



Nordic  
Social

FUTURE OF  
SOCIAL MEDIA

TEN TRENDS FOR 2022 AND BEYOND



# Preface

Social media is changing.

And not just in the way social media is used by consumers or brands.

Social media is actively changing the world.

It no longer simply helps us “connect to people”.

Social media has paved the way for a myriad of jobs and industries that now flourish solely through social media.

It helps to push societal boundaries, influence political elections, shed light on important issues and has even become the primary source of news-sharing and education for the younger generations.

Besides this, it has become a societal epicenter, and not just for entertainment purposes.

Today, social media is one of the main determining factors of what is culturally relevant and acceptable.

Thus, putting your head in the sand will not only ostracize you from your peers but may have dire consequences for all social media professionals and the brands they represent.

The social media landscape has changed radically since I took my first social steps at the end of 2018.

It has become an astronomical field with a myriad of different platforms, approaches, and strategies.

If you dive deep enough into the rabbit hole, there’s a real chance you won’t emerge again.

Therefore, it is no wonder that there’s a lot of doubt among professionals about how to behave on social media to drive results for their brands.

This e-book will attempt to shed light on some of the major social media trends and look ahead to what the future of social media looks like.

However, it’s not just me pretending to have a Magic-8-Ball.

In each of the sections, you will also find key insights from relevant industry profiles, for you to also learn and draw inspiration from them.

Despite social media moving at such an incredible speed, it’s never a bad idea to plan ahead.

After all, we all want to know what the future holds.

Right?







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# Introduction

## A Changing Paradigm

I could easily open up this e-book with the usual boring statistics about how many are present on social media, or about the steadily increasing number of people who use mobile devices, but that would leave neither you nor me any wiser.

Instead, I will present you with a shift in mindset that all brands should adopt when it comes to social media.

This shift was first brought to my attention years ago during a podcast episode with an industry colleague - Thomas Bigum.

To put this new paradigm into context, let's do some storytelling.

In the past, interactions between brands and consumers looked like this: Companies spoke downwards towards the market. They were in the driver's seat and dictated the course of action.

Imagine a family back in the '80s. They gather around the TV in the evening, only to be exposed to the same commercials as the neighbor next door, which, incidentally, were often regular topics of discussion.

In many respects, the big corporations that could afford to advertise had a monopoly on attention at the time.

Consumers looked to them for knowledge and guidance and blindly trusted them through the new age of consumerism.

As you may have realized, this is not quite the picture we see today. In fact, it is the exact opposite.

Brands today are shouting upwards to the market in the hope of being heard through the noise.

It is a symbol that the market, or the consumer, has taken control.

They are no longer ignorant consumers looking for guidance. They are enlightened. They are empowered.

Peer-to-peer reviews, internet forums, Facebook groups, FAQs, and not to mention Google and YouTube.

Consumers no longer need brands to tell them what to say, think and do.

They can figure it out for themselves.

And what does that mean, then? It means that you - as a brand - must be humble and approachable.

The tables have turned. It is now you who owe them something - not the other way around.



As consumers become more powerful, you must do everything you can to put your brand on the right path.

You need to adopt the right mindset in order to create value for your target audience and stay relevant in an increasingly competitive marketplace, without necessarily expecting anything in return.

Most social media professionals will no doubt know Gary Vaynerchuck and his famous “Jab, jab, jab - right hook” strategy.

Simply put, you need to give three times as much as you take (sometimes a lot more). Sounds easy enough, right?

Well, not so much.

Although social media professionals’ primary task should be to serve their target audience, KPIs, new product launches, and whimsical wishes from senior management often get in the way.

We need to be able to justify the investment into a proper social media presence, and not just paid advertising.

Also, it must go beyond mere banalities,

such as “because our target audience is there” or “because our competitors are”.

It goes deeper than that.

My hope is that by the end of this e-book, you will not only be able to pave the way for your brand on social media by tapping into the future trends, but also be able to justify the importance of a proper social media presence to your senior management.

And if not, give me a call, and I’ll do it for you.



**THOMAS BIGUM**  
Partner & CMO  
Bigum & Co.



The paradigm shift hasn’t sunk in yet. In 2020’s a lot of businesses are run by people who still has a lot to learn about being genuinely social. They may be top graduates in school. But at the school party they show an immense lack of what’s known as good old fashioned ‘game’. Luckily, every industry seems to have their frontrunners to look up to. So look up.”







#1

**Moments,  
not marketing**



## #1 Moments, not marketing

Unfortunately, the title of this chapter is not done by my hand, but by Carlos Gil (the author of “End of Marketing”). But the thoughts behind it are now more valid than ever.

Marketers need to realize that consumers simply aren't that passionate about their products, CVI's, beautifully coordinated graphs, or their precious USPs.

Contrary to belief, this is not why most consumers get up in the morning.

Consumers don't want to be sold to. At least not in the way that most marketers may be used to.

They want to be engaged. They want to be entertained. They want to be a part of something.

Thus, we cannot expect consumers to come running to us whenever we post another salesy social media post, simply displaying pack shots of your products, produced in a professional studio far away from your target audience.

It takes more to succeed on social media today.

As I mentioned earlier, social media has taken a central determining role in what is deemed culturally relevant and acceptable.

This, in turn, means that social media professionals need to turn their keen eyes outwards and away from their organization.

Away from the C-suite, KPIs and annual marketing plans.

Put simply, you need to spend less time thinking - and talking - about yourself and instead spend more time identifying unique opportunities for your brand.

### Key take-away:

Brands need to put themselves in the shoes of the consumer and adjust accordingly. What's going on in their world? What are they talking about? What are they doing?

The magic lies in connecting deep insights on your audience, actuality, and cultural relevance with your brands' unique identity.



You need to go where your audience is and join their conversation, instead of talking to yourself in hope of them coming to you.



## #1 Moments, not marketing

As Carlos Gil says “Don’t think like a marketer, think like a fan”.

Start focusing less on you and more on them. Make relevant and engaging content that your target audience actually wants.

And no. This doesn’t mean you should do silly dances on TikTok to stay relevant.

It also doesn’t mean you should jump on every new bandwagon simply because it’s culturally relevant

You don’t want to be the dog that barks at every car it sees. However, you do need to make it an organizational priority to identify new potential opportunities for your brand.

Otherwise, you will continue to tread water in the same lukewarm pool of yesteryear.

You should ask yourself: “What global movements, viral hashtags, and online conversations could suit our brand’s identity, purpose, product, or service?”

“What deep insights do we have on our target audience, and how can we tap into

this on an ongoing basis?”

