The 2026 **Social Media Content Strategy Report**

A Playbook to Break Through on Every Network

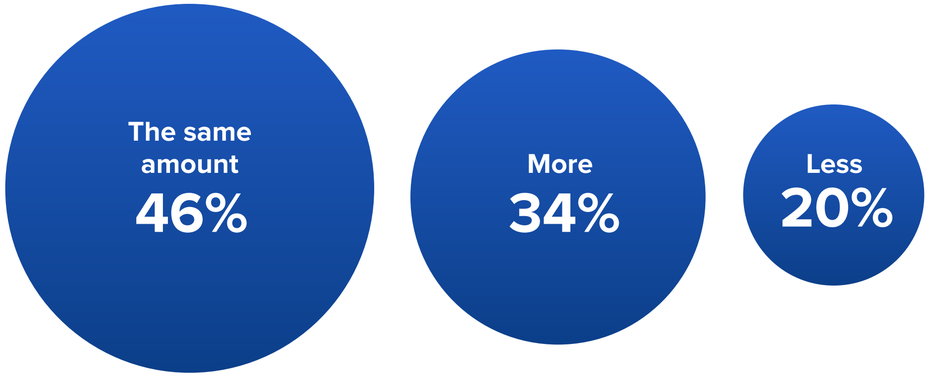
sproutsocial

INTRODUCTION

Marketers are casting wide nets, but *struggle to hook audiences*

Consumers are clear: They plan to be highly engaged with brands on social media in 2026. Four in five say they will interact with brand content more or the same as they do now.

Social media users will interact with brands _____ in 2026



Marketers are answering the call by investing in new social media networks. 87% say they want their brand to show up on more networks in 2026, though leaders are more likely to say it's a good idea than individual contributors. This isn't surprising given individual contributors' first-hand account of the effort required to expand to new networks. Yet, even sophisticated teams that already have extensive cross-platform presences want to expand to new networks, especially emerging ones.

With new networks dividing attention and unpredictable algorithmic shifts impacting who sees what where, teams struggle to reach and engage with their target audience on social. Unsure which networks are central to their audience's content consumption, marketers are going everywhere.

With a finite amount of resources, marketers need social intelligence that delivers deeper audience insights to make the best use of their time and talent. Without them, brands risk over-investing in the wrong places, while leaving space for competitors to swoop in on the networks that matter most to their audience.

For this report, we surveyed over 2,300 consumers in the US, UK and Australia to find out what users *actually* want from brands on social, and how their responses differ from network to network. We surveyed another 1,200 marketers in the US, UK and Australia to compare how brands' priorities differed from consumer expectations. These findings reveal what kind of content social teams should prioritize in 2026, and how to deliver the greatest return on investment from your social media efforts.

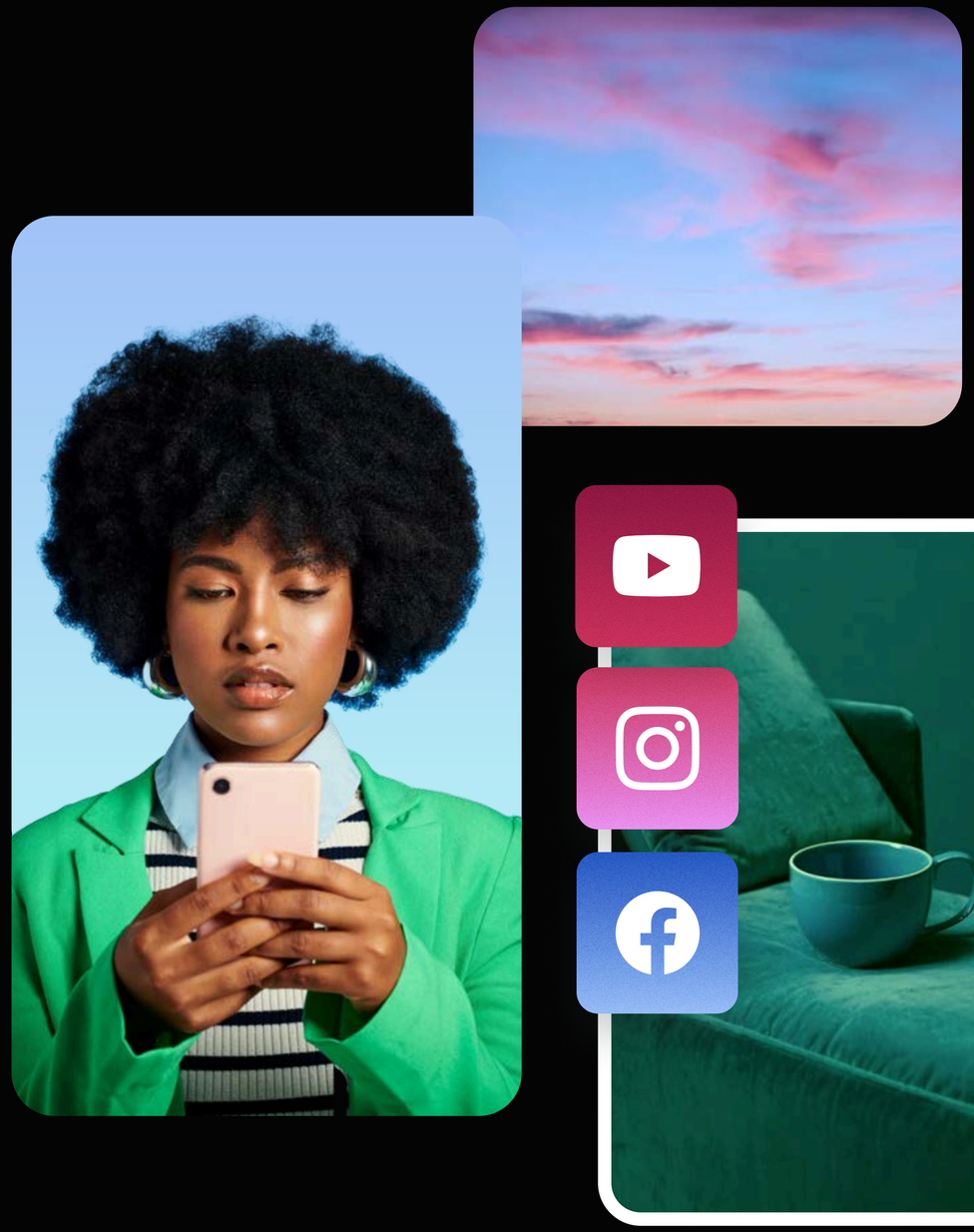
Marketers say: "Our brand needs to have a presence on _____ social media networks to reach our target audience."

Seniority	More	The same	Less
Mid-level individual contributor	65%	29%	6%
Manager	82%	14%	4%
Director	92%	3%	5%
Vice President	90%	2%	8%
Executive	88%	7%	5%

What *audiences* want vs. what *brands* are investing in

Most consumers are comfortable with brands showing up on all social platforms—but they don't plan to divide their time equally between networks. Notably, the platforms consumers plan to spend time on in 2026 don't match the networks marketers plan to pour the most effort into.

While consumers across generations plan to spend more time on Facebook, followed by Instagram and YouTube, most brands are making TikTok and Instagram their top investments. While there's some overlap, this misalignment reveals marketers are making false assumptions about their audience's social media habits.



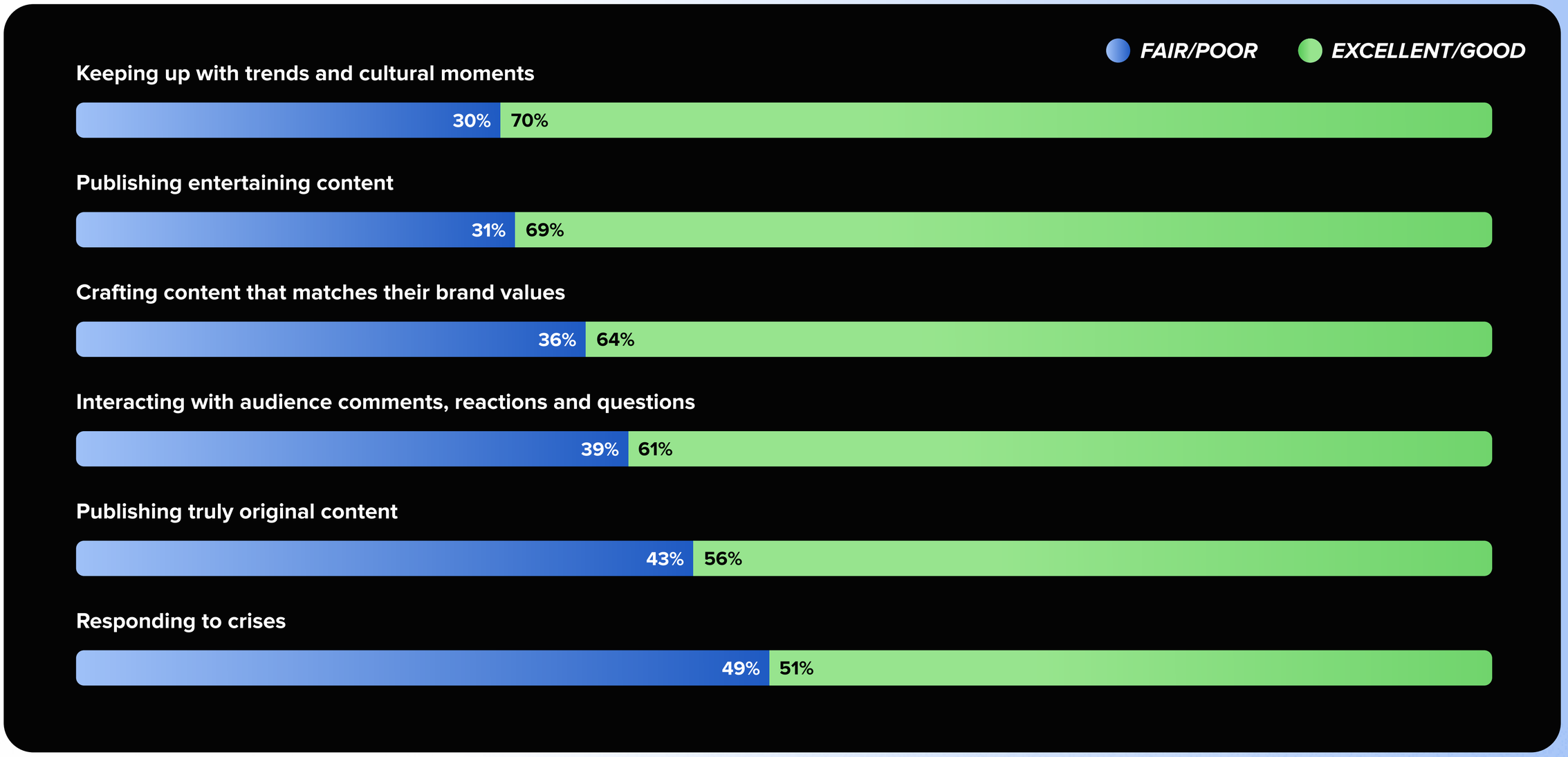
Which platforms do social media users plan to spend more time on in 2026?*

Consumer demographic														
All consumers	39%	32%	30%	27%	19%	14%	14%	14%	12%	9%	9%	7%	5%	2%
Gen Z	35%	41%	28%	39%	21%	19%	19%	19%	23%	13%	16%	10%	6%	4%
Millennials	42%	42%	32%	33%	24%	17%	18%	16%	16%	11%	11%	10%	5%	2%
Gen X	40%	25%	32%	23%	18%	12%	10%	10%	7%	6%	5%	5%	4%	0%
Baby Boomers	40%	16%	26%	10%	14%	8%	6%	10%	3%	4%	3%	2%	3%	1%

Which platforms do brands plan to invest more resources into in 2026?

Social media sophistication level														
All companies	62%	70%	56%	71%	46%	57%	18%	45%	43%	45%	42%	45%	44%	49%
Low (Up to 55,000 followers)	43%	62%	61%	53%	20%	63%	4%	25%	33%	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%
Medium (55,000-75,000 followers)	51%	61%	56%	68%	37%	64%	17%	44%	39%	47%	40%	35%	56%	40%
High (75,000-650,000 followers)	64%	72%	55%	72%	48%	55%	18%	42%	42%	44%	40%	46%	42%	51%
Very high (More than 650,000 followers)	73%	74%	57%	69%	48%	55%	21%	58%	50%	46%	55%	48%	50%	47%

How consumers rate brand efforts on social media



70% of marketers consider their team's social content strategy very effective. Consumers largely agree and say brands do a great job of keeping up with online culture and providing entertainment. Yet, around half wish marketers would do more to interact with followers, publish truly original content and respond to crises.

When it comes to 2026 priorities, consumers and marketers are on slightly different pages. For example, while consumers want brands to make human-generated content their #1 priority, marketers are making AI-generated content a top investment (especially marketing leaders). And while consumers want brands to make personalized customer service their #2 priority, it doesn't show up at all in marketers' priorities.

Compared to the other generations, Gen Z is most likely to say brands should interact in smaller, community-driven spaces.* As early adopters of new trends and technologies, this could suggest a larger future shift toward small-scale engagement.

What *marketers* plan to prioritize in 2026

1. Episodic series
2. AI-generated content
3. Long-term influencer partnerships
4. Surprise-and-delight moments
5. Audience engagement in small digital spaces / Social commerce

What *consumers* want brands to prioritize in 2026*

1. Human-generated content
2. Personalized customer service / Surprise-and-delight moments
3. Social commerce
4. Audience engagement in small digital spaces
5. Collaborations with other companies

Leaders *want* AI-generated content. They *need* AI-driven social intelligence.

