an editorial.
- The brand is able to distinguish their target audience and recognize their techno-graphics.
- Strong ability to optimize posts to reach maximum success.
- Largest fan base on social media in the marijuana industry.
- Posts across all platforms include intriguing images and captions that make the audience interested in reading the full article that is attached.

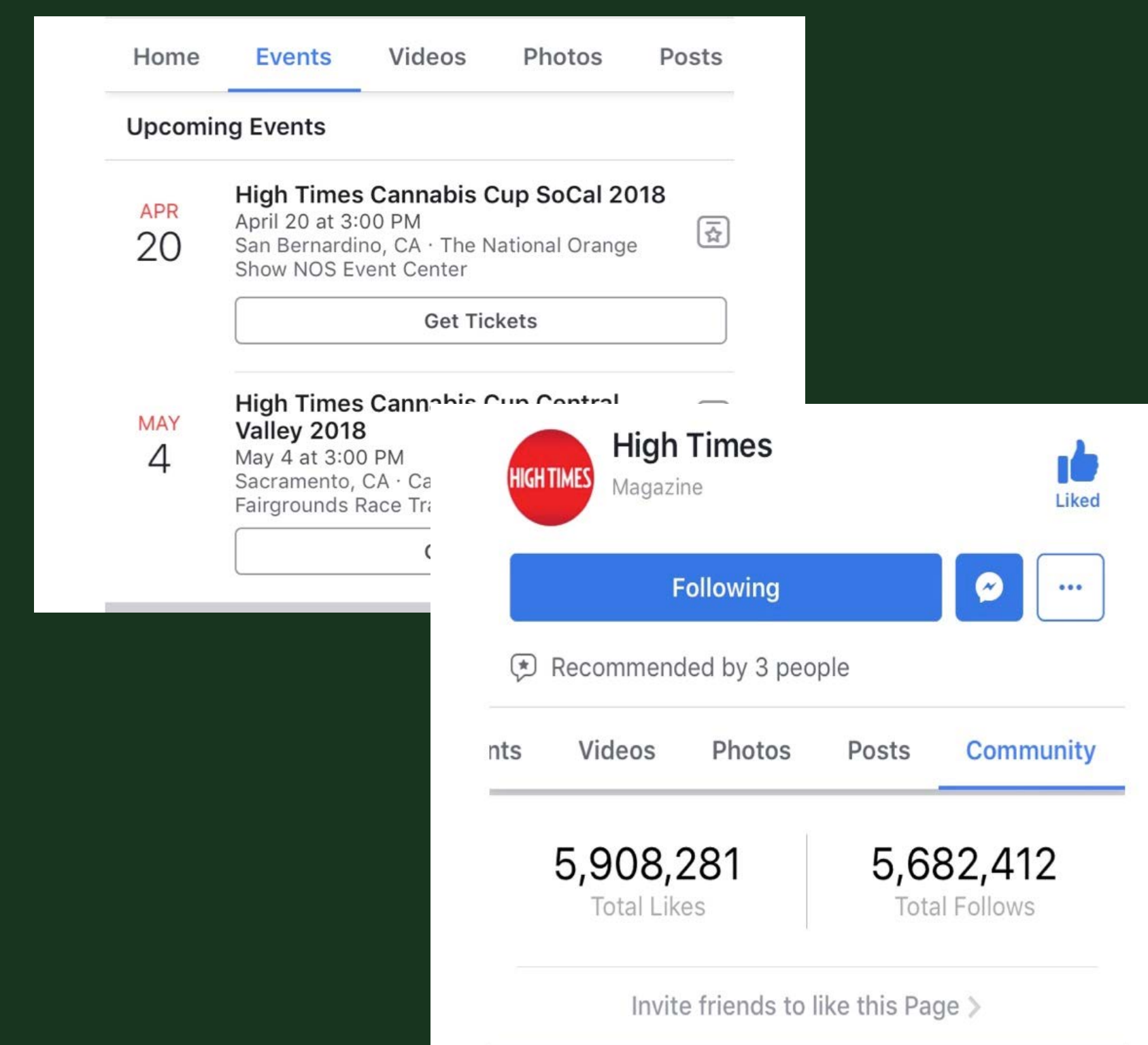
Facebook

Weakness:

- High Times’ was using the “upcoming events” tab to advertise their events and was not advertising them across other platforms until very recently.