It feels necessary to say that simply posting a rainbow-colored Instagram post during Pride week doesn’t cut it.

It takes more.



**JACOB WEINREICH**  
CMO  
TV2



While it’s possible to hit a time pocket where your product is so relevant that it can do with a simple price tag, the reality is often another story. Unless the brand appears culturally relevant and rethinks its marketing efforts, the consumer will quickly grow bored. Brands should strive to create brand engagement - regardless of their current position in the market.”





#2

Personalities,  
not Corporations





## #2 Personalities, not Corporations

The days where brands could lean back and hide behind their politically correct rhetoric are over.

The empowerment of the consumer has left them wanting more from brands. They can dictate how they want to be communicated to.

And so, the community manager needs the mandate to be agile and react as they see fit.

Given the rapid tempo of social media, there's no time to get every single response cleared through a communication or PR department, which in the past has left comments unanswered for several days, and even weeks. Agility is key.

Secondly, the language on social media is also a very unique thing, and if businesses neglect to communicate properly, consumers will see right through them.

Social media users don't want to interact with corporations, they want to interact with personalities.

They want to feel that there's a "real human" behind the other end of the screen. Simple as that.

And so, the "good brands" have begun to focus on bringing their inner voice to the surface.

You need to be active daily on your social media profiles and keep taps on the goings-on in the world.

## Key take-away:

Consumers don't want to interact with corporations, but with people. Simple as that.

The unique opportunities are fleeting, and you need to be quick.

See the following example of a Twitter Post from Weetabix, in which a multitude of businesses "join in on the fun", putting their unique stamp on the post, and gaining thousands of free impressions as a result.

Still don't believe me? Take a look at the comment on the far right from Yungee.

\*Mic drop\*

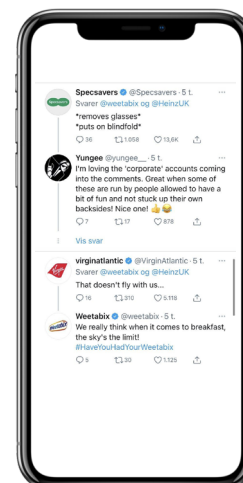
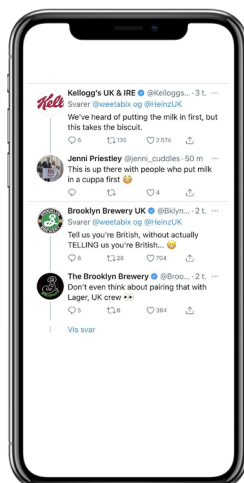
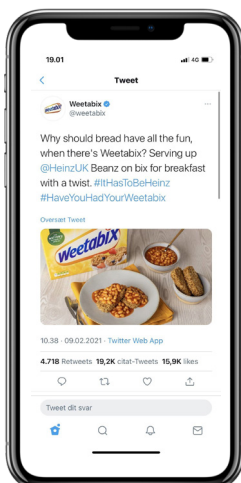


**KRISTINE LUNDSGAARD HAMMER**

Social Media Manager  
Royal Unibrew



The most important job for brands today is to maintain and strengthen the brand-consumer- relationship. This is not done by pushing commercial and corporate content on them but by inviting them in through relatable, humorous, and engaging content that leads to conversation and contributes to their lives in a meaningful way."





#3

# A New Content Paradigm





### #3 A New Content Paradigm

The consumer has more options and less time than ever.

In fact, there has never been more content in the world than there is today. And the time to consume it continues to shrink as consumers' social media presence is spread thinly on multiple platforms.

The obvious choice? They simply ignore stuff.

The current Swipe Culture has made the consumer incredibly adept at analyzing a piece of content in a matter of nanoseconds.

If it doesn't catch their attention, if it's too much work or it simply doesn't look appealing or engaging to them, they simply swipe their way through it.

This, along with ever-changing algorithms and a massive decrease in organic reach, puts a strain on social media professionals' creative capabilities.

What you need to realize is that the old content rules don't apply anymore.

#### **Key take-away:**

As the content options and users' desires change, social media marketers need to adjust their future content strategies accordingly. As author Arjun Basu said: "Without strategy, content is just stuff, and the world has enough stuff."

Posting studio-made product shots, corporate graphics, or unengaging company news simply don't cut it anymore.

There's a reason why apps are built the way they are.

Consumers want to press, swipe, and drag-n-drop. They want to interact.

They also don't want to look at boring and static content.

They want to be engaged and entertained.

Here are eight content trends you need to consider in the future:





### #3 A New Content Paradigm

#### **Video Will Continue Rising.**

Unless you've been living under a rock these past years, this shouldn't come as a surprise to you.

Whether short-form videos like TikToks or Instagram Reels or long-form videos such as IGTV, video has quickly risen to the top as one of the most engaging social media content formats.

Besides their obvious entertainment capabilities, and the fact that most platforms have implemented auto-play when you scroll past them, videos have a natural hook effect on us that draws our attention and keeps us engaged longer than a single image ever could.

And it's not just for entertainment purposes. In fact, much of the video content present on social media is centered around educational videos, such as tips & tricks, DIY, or tutorials.

A study by [Cisco](#) predicts that 82 pct. of all internet traffic in 2022 will be video-based, and according to [Statista](#), spending on video ads will increase a staggering 41 pct. from 2017-2024 in the US alone.

In 2021, [86 pct.](#) of businesses used video as a marketing tool, in comparison to 2016, in which only 61 pct. of businesses utilized it.

Whether helping marketers to increase brand awareness, build trust, or excite their target audience about their product or service, videos have proven themselves as a first-class content format that will only become more prevalent in the upcoming years.



### #3 A New Content Paradigm

#### **Content Downgrade is OK.**

This, obviously, doesn't mean that the consumer craves content of *poor quality*.

It means, however, that content no longer has to be polished for them to react and engage with it.

It's the message that gets people to react, not the messenger.

Content should be as native to the individual platform as possible, or else it will likely distance consumers that are expecting something else entirely.

Unless, of course, you're blazing new digital trails for the rest of us to follow.

I believe many marketers greatly underestimate the consumers.

They are incredibly adept at figuring out what content they *want to see*, and what they *want to ignore*.

Their antennas are always moving, scanning, and assessing.

So, unless you represent a high-end luxury brand, such as Rolex, Ferrari, or Louis Vuitton (where the audience has certain expectations) your content doesn't have to be polished to have an impact.

In fact, there's much evidence for the exact opposite.





## #3 A New Content Paradigm

### Entertainment is Crucial.

Social media users show up for a variety of reasons, but one thing often trumps them all<sup>123</sup>.