Marketers are most likely to use AI tools for content creation more than any other task. Which is a direct contradiction to what consumers want as their appetite for human-generated content grows. Teams need to strike the right balance between using AI to refine and scale content production, while retaining a human touch. Additionally, plugging AI into manual workflows (like data analysis) can give team time back to use toward crafting stronger human-generated content.

To make the issue increasingly complicated, there are discrepancies within teams. While half of managers and directors say AI content generation is a priority, only 35% of individual contributors agree. And even though nearly 70% of managers and directors say AI-driven content outperforms content crafted without AI in terms of engagement, that falls to 59% for individual contributors.

Tasks marketers use AI to support

1. Copy content creation
2. Image content creation
3. Content editing
4. Video content creation
5. Performance reporting and analysis

All marketers regardless of seniority say real-time audience insights would be the #1 most impactful resource for their content strategy. Today, teams are most likely to use their brand's own performance data—most haven't tapped into audience, competitor sentiment metrics. And only 40% of marketers use AI tools for performance reporting and analysis.

The real potential of AI for marketers isn't content creation, but content analysis to garner timely audience insights. This form of social intelligence gives a view into users' concerns, curiosities and cravings (i.e., the exact data teams need to produce content that cuts through the noise).

What marketers say would be the most helpful for increasing the impact of their social media strategy:

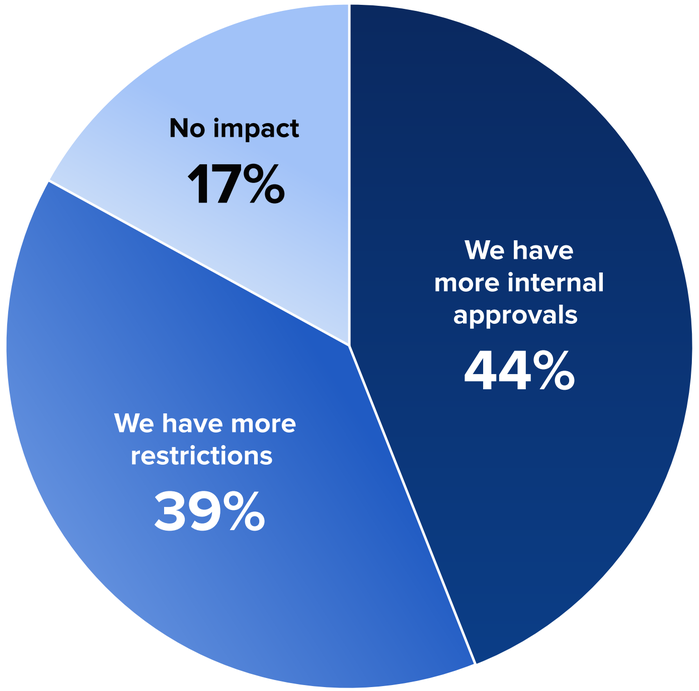
1. Real-time insights into what their audience wants to consume
2. Tools to produce AI-generated content
3. Full-time content creator roles
4. Employees willing to serve as on-screen talent
5. Increased budget for influencer content and boosted posts

Marketers are *keeping a close eye* **on the social & political climate**

Marketers’ desire to learn about their audience isn’t just about crafting better content. It’s necessary as they move forward in an increasingly divisive climate. Almost every team faces greater scrutiny, internally and on social.

39% of marketers say they have more restrictions around the types of content they publish and influencers they partner with. Even the 44% who say they still have autonomy now require more approvals.

How the current social and political climate has impacted brands' content strategies

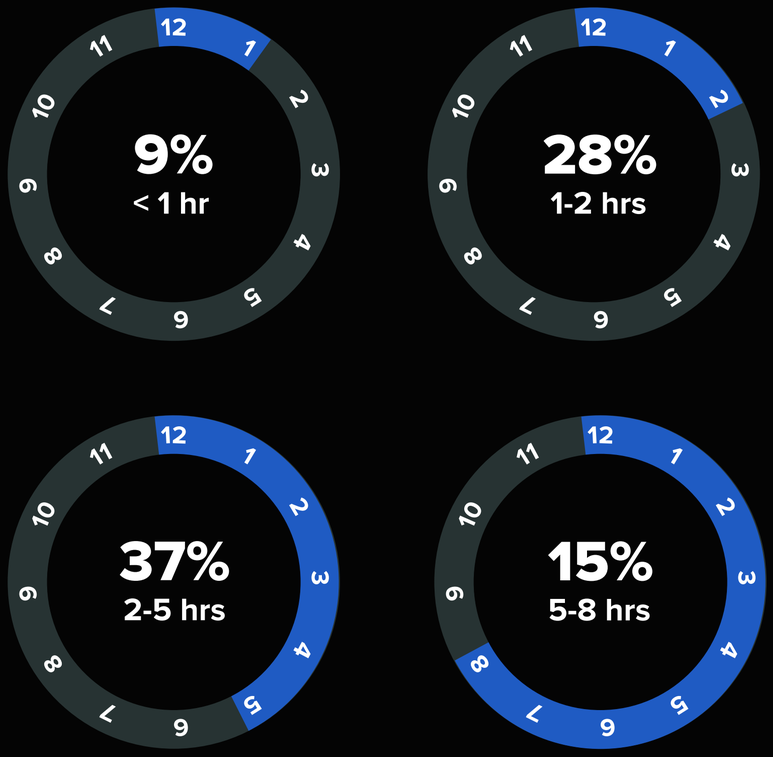


Many teams are responding to the rise of social and political controversy by creating original evergreen content instead of responding to trends or cultural moments. Only 30% of marketers say at least half of their content is timely or informed by cultural moments, but this rises to 44% for very sophisticated teams, which we define as those with more than 650,000 followers across networks.

With heightened risk comes a longer list of stakeholders, and in some cases, formal processes. About half of social teams have ad hoc conversations across their organization before deciding to respond to a trend or cultural moment, while the other half have formal playbooks.

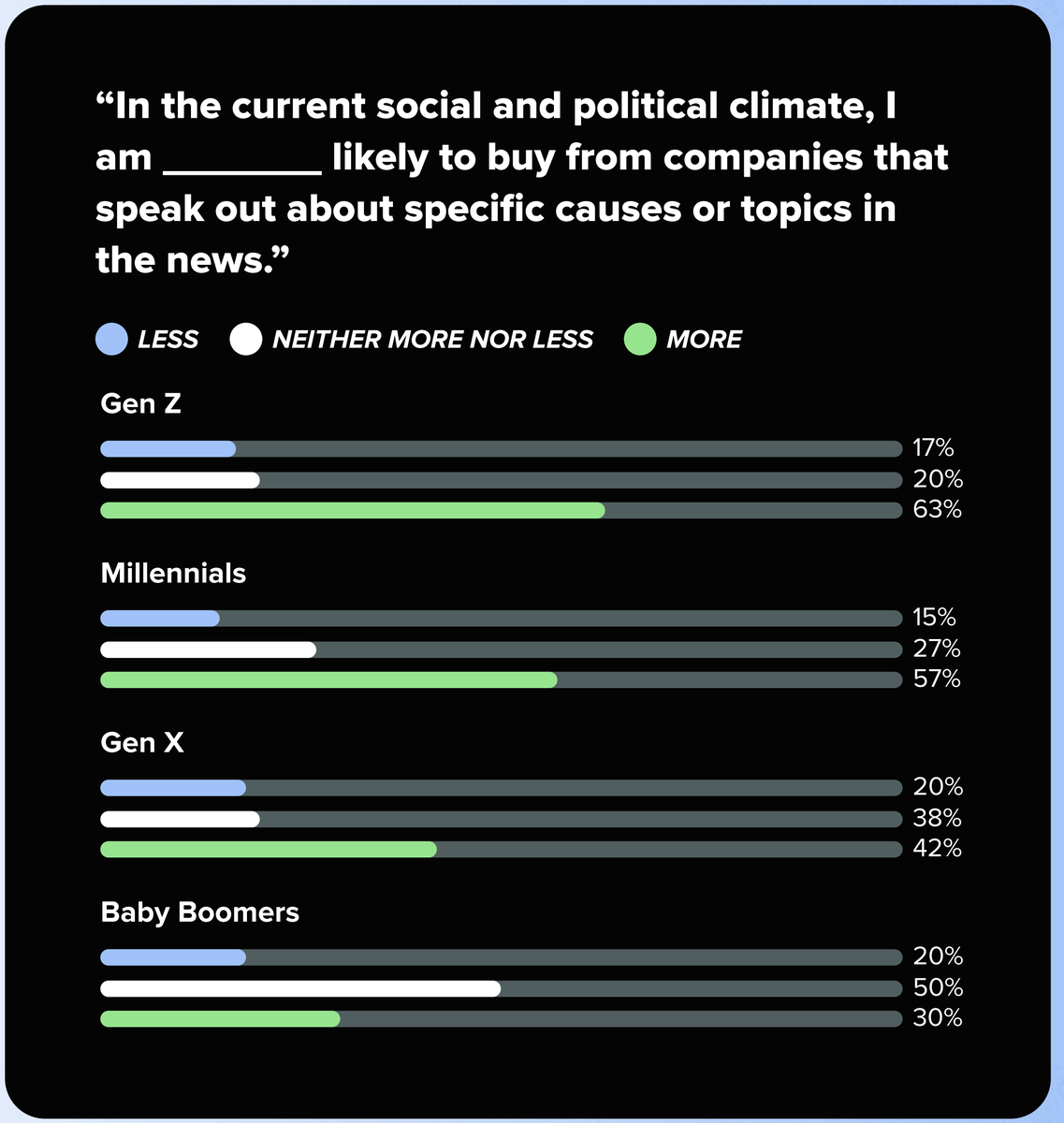
But these extra hurdles don’t slow teams down in the race to publish. When a trend or cultural moment emerges, 75% of marketers get timely content approved in 5 hours or less, with 38% of highly sophisticated teams getting approvals within the first hour. There is a direct correlation between approval time length and team sophistication level, suggesting that social teams with more buy-in and trust are able to act faster.

When a trend or cultural moment emerges that is relevant to your company, how long does it take to get timely social content approved?



The audience demand for brands to speak out also ratchets up the pressure on social teams. In 2023, only 25% of consumers said the most memorable brands speak about causes and news that align with their values. But we're experiencing an emerging brand activism renaissance. Almost half of consumers are more likely to buy from companies that speak about specific causes or topics in the news.**

Yet, marketers who approach activism reactively risk coming across as performative, while those who ground their decisions in solid brand values, audience awareness and action can build real trust and loyalty.