Strength:

- Highest follow count out of all platforms
- Optimal posts
- Events are listed and a link to buy tickets is included



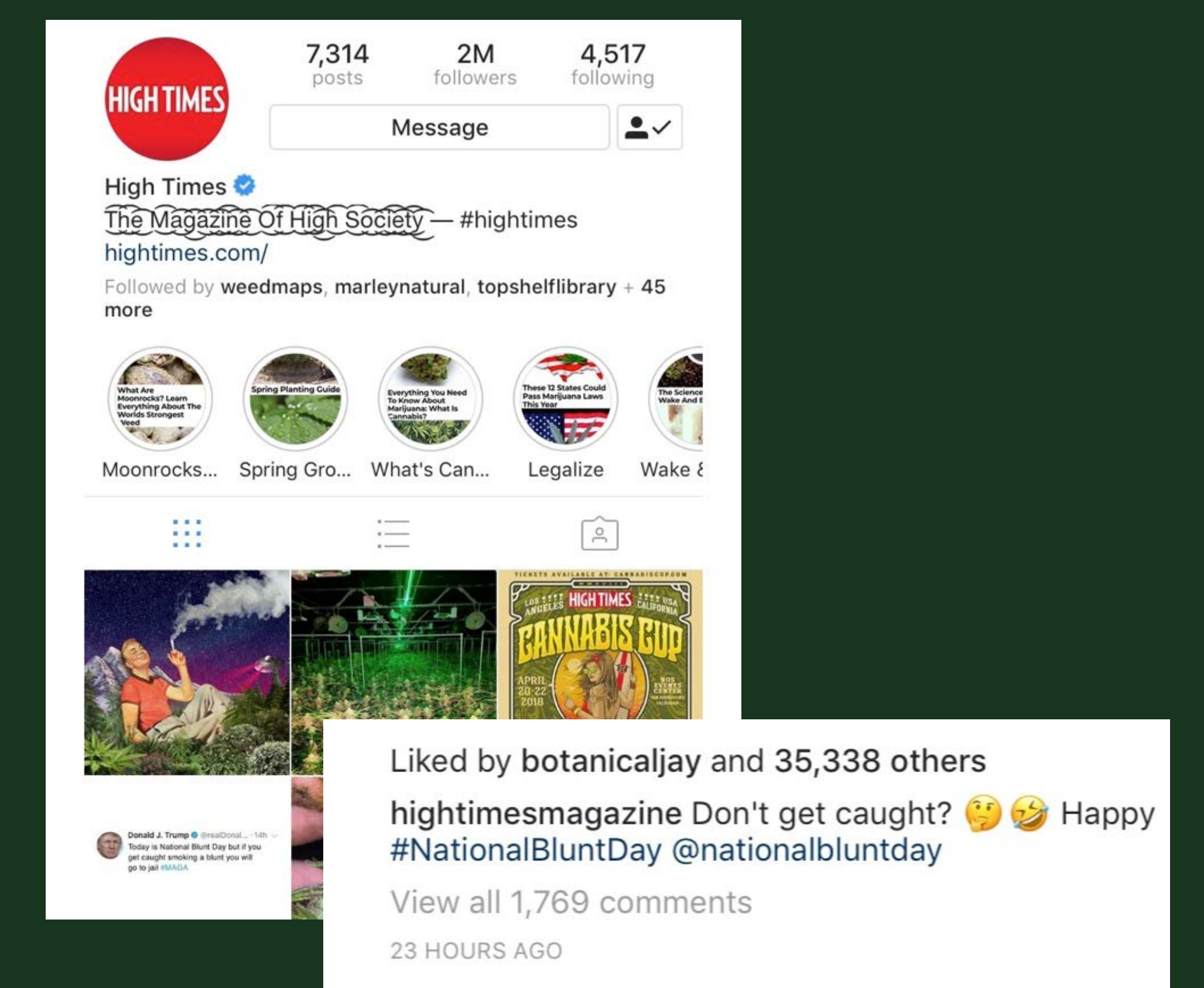
Instagram

Strength:

- Utilizes Instagram’s new story feature
- Effective use of hashtags
- Optimized posts

Weakness:

- Not until recently have they been advertising their Cannabis Cup event which would be very effective on this platform considering the artwork is so vivid for their event posters



Twitter

Weakness:

- Low follow count in comparison to other platforms.

Strength:

- High Times makes a point to send an average of two tweets per hour.



All images are screen shots of High Times social media pages. Taken on March 28, 2018, at 12:00 p.m.