Entertainment.

Think about it.

Whenever you get an impulse to scroll through Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok, it is often a result of you being bored, or simply having one or two minutes to kill while waiting in line at the grocery store.

You want to be entertained.

You want to share fun and relatable content with your friends and family.

You want to have something to talk about with your colleagues at the lunch table.

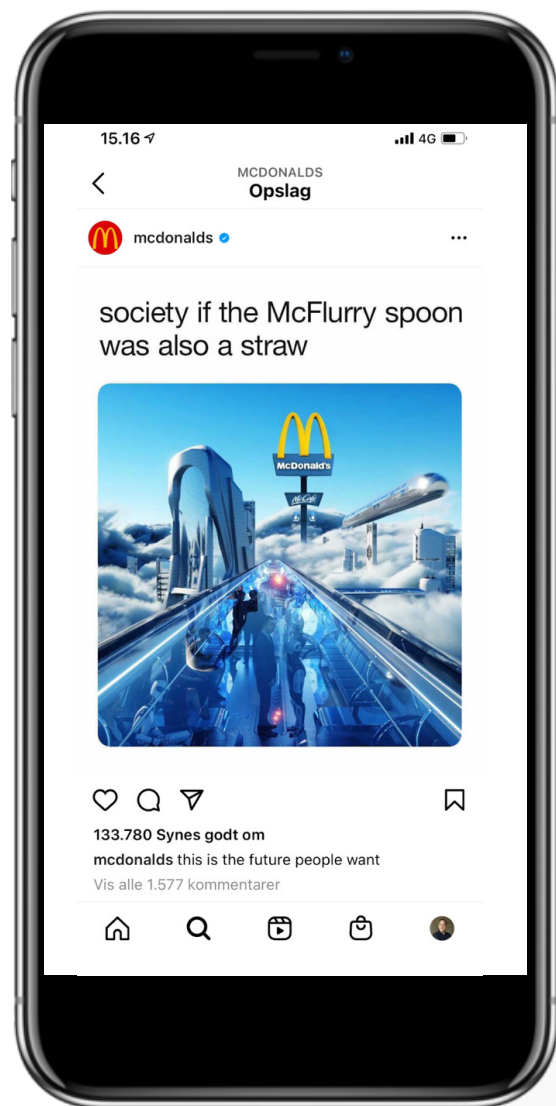
Despite social media taking on many more roles, entertainment still reigns supreme.

**39 pct.** of Danes use social media for entertainment purposes, and **34 pct.** of consumers will actively unfollow a brand if they find it boring.

Thus, social media professionals should seek to make entertainment a central part of their content strategy.

And no, it still doesn't mean you need to do silly dances on TikTok or begin to only post memes.

There are many ways to be entertaining, and they all start with deep insights into your target audience.



<sup>1</sup><https://www.marketingcharts.com/digital/social-media-116290>

<sup>2</sup><https://medium.com/@Derek.A.Franks/60-of-people-want-to-be-entertained-on-social-media-so-how-do-you-do-that-3fc27f3abc25>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.prdaily.com/report-consumers-want-to-be-entertained-on-social-media/>

### #3 A New Content Paradigm

#### **Collabs & Remixes is Gaining Ground.**

Another major trend that will only continue to grow, is collaborations & remixes.

As you may know, TikTok (“duets” & “stitches”) and Instagram and Facebook (“remixes”) have already implemented features where users can engage in collaborative content creation with other users.

This allows users - and brands - to blend content together, which in turn opens up endless creative possibilities.

Many creators simply recreate other users’ popular content, and in that way tap into something culturally relevant.

Take, for example, the CEO of Ocean Spray who recreated the viral TikTok of a guy skateboarding with Ocean Spray in hand and “Dreams” by Fleetwood Mac in ears.

In the future, brands need to be open to experimentation, organizationally prepared to leverage trends, and urge their followers to interact and collaborate with their content in new creative ways.





### #3 A New Content Paradigm

#### Sounds are in.

Speaks, voiceovers, lip-syncs, and trendy songs have begun to dominate social media.

Despite social media, historically speaking, primarily has been visual media, it has begun to change its ways.

With an endless list of popular trends accompanied by trending songs, TikTok has created a myriad of now international super-stars and even invented entire music categories.

According to TikTok 65 pct. of TikTok users want to hear original sounds from brands, 68 pct. of TikTok users say that it helps them remember the brand better, while 58 pct. say they feel a stronger connection to the brand.



Instagram has also followed suit with their now popular reels format, also supported by popular music and sounds.

To promote his new album release, Kato (American Producer) created a challenge in which he urged social media users to collaborate and create their own unique compositions on his tracks.

The result?

A staggering 4 million impressions and thousands of unique remixes of his songs.

But he's not the only one. And it's not just relevant for the music industry.

In the future, brands should seek to create a unique "sound" identity (branded soundtracks, jingles, and sounds) so that the brand not only has the same visual appearance across platforms and campaigns, but also the same auidial vibes.

As Sonic Branding Expert Karsten Kjems told me: "Having an audio identity is a must-have in a digital world with only two senses for brands to use. Seeing and Hearing. You don't communicate effectively by not utilizing the power of sound and music. Also, having an Audio identity equals more revenue and brand equity. Research shows that 20% of your adults are more inclined to choose or buy a product from a brand with a sonic identity than those without. How much worth to your brand would it be if your brand could be recognized in sound?"

## #3 A New Content Paradigm

### Native Ads is Filling up the Feeds.

As mentioned previously, brands should seek to create native content across platforms, and the same goes for paid advertising.

Consumers expect to see non-disruptive ads that fit seamlessly with the rest of the content on their social media feeds.

Many studies have shown the positive effects of native advertising on consumers' purchase intention, which is said to be increased by 18 pct. by employing native ads<sup>45</sup>.

The general notion is that they “trick” the consumer into thinking they are not watching an ad, which in turn makes them more likely to watch it through.

This hypothesis, however, has been debunked on several occasions.