Network-Specific Playbooks

Facebook 14

Instagram 17

YouTube 20

TikTok 23

WhatsApp 26

LinkedIn 29

X 32

Pinterest 35

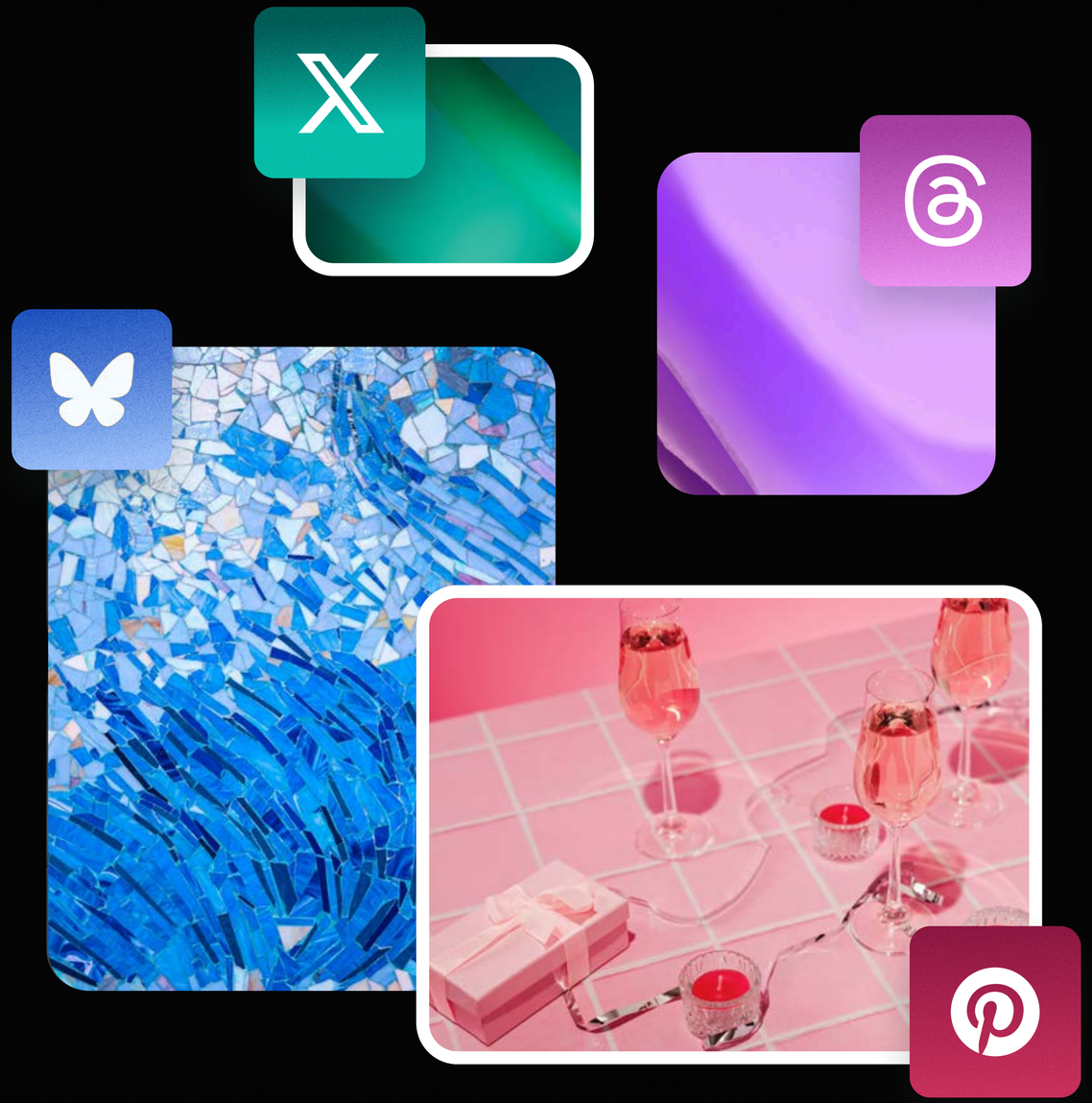
Snapchat 38

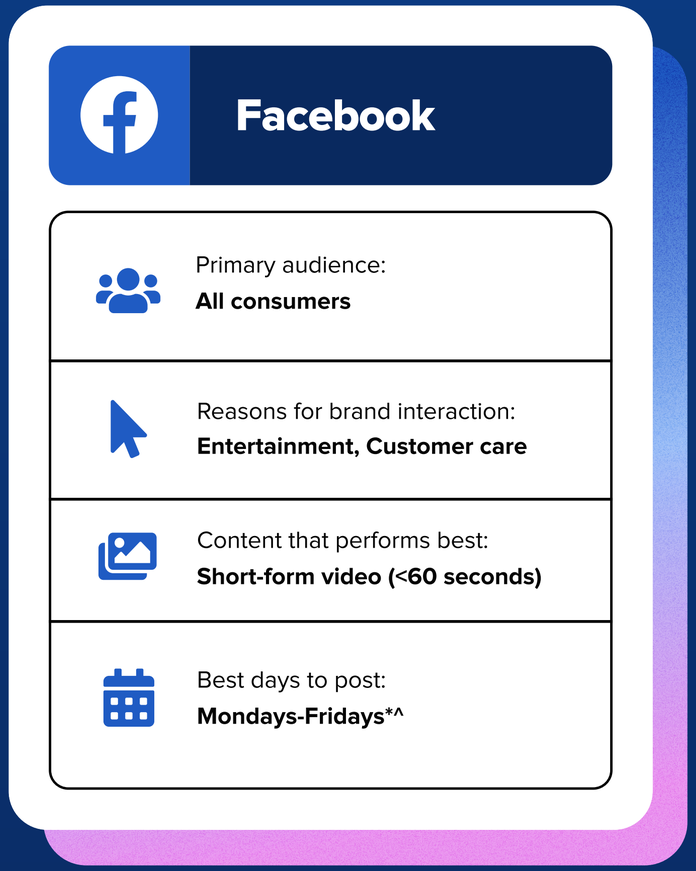
Reddit 41

Threads 44

Bluesky 47

Substack 50





Facebook is a global powerhouse

Facebook remains a stalwart, despite the deluge of new networks and the dramatic evolution of the social media landscape overall. **85% of consumers across generations have profiles on Facebook, the most of any network**, and another 39% plan to spend more time on the platform in 2026.

Thanks in part to its massive user base, Facebook is now the **#1 network for product discovery**, with nearly 40% of social users using it to find new products. Facebook is also the top channel for social customer service, with 45% of users seeking support there.

Given Facebook's central role in connecting consumers and brands, 70% of marketing leaders agree the network has the strongest impact on their business compared to any other platform.^^

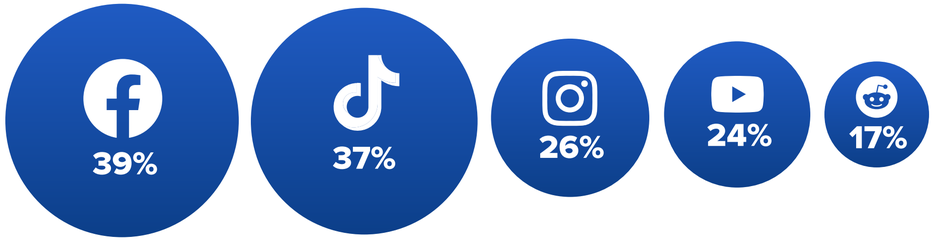
Connecting with others around niche and shared interests has become a core function of the Facebook experience, with **52% of consumers saying it's their top network for building community**. That's especially true for Baby Boomers and Gen X. Which further proves Facebook isn't just a legacy network, it's a hub for authentic connection.

Though static posts once ruled on the network, Facebook has become a destination for short-form video. Most users say they are most likely to interact with videos under 60 seconds on the network, followed by text posts and live video.

Overall, 35% of consumers interact with brand content at least once per day on Facebook, while another 20% interact at least once a week.

Looking forward to 2026, 62% of marketers plan to invest more time and resources into Facebook. While that's more than many networks, it still tails Instagram and TikTok, indicating that much of what brands share on Facebook is still cross-posted from other networks.

Top social media channels for product discovery



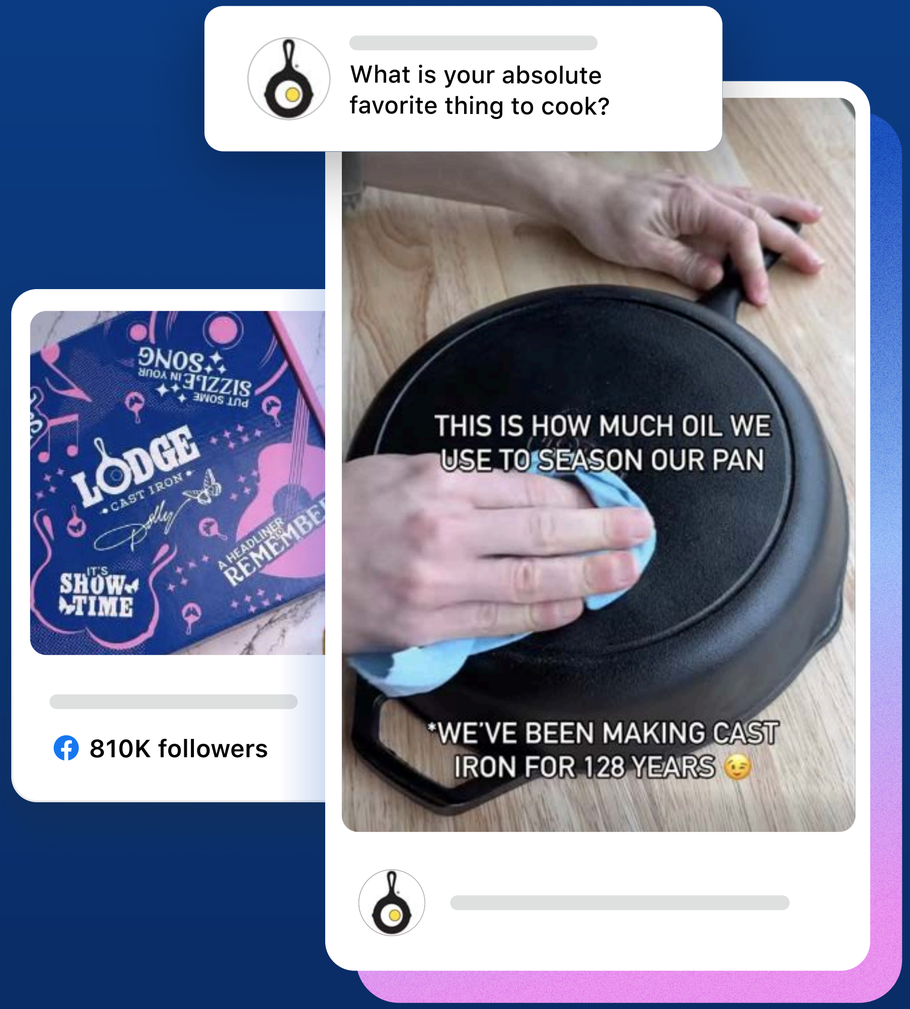
The types of brand content social users are most likely to interact with on Facebook

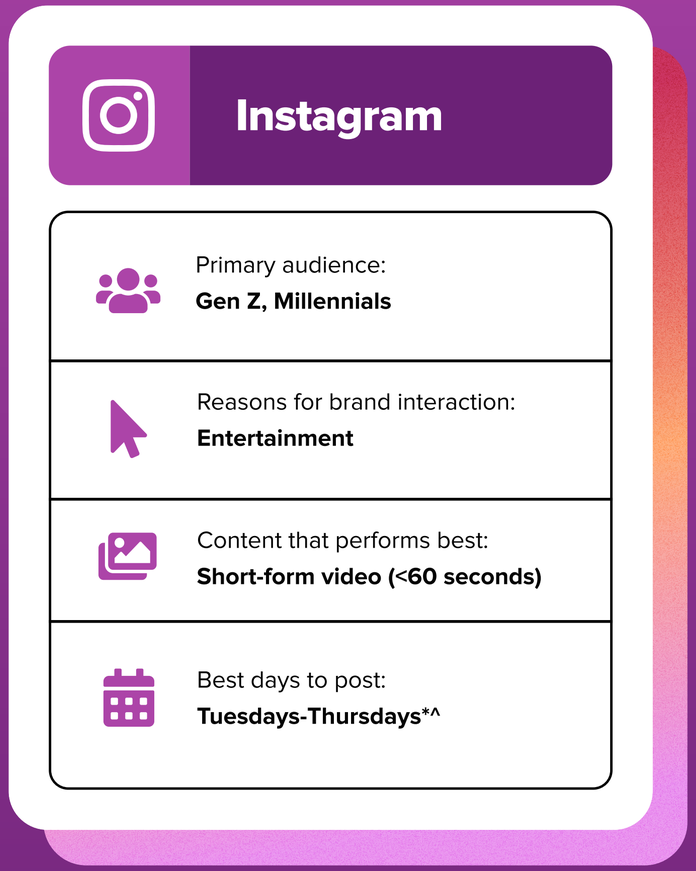
1. **Short-form video (<60 seconds):** 48%
2. **Text posts:** 32%
3. **Live video:** 22%
4. **User-generated content:** 21%
5. **Static images:** 17%

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Lodge Cast Iron

Lodge Cast Iron has been making heirloom quality cookware since 1896. The family-owned brand is beloved, and their community engagement on Facebook proves it. They have built and maintained a community of 800,000 followers, and their private Group reached 40,000 members with minimal promotion. When we featured the brand in our 2024 Social Media Content Strategy Report, they were primarily producing static posts for Facebook. They've since pivoted to lo-fi video, which has amassed millions of views on the network.





Instagram remains a mainstay, even as its role shifts

65% of social users say they have an Instagram profile, making it the second most popular network. 32% of consumers plan to spend even more time on Instagram next year, cementing its status as a star in the social sphere. But Instagram is no longer just a place for staying connected with friends, or for looking for product recommendations.

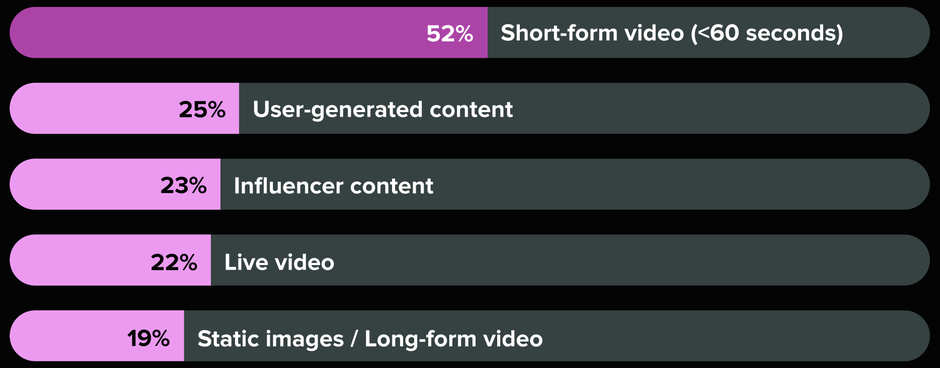
60% of consumers interact with brand content at least multiple times per week on Instagram. Over a quarter still use Instagram for product discovery, with people from every generation scrolling the network to find their next purchase. But users are just as likely to turn to Instagram for entertainment and customer service.

Consumer attention on Instagram remains incredibly valuable, and brands need to prioritize product discoverability, customer experience and entertainment equally to break through.

By far, consumers are most likely to interact with short-form video content on Instagram, followed by user-generated and influencer content. This reveals the most sought after content on the platform feels native and creator-driven, and brands need to create original, episodic short-form content to satiate this need.

In 2026, 41% of Gen Z consumers plan to use Instagram more, the most of any network for this generation. Younger consumers' loyalty to Instagram could explain why 70% of marketers plan to increase their investment in the platform.