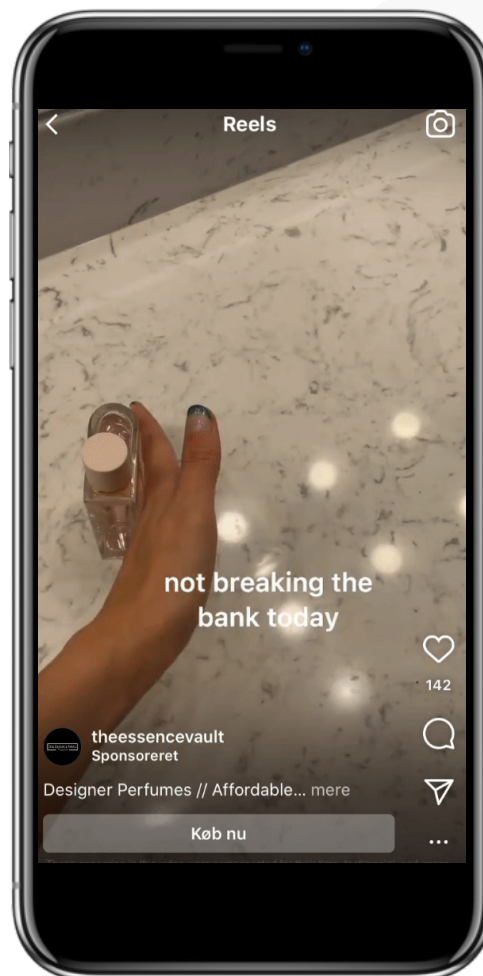
Among others, a **study** from Stanford University found that native advertising no longer “fools us anymore”.

But despite social media users being savvy enough to identify an ad when they see one, native ads are still working wonders on their purchase intentions.

Successful social media ads, however, don't just have to be native to succeed.

To even be in the race, native ads need to be able to stop the scrolling.

Social media ads need a powerful hook, something that catches your attention and draws you in.



After all, if people don't stop to watch the ad, the impression is just about worthless.

They should also be entertaining, informative, personalized, and credible to also drive conversions.

So, the next time you get told to repurpose the great-looking TV campaign, hopefully, you'll have a good response ready.

Social media ads need to be native. Period.

<sup>4</sup><https://research.cbs.dk/en/studentProjects/native-advertising-on-social-media-an-empirical-analysis-among-mi>

<sup>5</sup><https://blog.nativeadvertisinginstitute.com/native-advertising-ultimate-guide>



### #3 A New Content Paradigm

#### Ephemeral Content Continues to Grow.

Even if you're not yet acquainted with ephemeral content as a term, I assure you that you're familiar with the concept behind it.

Ephemeral content is content that's only available in a short duration, usually 24 hours, after which it disappears.

As you know, the consumers' attention span is fleeting, and their preference on how to consume content has changed.

This is where ephemeral content, such as Instagram stories, gets its merits.

They're short, engaging, interactive, and highly addictive, as they can keep you scrolling for hours on end.

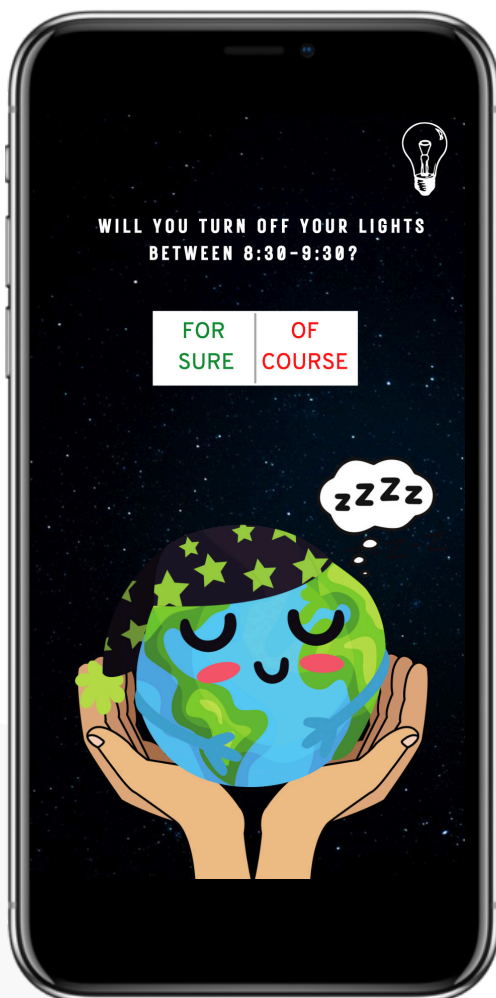
This wave was initiated when Snapchat introduced its "stories" format in 2013, users began sharing content (moments) that were worthy of being shown to their friends, but not quite worthy of being preserved forever on their social media profiles.

Since then, Instagram followed suit with the introduction of Instagram stories in 2016 and Facebook stories came along in 2017 - the first being among the most popular ephemeral content formats today.

In more recent years other platforms have attempted to ride the same wave, with varying success.

LinkedIn and Twitter both discontinued their attempts due to poor adoption by their users, but stories are still very popular among social media users in general.

TikTok is also launching a similar format during 2022, and a new social media platform (BeReal) is entirely centered around ephemeral content, highlighting its continuous popularity.

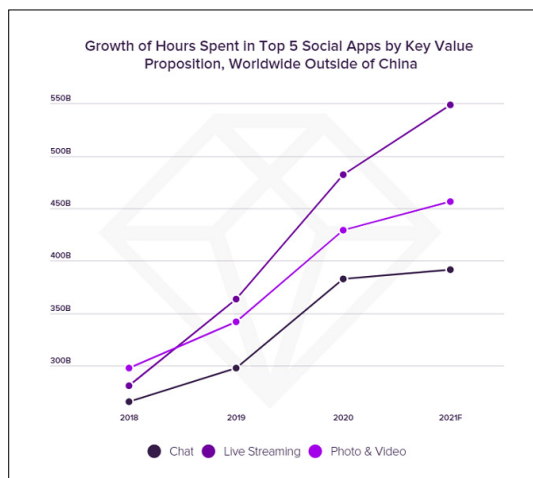


## #3 A New Content Paradigm

### Live Content is Growing.

COVID has had unprecedented implications on a multitude of industries, businesses, and even our way of living, but it has also paved the way for new entertainment options and ways of consuming content.

One of these is live-streaming, which has seen a massive increase in the last few years, as seen in the following graph.



Despite COVID being on the retreat, live-streaming will likely continue to soar, and not just on social media.

Consumers are now used to being able to experience their favorite brands, celebrities, and influencers in a real-time and unedited fashion.

Both Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have established live-streaming features of their own, each with varying popularity.

But why should brands even bother going live?

Well, by going live you can get instant feedback from your audience, connect with them on a deeper level and create a sense of community around your brand.

If this isn't enough, it allows you to skip the line in most social media platforms,

as live content is often prioritized by the algorithms.

So, how can brands utilize this powerful tool in the future?

The opportunities are endless, but here are some examples.

You can: give an exclusive sneak peek into your new collection or product release; share exciting news about your company or industry, or you can establish a Q&A with your target audience surrounding certain issues or questions they may have.

As Hootsuite rightly wrote: "Viewers love live video. The algorithm loves live video" - so why not get on board?



**JACOB WEINREICH**  
CMO  
TV2



We have long since passed the time when, for purposes other than convenience, you could spread the same type of content across all your platforms. Brands have to accept that if they want to achieve the best effect, they'll have to work according to the premise of the respective platform. Simple as that."





**How do we keep up?**

CONSTANT EVOLUTION!

**#4**

**Extracting and  
Applying Data**

## #4 Extracting and Applying Data

In later years data has become the talk of the town. I'm inclined to call it the digital gold fever.

Instead of searching for gold in makeshift mine shafts in California, marketers are 'mining' data, and going out of their way to make sure that they are "data-based, "data-driven", or at the very minimum, "data-informed".

Everyone wants to show - or think - that they are at the forefront of development.

No one wants to be left behind.

This gold data rush has, however, resulted in many marketers feeling overwhelmed by the abundance of data available.

We all know the term "Death by PowerPoint".

I now present you with "Death by Data".

I've talked to many a company who proudly present all their data, their reports, and their dashboards as if it was some form of an admission ticket.

But when asked "Why?" or "How have you applied it?", many fall short in answering.

Few ever make sense of their data. Thus, few put actions behind them.

As Bob Hoffman (founder of LinkedIn) said: "Without facts and principles, data is useless"

### **Social Media Data.**

Social media data can help you to understand how your target audience reacts, consumes, and engages with your social media content and paid social campaigns.

This, in turn, can help you to continuously improve your efforts and adjust your strategy in the right direction, as well as

### **Key take-away:**

Whether insights regarding their audience, products, or content, the brands with the most valid data who, of course, also manage to utilize it properly and merge it with creativity, may likely be the brands standing on the podium in the future social media arena.

showcase the impact of your social media presence to senior management.

When used correctly, data can eliminate the guessing and guide you towards what is moving the needle.

It can help you determine the right channels, the right times to post, the right content, the right frequency, and the right communicative means.

### **Look Outwards.**

However, simply looking at your own data will result in nothing more than limiting blinders that don't show the entire picture.

It's a bit like driving in a car where all the windows, except the windshield, are covered.

By glancing outwards through your side mirrors, you can gain comparative data insights on your competitors' efforts and establish industry benchmarks for you to aim towards (and beyond).

This is especially useful when you are just starting out and have a sparse data foundation.



## #4 Extracting and Applying Data

### **Don't follow it blindly.**

It is also important to note that simply following your data blindly is no-bueno.

If you keep creating the same type of content because it worked wonders last month, you're continually presenting the platforms with the same type of input, which may leave you none the wiser.

In other words, it is not enough to only follow "what seems to work", you need to establish a testing mindset and test out new types of content, copy, and formats.

This provides the social media platforms with new inputs on an ongoing basis, and can greatly accommodate plateauing and tiring your audience by simply copy-pasting.

### **What about KPIs?**

Well, just like kids in a candy store, it's easy for marketers to get carried away and simply focus on everything. This is poor practice and often leads nowhere.

Your KPIs should both be in accordance with your brand's current status in the market, the platforms you're present on, as well as your short- and long-term goals.

Just starting out? Your primary goal should be to create awareness of your brand, and thus, you should primarily look at metrics such as reach, impressions, followers & mentions.

Are you well-established and looking to increase engagement with your audience and even drive conversions? Then you should look at metrics such as saves, comments, likes, engagement rate, time

spent, as well as traffic and conversions.

When it comes to KPIs, it's good to be bold, yet realistic. Keep track of your progress as you go, and follow up on your KPIs every month - revise them quarterly.

### **Data of Tomorrow?**

As we know, data is becoming sparser.

Instagram likes are being phased out, shares are no longer visible, and the introduction of IOS14 has resulted in poorer tracking and retargeting capabilities, reduced attribution measurement, and the prolonging of data windows, making it more difficult to react and optimize ads in a timely manner.

And with Android looking to make a similar shift within the next couple of years, marketing professionals will have to adjust, as everything points in the direction of a future without cookies or relevant consumer data, which is slowly slipping away from our fingers.

Since the introduction of GDPR in 2016, the demand for privacy has spiked massively. In fact, 91% of consumers are concerned about the amount of data companies can collect on them<sup>6</sup>.

Given this development, many brands have begun gathering 1st party data, such as e-mail lists, which is guaranteed to prove valuable in a cookie-less future.

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.iprospect.com/en/global/news-and-insights/insights/in-brands-we-trust/>

## #4 Extracting and Applying Data

There are also tactics that can be employed to accommodate the lack of data in social media advertising, such as:

- Implementing Conversion API's
- Domain Verification
- Establishing Conversion Events
- Utilizing Contextual Targeting instead of behavioral targeting
- Investing in unblockable out-of-home campaigns (e.g., on busses or billboards).

Given the amount of digital noise and increased competition, brands also need to invest heavily into creating captivating and creative content that catches the consumer's attention.



**STEFFEN HEDEBRANDT**

Co-Founder  
Dreamdata



Data is a game of competitive advantage. It's about knowing more than your competitors. But remember - data always needs to be supplemented with gut-feeling and experience. Sounds too good to be true? It probably is. Absolutely no conversions? Tracking is probably broken."







#5

# Technologies of Tomorrow

## #5 Technologies of Tomorrow

In addition to our desire to be data-driven, technological development has paved the way for a myriad of tools and techniques that, in many ways, are now revolutionizing our industry.

So, what are some of the biggest technology trends right now?

### **AI & Machine Learning.**

This one shouldn't come as a shock. In fact, besides the massive chatter on data in general, AI and machine learning have come front and center in marketing departments around the world.

Almost all social media platforms are based around AI and machine learning. This allows you to tap into their powerful algorithms and targeting capabilities, but this is just the beginning.

Third-party tools based on AI have started to flood the marketplace. We've tried a couple of them out, and despite them still being in their early stages they can provide some incredible insights by processing a vast amount of data in no time and highlight trends, tendencies, and nuances that we humans are simply incapable of grasping.

As the consumer's digital footprints, to some degree, can be collected and analyzed, AI can also take the step further from the target audiences' demographics to psychographics.

Thus, it can help to analyze the target audience's behavior at a much more detailed level and thereby anticipate their next steps, motivations, and desires based on their past actions. Each interaction with your company's content is just another data point for the system's continuous learning curve.

One thing is certain, AI-based tools will continue to develop rapidly, and more and more disciplines within social media will either be amplified or replaced completely by it.