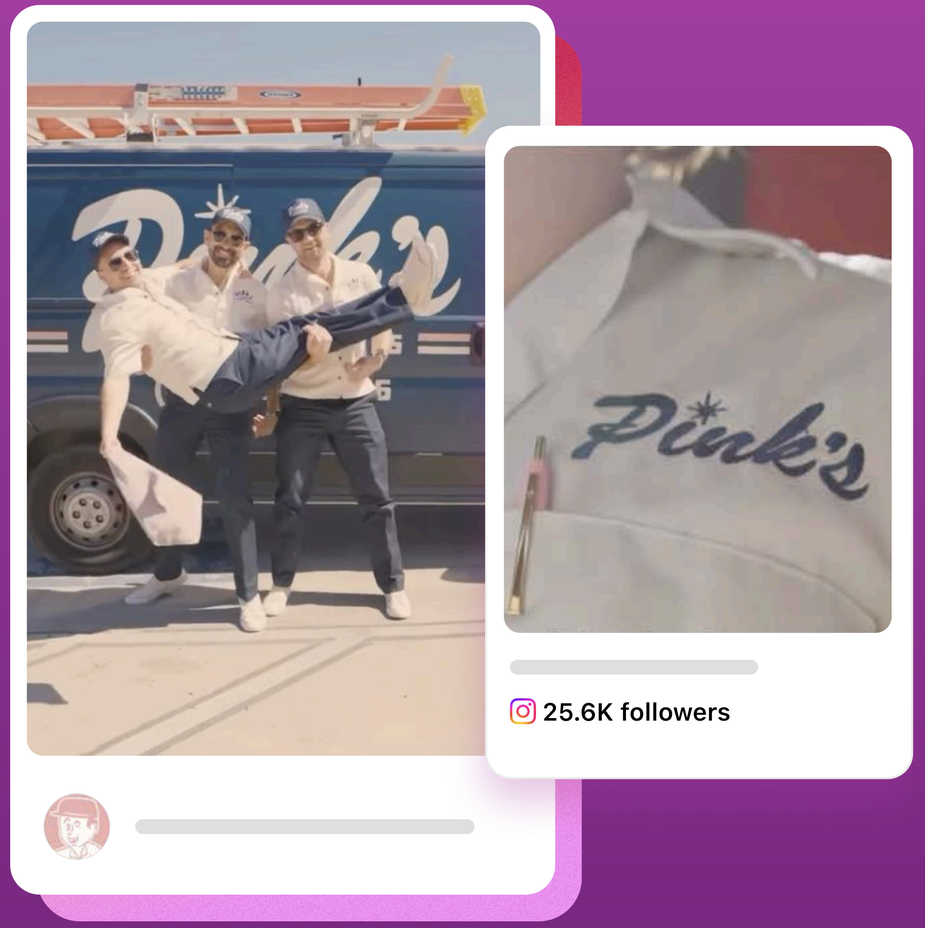
The types of brand content social users are most likely to interact with on Instagram

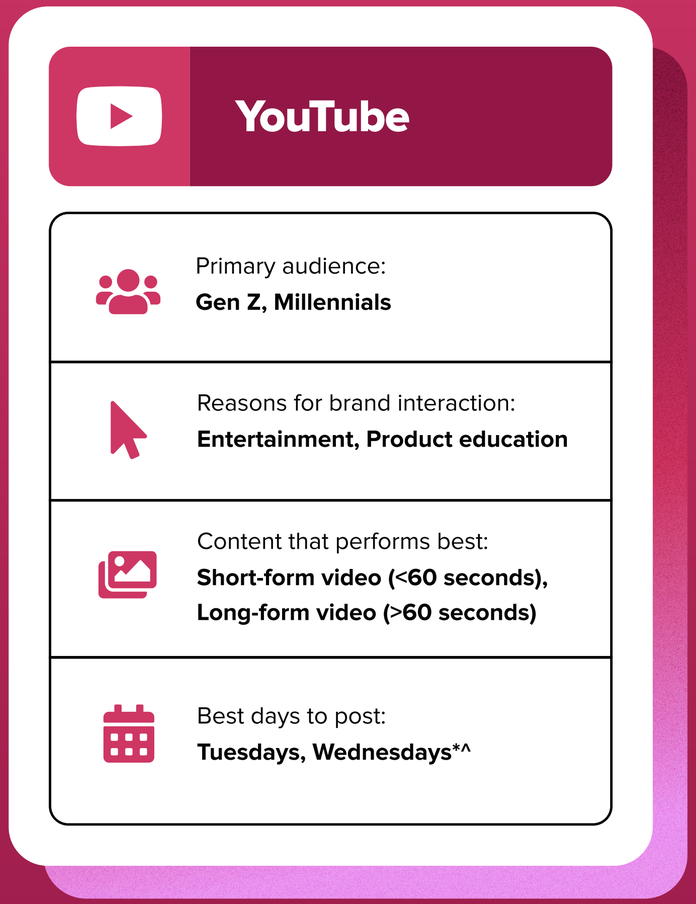


BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Pink’s Window Services

Pink’s Window Services is a growing national chain cleaning service, offering window cleaning, power washing, and roof and gutter cleaning. Pink’s is especially known for their personality-driven, creator-inspired content on Instagram. Whether they take viewers along on a complimentary clean or introduce you to their new franchisees in the style of a TV show opening, prepare to be entertained. Pink’s has built an impressive following of 25,000 and racked up millions of views—a notable feat for every industry, especially home cleaning.





YouTube is a budding destination for product education

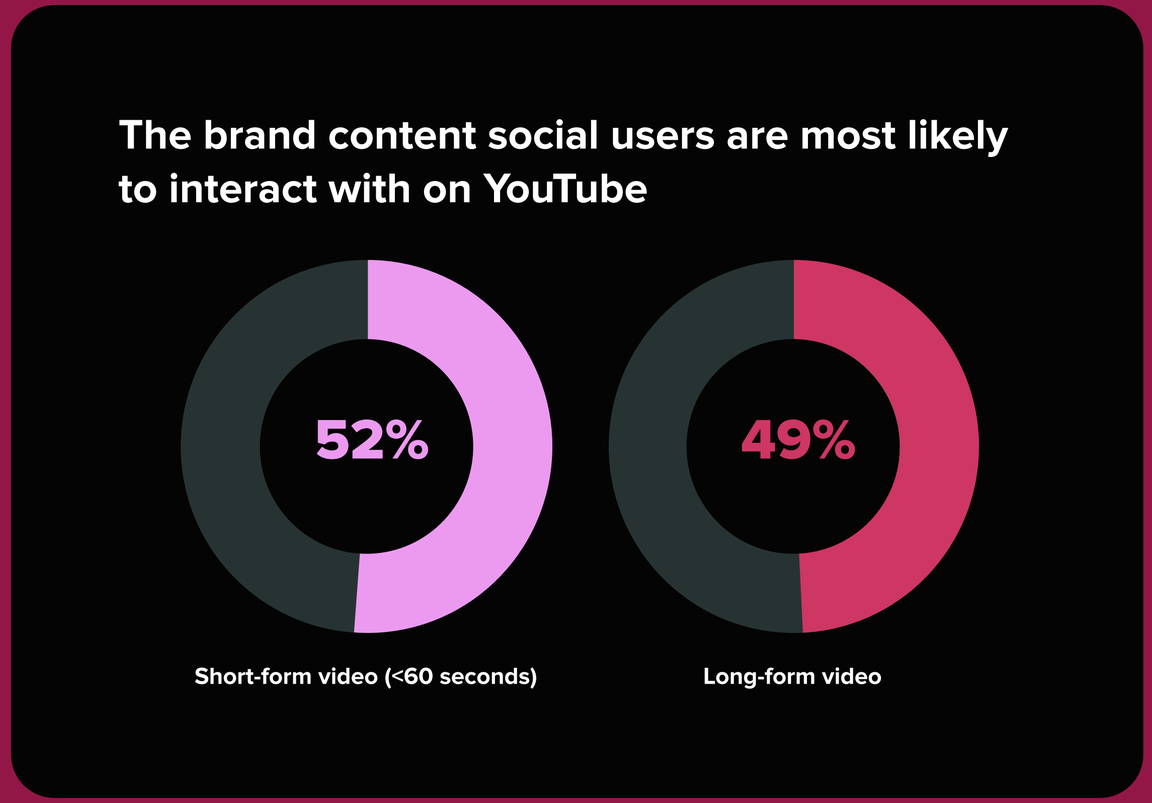
Consumers are increasingly glued to YouTube, and are eager to learn about products there. **Already 63% of users say they have profiles on the network, with 30% planning to use it more often in 2026.**

While YouTube has long been a portal to entertainment, it's become a destination for finding answers. 24% of users find new products on YouTube, with consumers almost as likely to seek out product education as they are entertainment.

Consumers don't just engage with brand content on YouTube, they want brands to show up on the platform. Of all the networks, consumers are least likely to say they want brands to stay away from YouTube.

When interacting with brands, consumers are slightly more likely to watch short-form video (<60 seconds) than long-form (>60 seconds)—suggesting the popularization of YouTube Shorts has shifted how consumers engage. This means product education on the platform doesn't have to be long-form or high fidelity. Short-form videos that are easier to produce can resonate just as much.

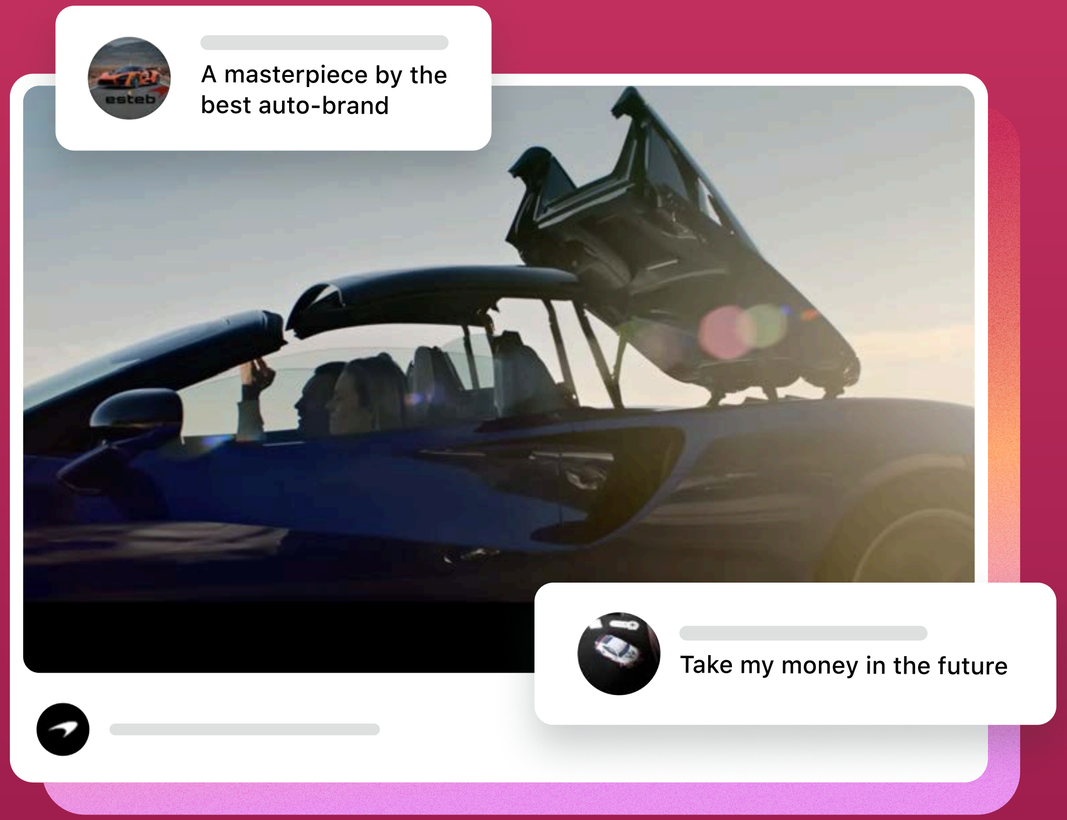
56% of marketers already plan to increase their investment in YouTube in 2026. But even those that don't invest more resources can find success on the platform by cross-posting short-form video from other networks.

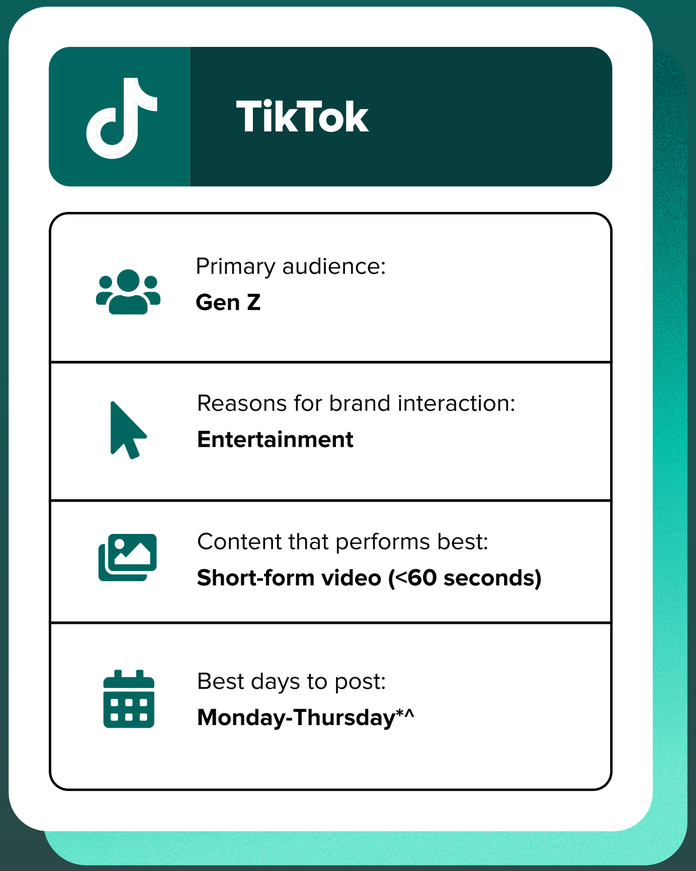


BRAND SPOTLIGHT

McLaren Automotive

McLaren is a British luxury automotive manufacturer, known for their industry-leading race cars. On YouTube, the brand highlights their latest models, behind-the-scenes testing footage and episodic content from their Tech Club. McLaren has an expansive content library of long-form videos and Shorts all dedicated to the inner workings of their cars, which is how they've amassed over 380,000 subscribers.





TikTok's Gen Z power users define the network

It's almost a cliché: Gen Z consumers are the force behind TikTok's enduring cultural impact. While 50% of users overall have TikTok accounts, that number rises to 72% of Gen Z.