### **Key take-away:**

Brands that manage to successfully implement the technologies of tomorrow in their social media marketing strategy will likely gain a competitive edge in the future, compared to brands that choose to wait or completely neglect these entirely novel marketing opportunities.

### **Social Listening.**

Contrary to belief, social media platforms are goldmines filled with relevant data and actionable insights that can be leveraged by brands - if collected and used correctly.

This is where Social Listening comes into the picture. A Social Listening Tool is "software that monitors and analyzes online conversations about your brand, a specific topic, your competitors, or anything else that's relevant to your company" (Synthesio).

It's not exactly new technology but has become a staple in most social media professionals' toolkits, given their massive impact and cost-effectiveness.

They have many utilities, but most brands use them to understand how their brand is perceived in the marketplace (sentiment analysis), and through continuous listening pick up on and react to both positive and negative conversations in a timely manner.

In short, it allows you to be in a lot of places at once, and to better understand your target audience.



## #5 Technologies of Tomorrow

### Virtual Influencers.

As mentioned prior, the Influencer Marketing Industry has skyrocketed, and not just in the human department. In fact, since Miquela Sousa - aka. Lil Miquela, the first virtual influencer, made her way onto the social media platforms, a multitude of other virtual influencers have since joined the scene.

In short, a virtual influencer is “a digital character that was created using computer graphics software. This character is then given a personality and will at all times act on social media platforms as if he/she is the influencer” .

Virtual influencers, however, are more than just social media profiles. Lil Miquela, for instance, has worked as a model for luxury brands such as Prada, Dior, and Calvin Klein, and has even released a single - “Not Mine” - and appeared in music videos<sup>7</sup>.

Whether you deem it clever or downright creepy, virtual influencers may likely become a much bigger part of the influencer marketing industry in the future, as brands are searching for new ways of reaching and engaging with their target audiences across platforms.

### Augmented Reality.

Augmented reality is a technology that enhances or changes our “digital reality” by adding graphical elements and filters to our pictures and videos.

Snapchat was, again, one of the frontrunners in this category, when they first introduced their popular AR-filters to their platform in 2015.

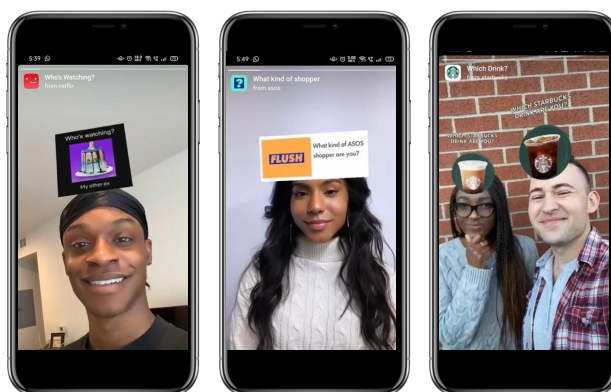
This allowed their users to employ a range of different filters on their content,

such as the “Dog-filter”, which quickly became an all-time favorite.

Since then, Facebook and Instagram introduced their own series of AR filters around 2018.

They also created their ‘Spark AR Studio’, in which everyone is invited to create their own unique AR filter, which can subsequently be used directly on their platforms.

Since then, many brands, such as Starbucks, Netflix, and Asos, have leveraged AR filters in their social media efforts.



By activating their communities in a fun and engaging way, they indirectly get their followers to spread the message like rings in the water. In my humble opinion, there’s no better marketing than user-driven marketing.

But augmented reality is much more than goofy filters, it also has great commercial utilities.

For example, the beauty conglomerate Sephora has successfully implemented the technology in their customer journey, in which potential customers get the chance to “try on” their makeup products prior to buying them in-store or online.

<sup>7</sup>Influencer Marketing Hub.

## #5 Technologies of Tomorrow

### Virtual Reality.

The popularity and interest of virtual reality have also grown rapidly but has not yet been implemented on the mainstream social media platforms, at least not to the same degree as its augmented cousin.

This, however, is a mere matter of time, as the technology is constantly being improved upon, and with Metaverse on our doorstep, we believe that VR will bring about an entirely new social media paradigm.

Brands like Balenciaga, Mercedes, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, have already begun to utilize VR, proving its strong commercial capabilities.

Web 3.0 and the Metaverse will result in DTC (direct-to-consumer) brands becoming, at least to some degree, DTA (direct-to-avatar).

This shift will bring along unprecedented opportunities for brands, both in terms of marketing and creating unique customer experiences.

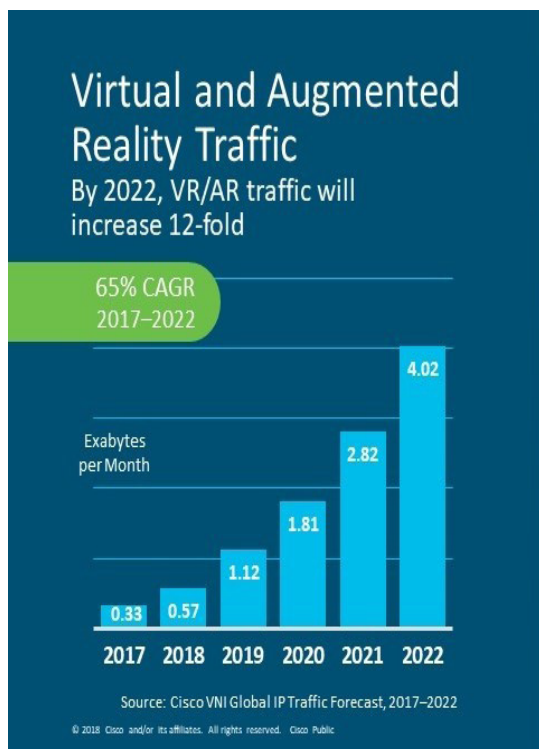
Brands will, for example, be able to create virtual stores and showrooms in which consumers can explore and experience their products and even customize products to their own design.

Brands, such as Nike, have already leveraged this technology, having welcomed over 7 million visits into their digital 'Nikeland' since last year.

Brands can also take community building to the next level by creating their own unique digital environment and inviting their customers and social media following to engage with them.

This is just the tip of the iceberg, but one thing is certain: Metaverse has come to stay.

It's up to us to define how it can be leveraged.



**CASPER ROUCHMANN**  
Head of Marketing  
United Fintech



When it comes to tools and channels, I've always believed in the importance of being early testers. Why? Because it allows you to understand and formulate use-cases for these tools/channels before anyone else, so you have an idea of how to incorporate them into your overall strategy. That way you can 'crack' it before anyone else gets a shot."