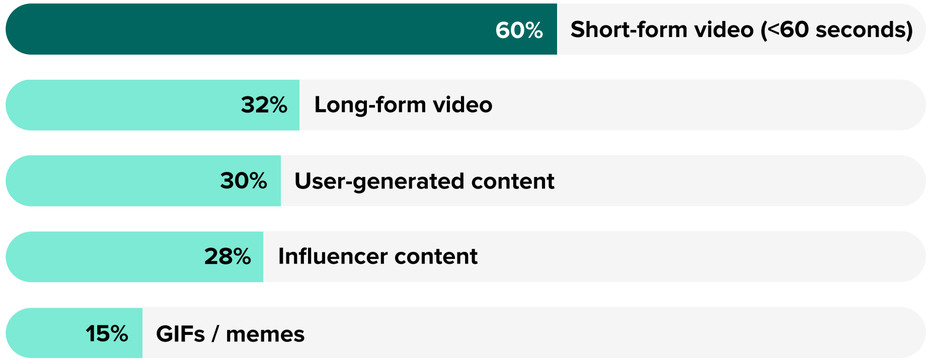
For Gen Z, TikTok isn't just a social network. It's a search engine, news source, birthplace of culture and a shopping mall. **TikTok is the top channel for product discovery among Gen Z, with 49% of Gen Z consumers turning to the platform.**

Which explains why 55% of Gen Z users engage with brand content on TikTok at least once—if not multiple times—per day. They proactively seek out new products and product updates on the platform. Another 30% engage with brand content at least once per week.

When users interact with brands on TikTok, they're significantly more likely to engage with short-form videos, followed by long-form and user-generated content. And they're most interested in entertaining content by a significant margin.

In 2026, 39% of Gen Z consumers plan to use TikTok even more, and 71% of marketers are upping their investment in the network, the most of any platform.

The brand content social users are most likely to interact with on TikTok



How many users interact with brand content on TikTok multiple times per day

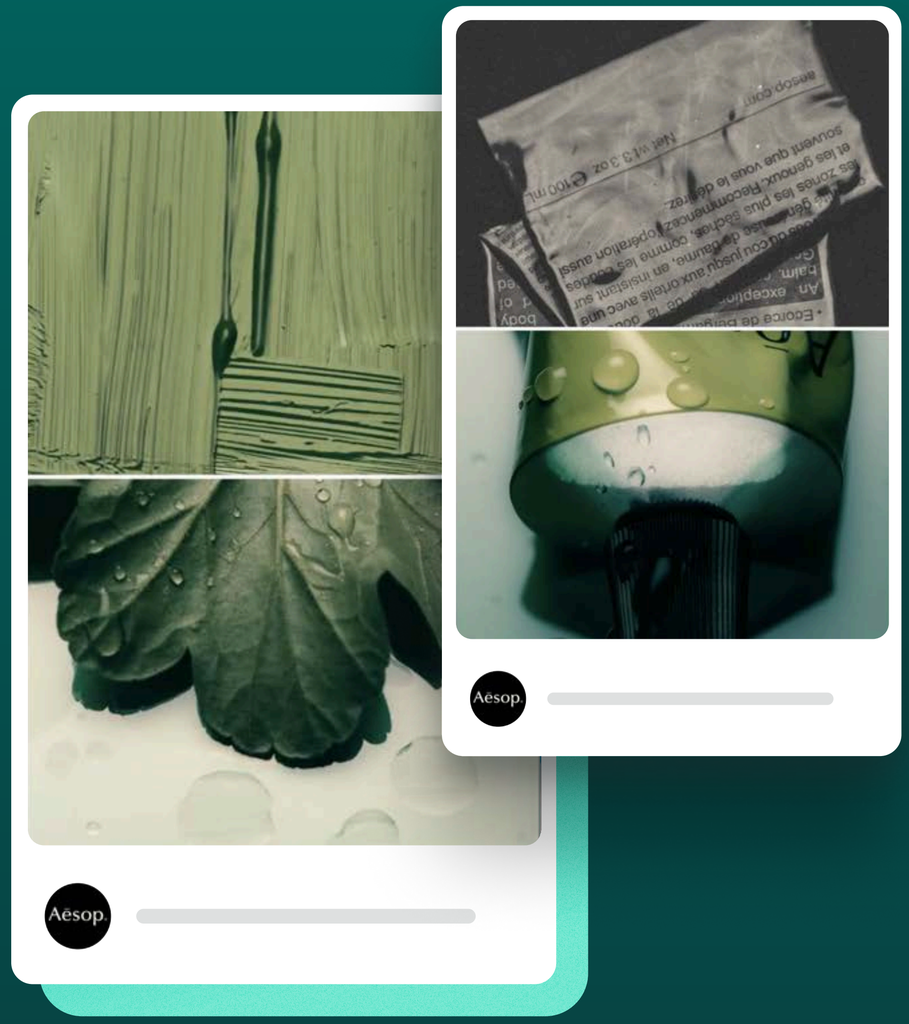
1. **Gen Z:** 44%
2. **Millennials:** 37%
3. **Gen X:** 30%
4. **Baby Boomers:** 31%

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Aesop

Aesop is an Australian luxury cosmetics brand that produces skincare, haircare and fragrance products, and are widely known for their hand soap collection. The company proves brands can succeed on TikTok without following trends or commenting on cultural moments. In their posts, Aesop leans into entertainment, ASMR and aesthetic visuals, cultivating an identity all their own.

Aesop has received 150,000 likes and millions of views on TikTok. As one commenter put it, “Makes everyday self-care feel like intentional living.”

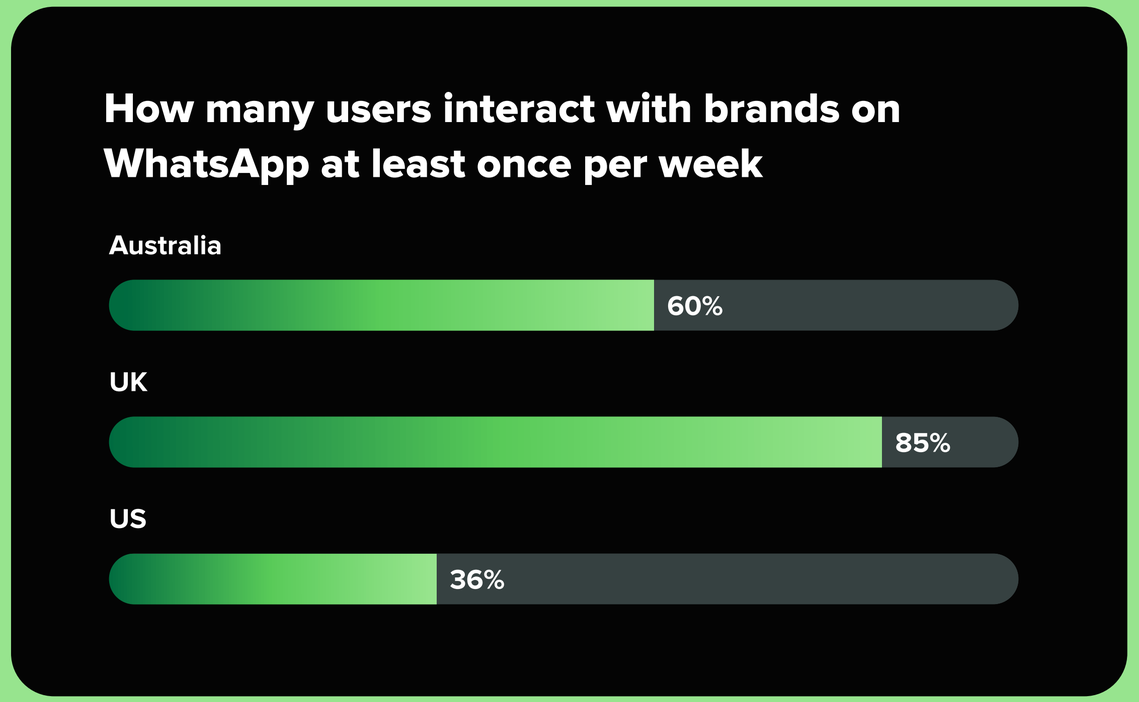


WhatsApp is the network to watch for customer service and community building

WhatsApp is a growing platform for staying connected, and that includes staying connected with brands. **52% of all social users have WhatsApp accounts.** 49% of these users interact with brands on the network multiple times per week, with 31% of UK consumers contacting brands multiple times per day.

40% of users say they want companies to show up on WhatsApp to provide customer service and support. Consumers also are most likely to use WhatsApp when they have a question about an order they placed, followed by when they want to learn about a company's product or service. It's an especially popular channel for Baby Boomers and Gen X seeking support.

While 46% of marketers overall are investing in WhatsApp in 2026, US teams are significantly more likely than Australian and UK marketers—suggesting that US brands are using the network to take their company global and Australian and UK teams have already invested heavily.

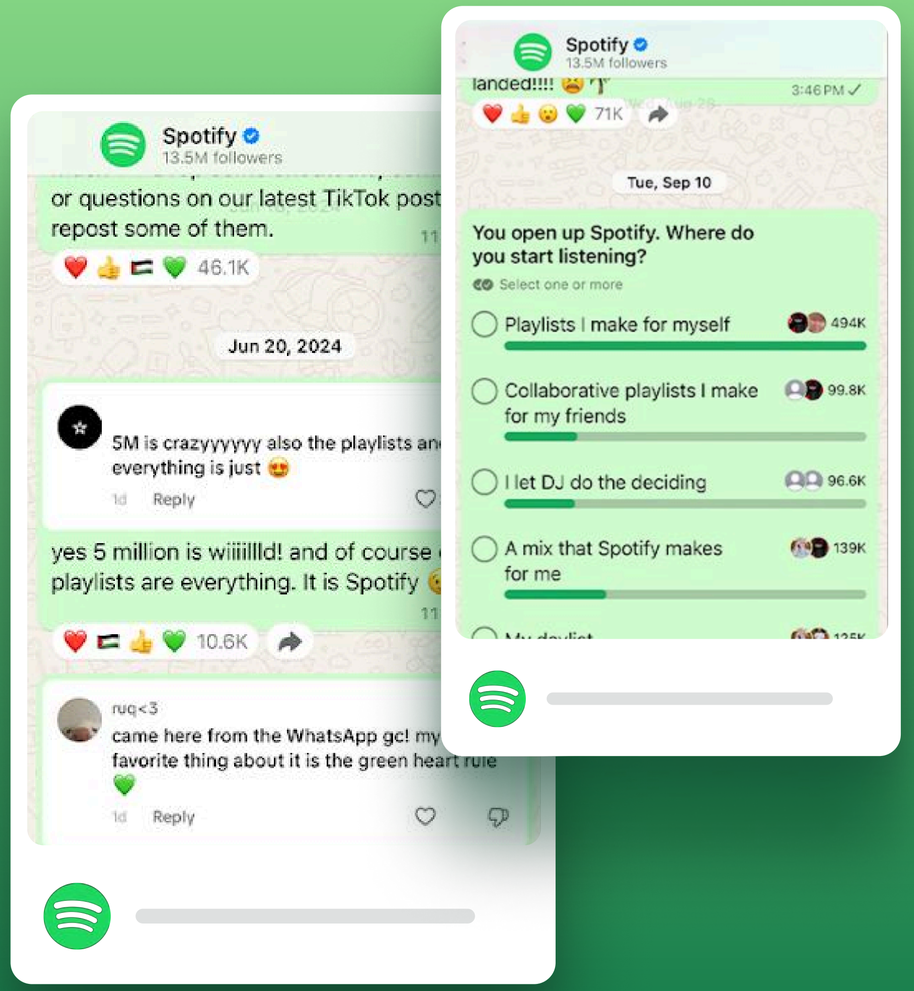


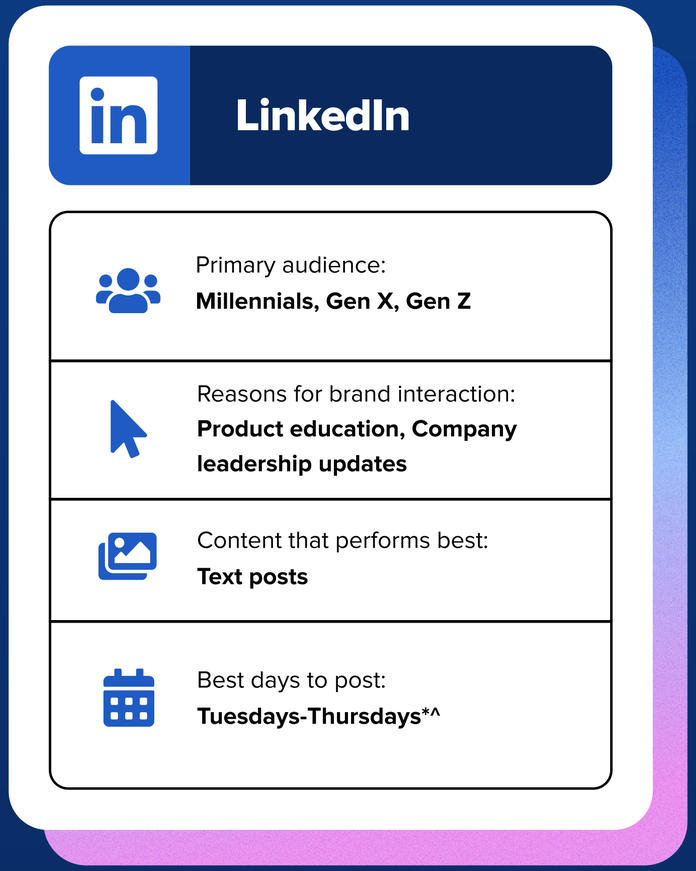
BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Spotify

Spotify is a Swedish digital music service that gives people access to millions of songs, podcasts and audiobooks. Spotify is globally celebrated for their Spotify Wrapped campaign, a personalized yearly recap of users' listening trends. To grow their community engagement efforts, Spotify tied their annual campaign to their new WhatsApp presence, and created a casual space where they share lo-fi content inspired by Wrapped (i.e., memes, screenshots and group chat-inspired posts).