#6

~~Content~~  
Community is King

## #6 ~~Content~~ Community is King

Bill Gates may have been right when he wrote the now-famous words: “Content is King” in his article from 1996.

In a lot of ways, he’s still right. But just like plastering keywords is no longer enough in SEO, a noticeable social media presence takes more than simply throwing your corporate content at any available eyeball.

Today, “high-quality” content can be created in drag’n drop tools by everyone - creative or not - in a matter of seconds.

Simultaneously, many brands focus too much on what they should post and when they should post, how many hashtags they should use, or how they can beat the latest algorithm change.

The thing is, you can have all the content in the world, but without a community to consume it or interact with it, it simply won’t do much.

Instead, social media professionals should spend more time creating an engaged and loyal following.

They should think: “How can we build an engaged community around our business? How can we activate our customer base and get them to join in? How can we create shareable moments that our target audience would engage with on an ongoing basis?”

The idea behind creating a community is to create a strong network with the brand at the center, which makes the brand invaluable in the process.

Thus, arises the discipline of community management and its tactical officer who thrives deep in the social media trenches, the community manager.

Community management is “the process of building, facilitating, and guiding an authentic and engaged community among a brand’s customers, employees, vendors, and followers”.

### **Key take-away:**

Brands need to realize, that you can have all the content in the world, but without a following to consume it, it simply won’t do much. Get personal and invest in community-building activities, it’ll be worth it if you succeed.

Community management has obvious bridge-building effects that pave the way for a more active two-way communication between the brand and its target audience.

You can choose to see it as the personification of your brand.

By placing the community manager front and center, they can shape the story of the brand while creating meaningful experiences for the target audience along the way.

A good community manager will also react to negativity and potential crises around your brand before they escalate. As you know, “the shitstorm is always around the corner”.

Through active dialogue, they can get to know their community deeply. Who they are, what they say, what problems they have, and what they are looking for, and thereby extract insights that can help to guide their content and overall social media strategy.

Too many organizations, however, fail to see the distinction between a Social Media Manager and a Community Manager, leaving the latter too often being excluded from the equation entirely.



## #6 ~~Content~~ Community is King

When asked about a potential investment in community management, the Marketing Executive may likely ask “What’s the ROI?”, a question that can stumble even the most seasoned marketing veterans.

Well, “conversation” is often the driving force behind “conversion”.

In fact, that’s why so many of us go to specific restaurants, nightclubs, or buy certain products.

Because we’re told to, by our friends, family, and colleagues.

As Jonah Berger said in his popular marketing book Contagious: “When we care, we share”.

And nothing gets you to care more than another human showing genuine interest in you and your passions or problems.

**Deloitte** argued that “Rational considerations may connect customers with brands, but emotions are what bond them in a sense of relationship” and

**Ogilvy** found that “84 pct. of customers say the experience a company provides is as important as its products and services”.

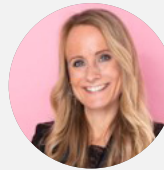
What you need to realize, is that

community management is becoming an independent discipline in and of itself, even on the same scale as paid social.

Consumers are looking to join up with their peers. They want to be a part of something bigger. A tribe.

Many brands have acknowledged this demand, and have begun creating exclusive social media communities (e.g. Facebook groups) for their target audience, in which they take on the role of moderator.

This trend will continue to be even more valid in the future, as the Metaverse will open up for even more interesting and engaging ways for you to interact with your community.



**ANNE WEICHENFELDT  
STEENBERG**

CEO & Founder  
My Beauty Guide



Building a community is like building a friendship or a beautiful love story. It’s all about building a relationship. You need to have a sincere interest in getting to know your community - interact with them, listen to them, excite them, inspire them etc. And remember - you have invited these persons into your community – make it worth their time.”







#7

**Marriages over  
one-night stands**



## #7 Marriages over one-night stands

I could easily have coined this trend “ambassadors over advertisers”, but it doesn’t pack quite the same punch.

The Influencer Marketing industry has evolved radically in the last few years, moving from a global industry of \$1,7b in 2016 to \$6,5b in 2019.

Today, it is no longer a fad, but instead a staple in most marketing professionals’ toolkits.

Micro-influencers, especially, has taken a central role in many brands’ social media strategy, given their authentic voice, loyal following, content creation capabilities, and - of course - often cheaper prices.

However, the days of stand-alone conversion campaigns seem to be drawing to a close, or at the very least, halting.

Yes, you may get some conversions and short-term success, which is always nice, but the results often stop there.

Instead, some have begun to focus on long-term collaborations and ambassadorships. In other words, marriages over one-night stands.

The benefit of this approach is that you can find the perfect candidate to advocate for your brand.

Someone who lives, breathes, and bleeds your brand values and loves your products.

Someone authentic who your target audience can mirror themselves in.

Given that **65 pct.** of consumers are more likely to purchase from a company, they’ve followed for more than a month, it makes sense to get someone they admire or look

### Key take-away:

As the desire for authenticity continues to grow, brands should consider establishing long-term relationships with relevant brand ambassadors, to remain relevant and build bridges to their target audience.

Brands can also ask their ambassadors to actively contribute to the online conversations around the brand (e.g. being active in the comment section and interacting with the target audience) which will only make the collaboration even more potent.

Live-shopping, collaborative ads and co-creations is also gaining ground, which only emphasizes the importance of ambassadors.

And while I still greatly believe in influencer marketing (having seen its amazing impact on brands) this trend that will likely carry over in the future of social media.

So, next time you’re looking to engage in Influencer marketing, consider establishing longer-term partnerships, instead of solely looking at stand-alone conversion campaigns.

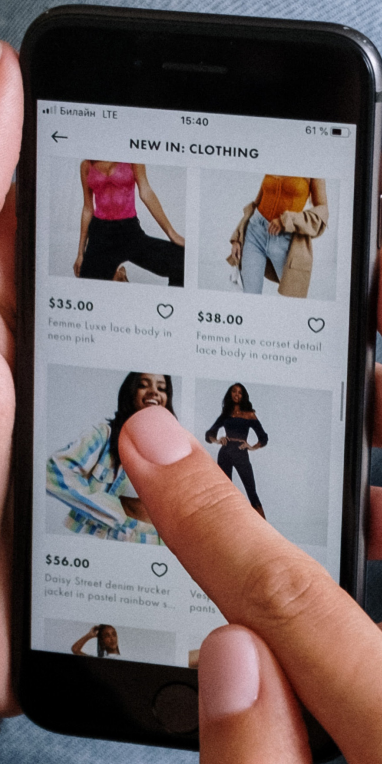


**JOSEPHINE  
STAUNBJERG**  
CEO  
Jost Communication



Influencer marketing is a modern version of Word of-Mouth. Followers see influencers as digital friends who can be trusted for recommendations. However, to have an impact, recommendations need to be perceived as authentic. One-off campaigns often fail this criteria. Brand ambassadors who use products again and again are just way more credible. Done right, Influencer marketing can be extremely impactful both for brand awareness and conversions.”