Since launching Spotify's WhatsApp channel, it has grown to 13 million followers, surpassing even the brand's Instagram and Tiktok accounts within a year. Their top post even earned over 1.7 million interactions.





LinkedIn is where users want company and product updates straight from the top

Consumers across age groups use LinkedIn for professional networking, building community and learning about brands. **35% of all social users have LinkedIn accounts, and each generation is represented equally.**

A combined 48% of users say they want brands on LinkedIn to focus on sharing educational product information and updates from company leadership, content that goes hand-in-hand. By comparison, only 5% say they want companies to partner with influencers. As creator content surges on the network, users want information straight from the source, and that bodes well for marketers who say executives are already the group they tap most often to appear as on-screen talent.

Nearly 70% of users interact with brands content on LinkedIn at least once per week, with over half of users gravitating toward text-based posts. Users are significantly less likely to engage with video, images, influencer or user-generated posts.

LinkedIn is also a growing channel for customer service, with 18% of users turning to the network before any other when they need help. Baby Boomers and Gen Z are the most likely to say LinkedIn is their top channel for customer support.

How users want brands to show up on LinkedIn

1. **Educational product information - 24%**
2. **Updates from company leadership - 24%**
3. **Customer service and support - 17%**
4. **Managing smaller communities - 9%**
5. **Interacting with other brand accounts - 9%**

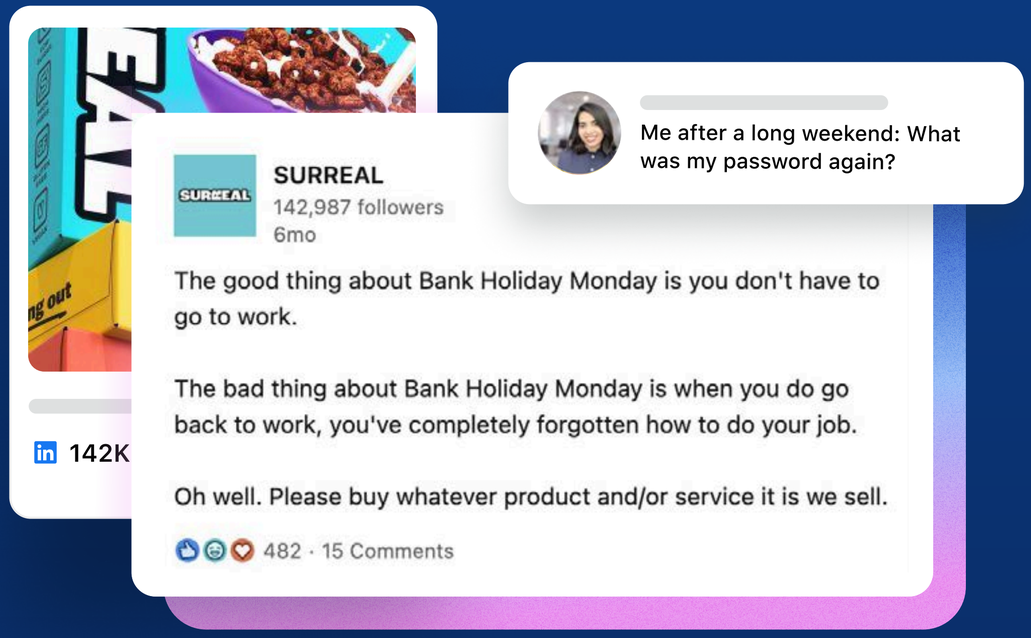
The brand content social users are most likely to interact with on LinkedIn

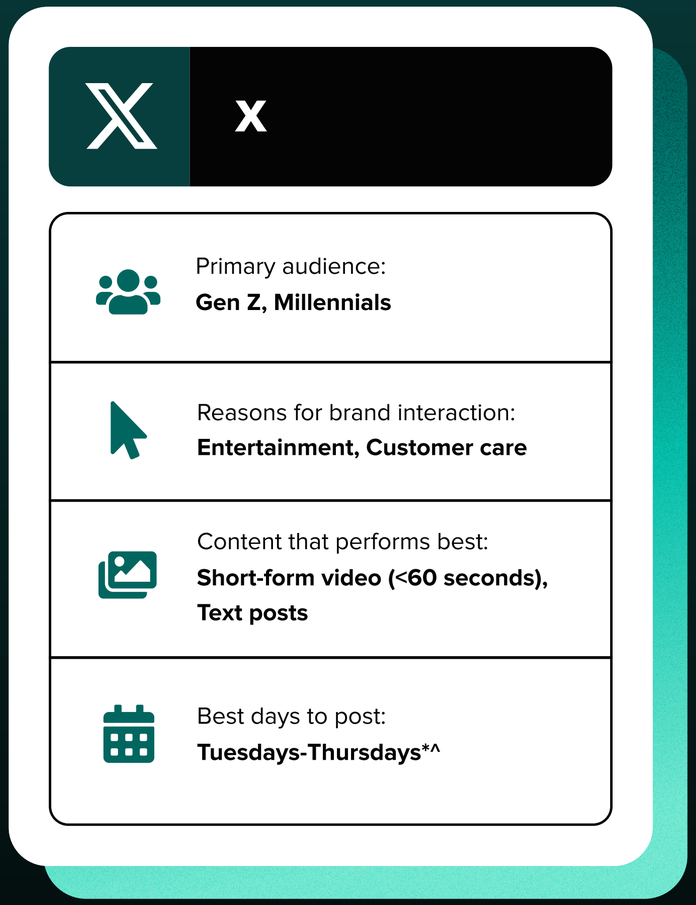
1. Text posts: 51%
2. User-generated content: 34%
3. Short-form video: 27%
4. Static images: 22%
5. Influencer content: 16%

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Surreal

UK-based Surreal is disrupting the cereal aisle with high-protein, zero-sugar and keto-friendly cereals and granolas. With a knack for the unexpected, the brand has also become a LinkedIn darling, with a distinct brand voice that has helped them land 143,000 followers. On LinkedIn, they share new product launches via meandering carousels and out-of-home-inspired imagery, plus text posts every professional can relate to.





X users' content appetites are changing

About one-third of social media users have X (formerly Twitter) accounts. Interestingly, it's Gen Z consumers who are most likely to have profiles on the network, a trend that's consistent from our 2024 Social Media Content Strategy Report.

As X's demographics lean younger, content preferences are evolving too. Once a network with a feed full of text-only posts, users are now most likely to interact with short-form videos (<60 seconds) by a slim margin.

Above all else, consumers want to be entertained on X, a shift from our 2024 report findings where they said timely updates, news and educational product content drew them to the platform.

Over half of X users (58%) interact with brands on the network at least once per week. 18% of all social media users say X is their top destination for social customer service, and providing customer support is the #2 effort consumers want brands to prioritize on the network.

Younger consumers (especially Millennials) are more likely to engage with influencer content on X. This could be an early indicator of how the network culture will continue to change, a shift marketers with active communities should keep an eye on.

The brand content social users are most likely to interact with on X

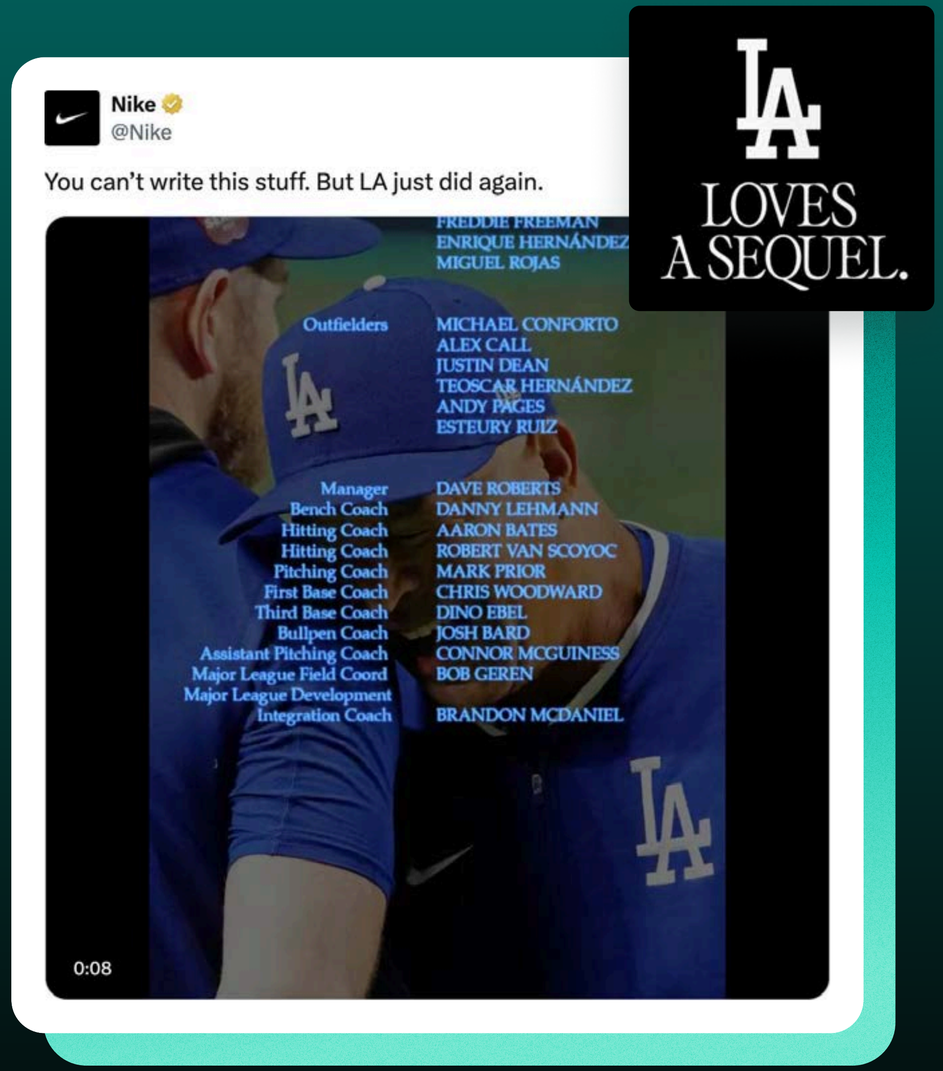
1. **Short-form video (<60 seconds) - 37%**
2. **Text-based posts - 36%**
3. **User-generated content - 26%**
4. **Static images - 21%**
5. **Influencer content - 21%**

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Nike

Nike has crafted some of the most iconic shoes and athletic wear of the past two centuries. Their collaborations with athletes-turned-spokespeople and athletes-turned-influencers have made their signature Swoosh one of the most recognizable brand logos of all time.

On X, Nike shares highly-produced short-form videos celebrating the biggest moments in sports and their latest product drops. They capture athletes defying what was previously believed possible, all while decked out in Nike gear. With over 10 million followers, they continue to capture consumer attention on X.



Pinterest has gone from mood board to shopping list

Almost one-third of social media users have a Pinterest account, and it's most popular among Gen Z, Millennials and women. Pinterest's appeal comes from its long-established reputation as a positive source of inspiration. Because Pinterest's user base is smaller, only about 16% of consumers overall are most likely to turn to the network to discover products. But those that do are highly engaged and ready to buy.

34% of consumers are most likely to interact with Shoppable Pins when engaging with brands on the network (second only to the 38% who prefer static images). Another 21% say they want brands to share more educational product information. And even though Baby Boomers aren't a primary audience on the network, over a quarter say they turn to Pinterest more than other networks to discover products.

Brands are welcome and encouraged to build a Pinterest presence. Of all the social networks, Pinterest is one the places consumers least mind brands showing up, second only to YouTube. 70% of users interact with brand content at least once per week, and that figure rises to 78% among Gen Z.

How users want brands to show up on Pinterest

1. **Posting entertaining content - 23%**
2. **Sharing educational product information - 21%**
3. **Partnering with influencers - 13%**
4. **Providing customer service and support - 13%**
5. **Interacting with other brand accounts - 10%**

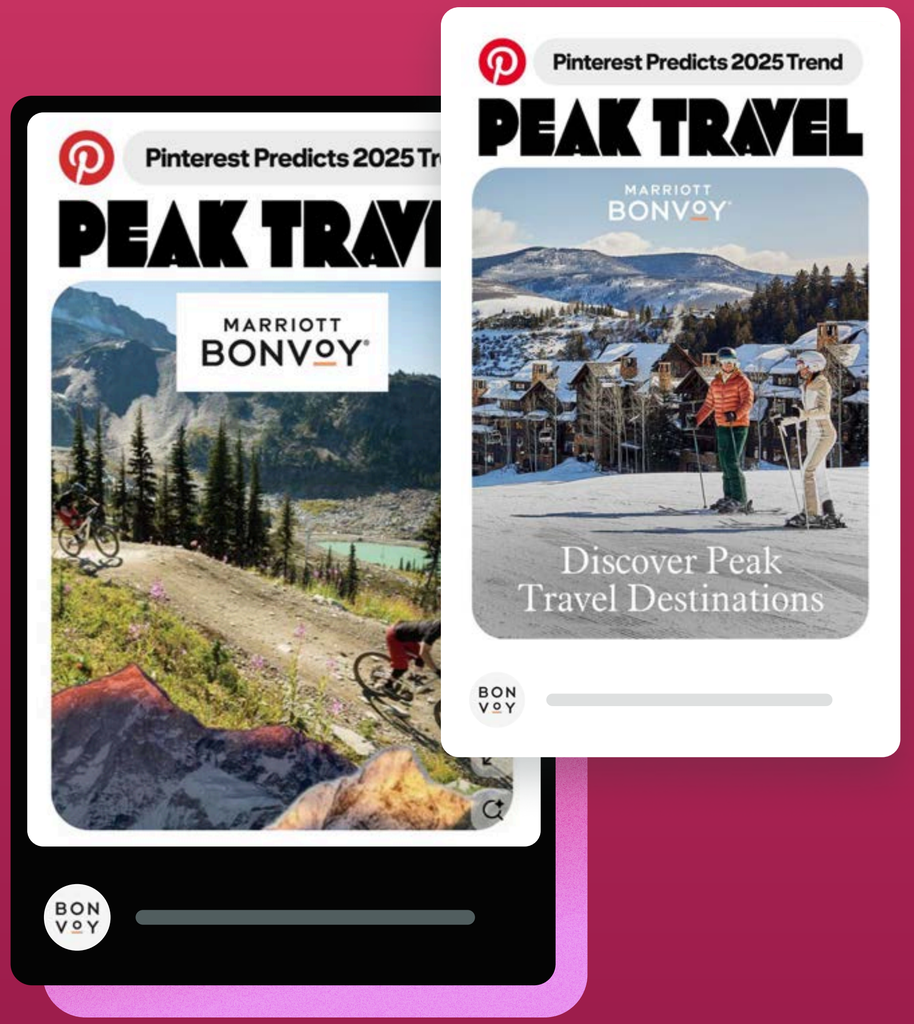
How likely each generation is to use Pinterest as their primary network for product discovery

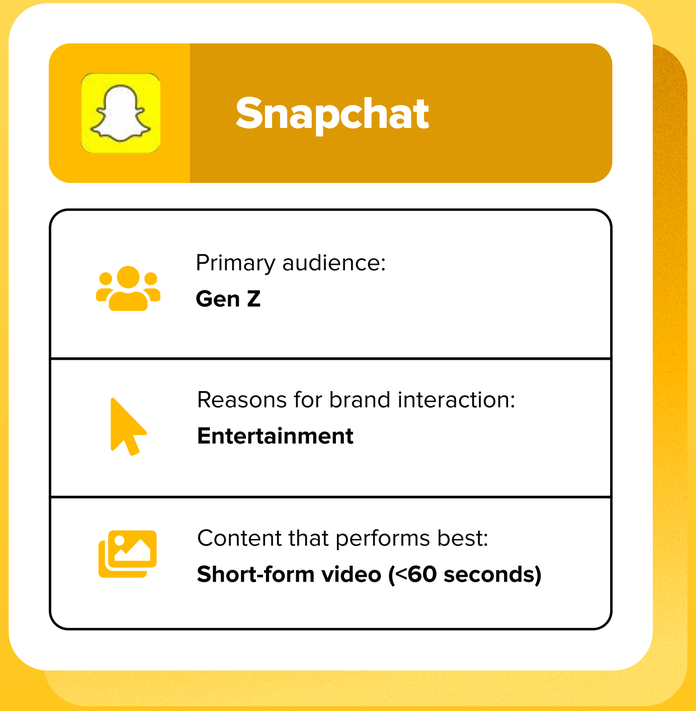
1. **Baby Boomers:** 26%
2. **Gen X:** 20%
3. **Gen Z:** 12%
4. **Millennials:** 10%

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Marriott Bonvoy

Marriott Bonvoy is a travel loyalty program that offers consumers experiences with extraordinary hotel brands. To reach high-intent travel audiences, Marriott Bonvoy sponsored a trend from Pinterest Predicts, the platform's annual forecasting report that identifies what will be trending in the future based on growing data signals. Marriott Bonvoy then turned the “Peak Travel” insights into a targeted campaign on the network, which drove **15x higher lift in brand awareness compared to vertical average and 5x higher lift in message association**.





Snapchat is having a resurgence

The king of ephemeral content is back on top. **Over one-third of all social users have a Snapchat presence, but that rises to 60% among Gen Z.** The network, which first launched in 2011, is catapulting back into the zeitgeist.

Even though only 30% of companies have built and maintain a Snapchat presence, about 75% of Gen Z and Millennial users interact with brand content at least once per week—leaving ample ground for growth and engagement.

Unsurprisingly, short-form video (<60 seconds)—the network's bread and butter—is still the brand content users are most likely to engage with. But new technology is gaining attention, as 25% of consumers say they're most likely to engage with brand-sponsored AR lenses.

When it comes to why they turn to brands on the network, most consumers are simply looking to be entertained. But some are also interested in learning about contests and giveaways, watching influencer content and joining smaller, niche communities.

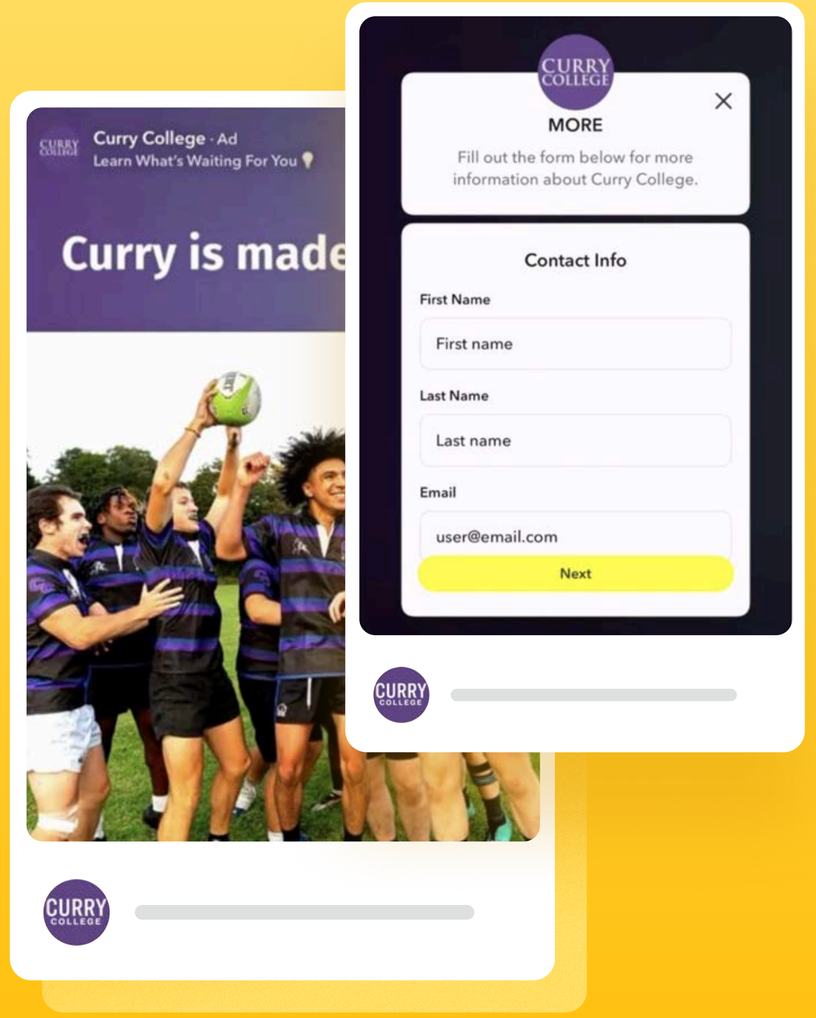
How users want brands to show up on Snapchat

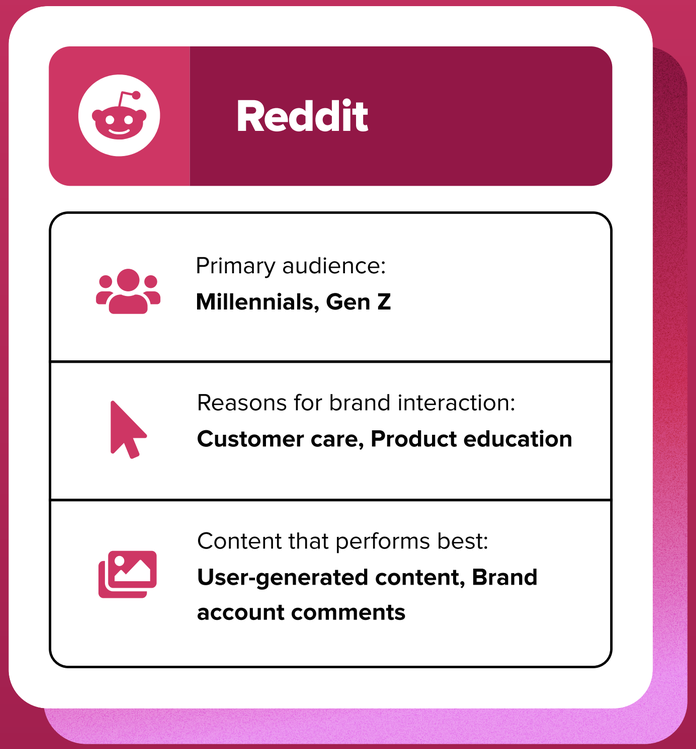
1. **Entertaining content - 29%**
2. **Promoting contests and giveaways - 15%**
3. **Partnering with influencers - 12%**
4. **Managing smaller communities - 12%**
5. **Providing customer service and support - 11%**

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Curry College

Curry College is a private liberal arts university outside of Boston, Massachusetts. The university realized traditional media channels weren't cutting it when it came to recruiting Gen Z students, so they turned to Snapchat. On the platform, Curry ran an ad campaign using geographic and psychographic audience data that resulted in an 88% conversion rate and an 89% lower CPA compared to other channels





Reddit is an audience insights goldmine

Reddit is the network on the tip of everyone's tongue, from influencer thought leaders to your CMO. That's in part because nearly one-third of all social users turn to Reddit for connecting with niche communities, making it the perfect space to learn about your exact customers.

Though only 22% of social users have a Reddit profile, that doesn't account for the other casual lurkers who end up on the platform through a search engine. Reddit's actual influence is hard to quantify.

When interacting with brands on Reddit, 54% of users are most likely to engage with user-generated content, followed by brand comments in user and brand-moderated subreddits.

Additionally, users are most likely to say they want companies to show up on Reddit to provide customer service. But It's important to note that 14% don't want brands on Reddit at all. When building a Reddit strategy, prioritize showing up when users specifically request your help. Otherwise, use the network to listen and learn, not create robust publishing strategies.

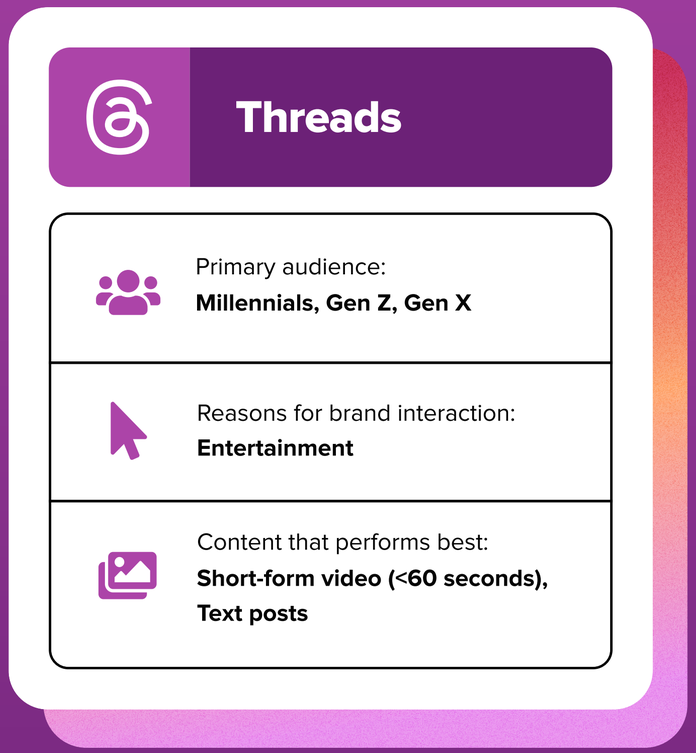
How users want brands to show up on Reddit

1. Providing customer service and support - 21%
2. Sharing educational product information - 16%
3. Posting entertaining content - 14%
4. I do not want companies showing up on Reddit - 14%
5. Managing smaller communities - 11%

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Ramp

Financial technology company Ramp provides business credit cards that deliver spend visibility and control. The brand manages their own subreddit, which serves as a hub for customer service questions and product feedback, along with AMAs hosted by Ramp executives. The subreddit receives healthy engagement, with 2,300 ramplings and 25 weekly contributions. Ramp also weighs in on other subreddits regularly, responding to questions about corporate credit cards.



Threads is maintaining its slice of the social ecosystem

Meta’s Threads platform, designed for sharing timely updates and creating public conversations, has seen massive growth since it debuted at the end of 2023. Yet, only 15% of our survey respondents currently have a Threads profile, a consistent finding from our 2024 Social Media Content Strategy Report. This percentage increases slightly for Gen Z and Millennials.

When it comes to brand content on the network, most social users want to be entertained above all else. But there's a growing segment interested in educational product information.

Users say they're most likely to interact with short-form video (<60 seconds) and text posts, followed by user-generated and influencer content. About 30% of users typically engage with brand content on Threads at least once a week.

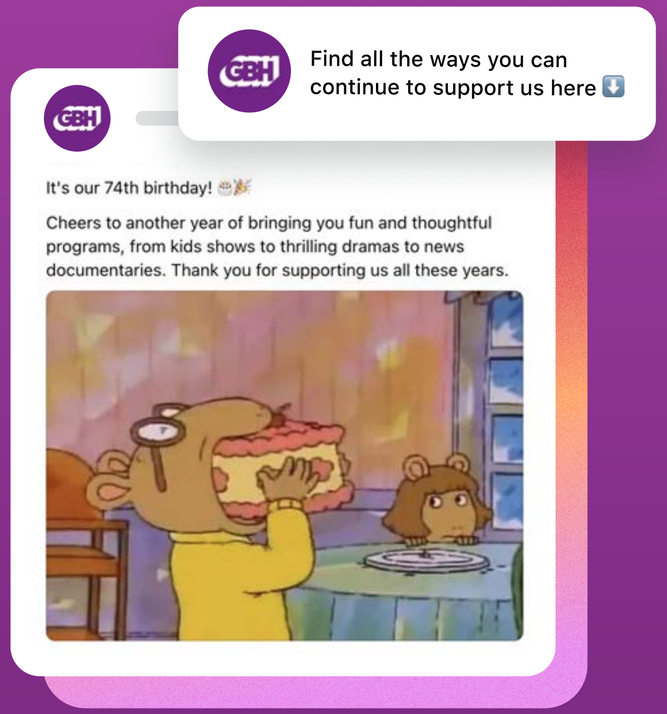
How users want brands to show up on Threads

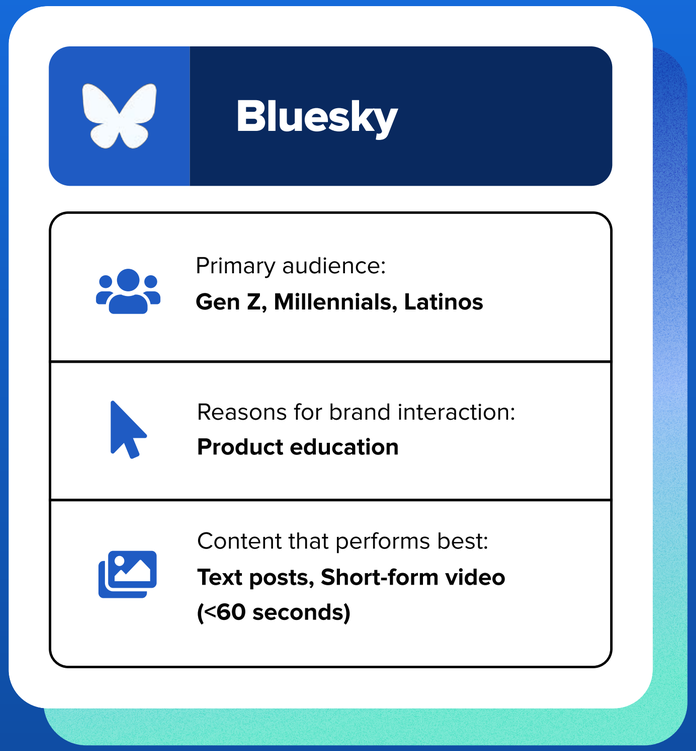
1. Posting entertaining content - 28%
2. Sharing educational product content - 15%
3. Partnering with influencers - 14%
4. Providing customer service and support - 14%
5. Promoting contests and giveaways - 11%

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

GBH

GBH is a Boston-based public media producer, creating local news, nationally-distributed television programs, classical music programming, educational resources and events. The organization uses Threads to keep viewers in the know about program updates, fundraise amid budget uncertainty and create nostalgia for vintage television. GBH boasts 30,000 followers on Threads, and receives hundreds of engagements on most posts.





Bluesky is one to watch

Thanks in part to the way Bluesky allows users to control what shows up in their feed, the network has grown considerably since its launch in February 2024. **While only 5% of social media users say they currently have Bluesky profiles,** active user growth is trending upward. And 51% say they use Bluesky over other networks because of its customizable feed options.**

When users interact with brands on Bluesky, they're most likely to engage with text-based posts, followed by short-form video, static images and user-generated content. Users are primarily looking for educational product information, but also seek out entertainment and customer service.

39% of consumers say Bluesky's lack of traditional advertising and content control features make them more likely to interact with brands on the network.** Already, 65% of users engage with brand content at least once a week.

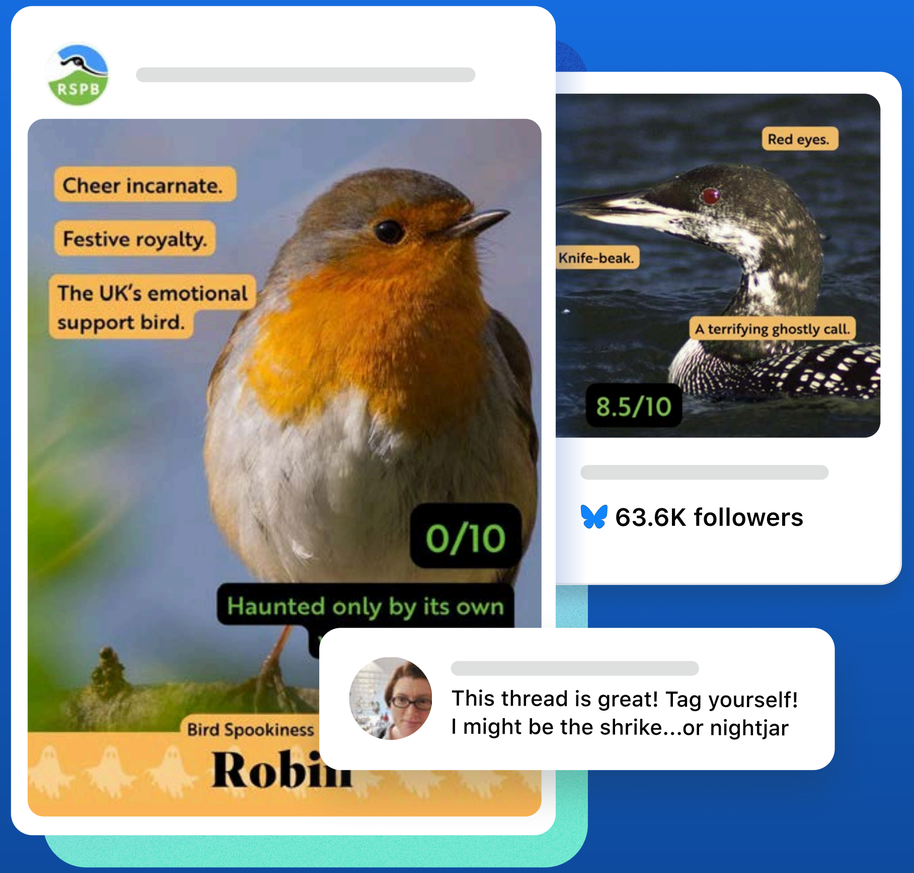
How users want brands to show up on Bluesky

1. **Sharing educational product information - 25%**
2. **Posting entertaining content - 22%**
3. **Providing customer service and support - 17%**

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

RSPB

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is a UK-based nonprofit organization whose mission revolves around the conversation of birds and wildlife. On Bluesky, the organization informs their 60,000 followers about little-known bird facts and actionable steps they can take to protect vulnerable ecosystems. RSPB also weaves in relatable, hilarious bird-inspired memes to drum up engagement.



Substack is still finding its footing, but has potential

Substack, the creator-led media platform, has origins in long-form text content, but is quickly becoming a go-to source of video, podcast and short-form content. **Only 3% of social media users currently have Substack profiles,** but the network is gaining traction as consumers move toward closed, community-driven spaces.

When it comes to engaging with brands on Substack, almost half of users prefer to read short-form text Notes—an unexpected finding given the network's beginnings. Another 44% say they're most likely to interact with long-form newsletters, followed by 38% who say discussion threads.

Most users say they want brands to share educational product information, an important note for brands considering launching their own newsletter. Already, 75% of users say they interact with brands at least once per week, suggesting company Substacks are becoming increasingly common.

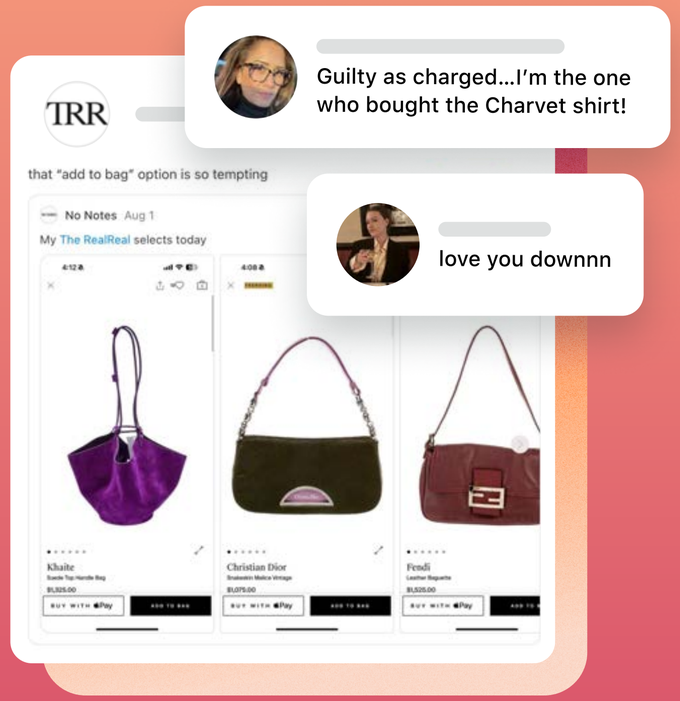
How users want brands to show up on Substack

1. **Sharing educational product information - 32%**
2. **Interacting with other brand accounts - 16%**
3. **Posting entertaining content - 13%**
4. **Partnering with creators on the platform - 11%**

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

TheRealReal

As one of the first brands to create a Substack presence, TheRealReal's strategy on the network stands out as particularly innovative. In their newsletters, TheRealReal delves into what luxury goods are selling on their consignment online marketplace, what's trending each season and how to wear the latest fashions. They also have a consistent Notes publishing cadence, restacking top creator posts and sharing quips inspired by their platform. These efforts have contributed to their impressive following of 4,800 subscribers.



Go where *your audience* is

Despite consumers' seemingly insatiable appetite for content, think twice before going everywhere and trying to build a platform on every network. Instead, dig deeply into social insights to unearth where your distinct audience spends their time. Make sure you clearly understand the nuances of when and how they want to engage with you.

Going all-in on AI-generated content won't solve for crucial audience knowledge gaps. The best use of AI is as an analyst, a window into your audience's needs and behavior.

Because reaching consumers in today's landscape starts with showing your followers you "get" them, staying adaptable and prioritizing content that resonates.

Remember: Audiences want to be listened to, not posted at.

Global marketers' confidence in their content strategy

Country	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
All	1%	29%	70%
Australia	0%	19%	81%
UK	1%	30%	69%
US	0%	30%	70%

How global marketers say their company's social strategy has been impacted by the current social and political climate

Country	We have more restrictions around the types of content we publish and influencers we partner with	We still have autonomy over the types of content we publish and influencers we partner with, but there are more internal approvals required	The current climate has had no impact on our social content strategy
All	39%	44%	17%
Australia	56%	28%	15%
UK	39%	43%	18%
US	36%	47%	18%

How much global marketers' social media strategies are dedicated to responding to emerging trends or cultural moments

Country	Less than 10%	10-25%	25–50%	50-75%	75-100%
All	8%	27%	34%	25%	5%
Australia	9%	26%	32%	26%	7%
UK	10%	31%	32%	23%	4%
US	6%	24%	37%	26%	6%

Content strategy highlights: Australia

Top platforms Australian social media users plan to spend more time on in 2026*

37%	27%	25%

Top platforms Australian marketers plan to invest more resources into in 2026

79%	70%	60%

Australian marketers' top 5 social media priorities in 2026

1. Surprise-and-delight moments
2. Social selling
3. Interacting with audiences in smaller digital spaces
4. Personalized customer service
5. Episodic content

Content strategy highlights: UK

Top platforms UK social media users plan to spend more time on in 2026*

34%	29%	25%

Top platforms UK marketers plan to invest more resources into in 2026

73%	69%	64%

UK marketers' top 5 social media priorities in 2026

1. Experimenting with AI-generated content
2. Episodic content
3. Long-term collaborations with influencers
4. Social selling / Surprise-and-delight moments
5. Interacting with audiences in smaller digital spaces / Collaborating with other companies

Content strategy highlights: US

Top platforms US social media users plan to spend more time on in 2026*

46%	37%	31%

Top platforms US marketers plan to invest more resources into in 2026

72%	69%	59%

US marketers' top 5 social media priorities in 2026

1. Episodic content
2. Experimenting with AI-generated content
3. Long-term collaborations with influencers
4. Surprise-and-delight moments
5. Collaborating with other companies

About the data

Unless otherwise indicated via the symbols below, the research cited in this report was conducted online by Panoplai on behalf of Sprout Social. Consumer participants included 2,305 respondents across the US, UK and Australia who have at least one social media account and follow at least five brands on social media. The survey was conducted between October 6–16, 2025.

*Q4 2025 Sprout Pulse Survey. The data referenced was collected via an online survey of 2,270 consumers in the US, UK and Australia conducted by Panoplai on behalf of Sprout. The survey was conducted online from September 25-28, 2025.

**Q3 2025 Sprout Pulse Survey. The data referenced was collected via an online survey of 2,250 consumers in the US, UK and Australia conducted by Glimpse on behalf of Sprout. The survey was conducted online from July 21-28, 2025.

*^2025 Best Times to Post on Social Media Report. Sprout Social's Data Science team gathers this information by analyzing nearly 2 billion engagements across 400,000 social profiles across X, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest and TikTok.

^^**The 2025 Impact of Social Media Marketing Report.** The data referenced was conducted via an online survey by Glimpse on behalf of Sprout Social in the US, UK and Australia. Participants included 1,200 marketing leaders whose seniority ranged from manager to CMO, and who listed social media among their responsibilities. All surveys were conducted from May 30-June 20, 2025.

About Sprout Social

Sprout Social is a global leader in social media management and analytics software, built on the belief that All Business is Social℠. Sprout's intuitive platform puts powerful social data into the hands of approximately 30,000 brands so they can deliver smarter, faster business impact.

Named the #1 Best Software Product by G2's 2024 Best Software Award, Sprout offers comprehensive publishing and engagement functionality, customer care, influencer marketing, advocacy, crisis management, and AI-powered, predictive business intelligence.

Sprout's software operates across all major social media networks and digital platforms. For more information about Sprout Social (NASDAQ: SPT), visit sproutsocial.com.

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