#8

**Social Commerce**



## #8 Social Commerce.

Social commerce - the process of selling or buying products directly on social channels  
- has grown rapidly in later years.

Social Commerce continues to become a bigger part of the entire marketing mix, and thus gain ground in both the eyes of the marketer and the consumer. And with good reason.

In fact, I'm willing to bet that you have purchased, or at the very least thought of purchasing, a product or service after being introduced to it on social media.

From the early and somewhat primitive product tags introduced by Instagram in 2016, the conglomerate – along with other platforms - has continuously moved towards creating a one-stop shop with enhanced functionality and streamlined purchasing processes.

Less friction (fewer steps from A-B) equals higher conversion rates. And that's both good news for marketers and end-users, who can enjoy one-click checkouts without even leaving the app (or the living room).

In November 2021 Facebook announced the introduction of several Social Commerce initiatives, such as Group Shopping, Product Recommendations as well as Live Shopping for Creators.

In March 2022 Pinterest announced a multitude of new commercial initiatives, such as in-app-purchase, Profile Shops, Product Tags and much more.

Similarly, TikTok has, with its massive follower-base and many commercial applications, also thrown its hat in the social commerce ring.

In fact, an entire digital movement has been asserted around #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt", a hashtag that currently has +10 billion uses, in which ingenious products go viral on the platform and subsequently are acquired in droves.

### Key take-away:

Social commerce is here to stay. The platforms are all aiming at creating one-stop shops in which consumers can enjoy seamless one-click checkouts, without ever leaving the app. This is both great news for consumers and marketers - if they manage to leverage it properly.

Despite the great potential of Social Commerce for both consumers and marketers, it may also prove a liability to brands looking to create close ties with their customers, as social media platforms may become the center of commerce, and not the brand themselves.

This is only more relevant now that data is becoming sparser, making 1st part data much more valuable.

As platforms continue to develop and improve their shopping features to keep up with the consumers' demands, brands will have to accommodate their efforts accordingly, while still prioritizing their own shopping channels.



**TOBIAS MADSEN**  
Head of Paid Social  
Nordic Social



At Nordic Social we see social media as a great way to drive performance and increase brand awareness. However, attribution is getting more difficult, and we expect to continue to see social media platforms adapt to the consumers' demands through building their own integrated ecosystems for shopping."



## How people are using social media to shop

Use social media for shopping inspiration



Shop when stumbling across something in feed/stories/etc.



Shop from influencer recommendations and links



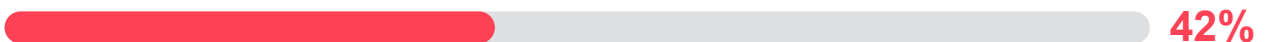
Shop from content from brands they follow



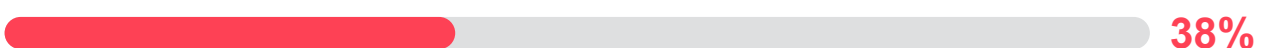
Shop from recommendations from friends and family



Use social media for 'information gathering'



Actively look for products to shop in feed/stories/etc.







#9

**Social Customer  
Service**

## #9 Social Customer Service

We all know that consumer habits and desires are dynamic.

They change all the time in with new technological opportunities, trends and tendencies.

One trend that seems to be prevalent, especially among the younger generations, is that consumers no longer resort to the traditional customer service channels, such as e-mail and telephone.

The reasoning behind this migration? Besides the obvious answer (AI-based chatbots and FAQ's), social media has also contributed to this development.

And while there's still a place for traditional customer service channels, an increasing number of consumers are resorting to social media platform like Facebook and Instagram to connect with brands, provide feedback and ask questions.

Don't believe me?

Let's look at some stats:

1. 90 pct. of social media users have already connected with a brand or business through their chosen platform
2. 67 pct. of consumers use social media to find solutions to concrete problems
3. 63 pct. of customers expect companies to offer customer service through their social media
4. 61 pct. find it very or extremely important that brands respond to their feedback on social media

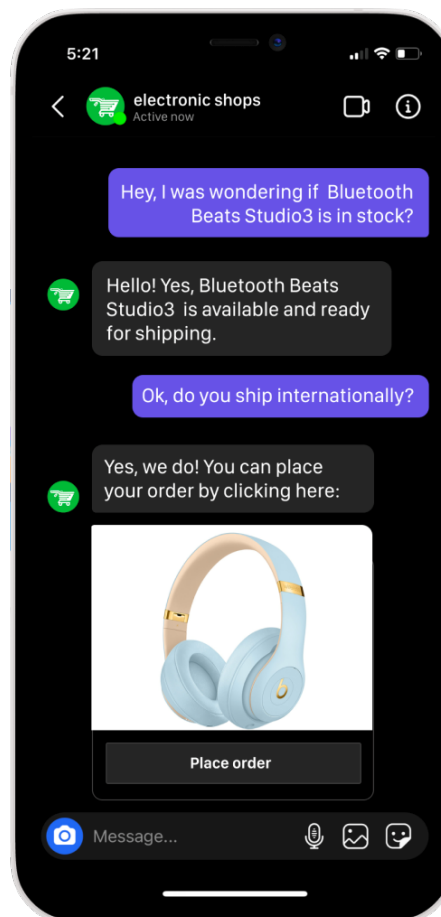
In addition to accommodating the needs of the consumer, the shift towards social customer service may benefit the brands as well.

### Key take-away:

Customer service will continue to migrate to where the consumers are. And if there's one place you'll find them in the future, it'll be on social media.

In fact, SmartInsights concluded that it's over 5 times cheaper for companies to solve the problem on social media than through a traditional call center.

How's that for cost-reduction?



Similarly, Bain has earlier argued that consumers are 20-40 pct. more likely to purchase products from brands that they have interacted with on social media.

Whether the percentage is accurate today is difficult to know with certainty - but the overall trend seems to hold true.



## #9 Social Customer Service

Social media platforms have also picked up on the development and has launched many initiatives to make it easier for brands to be there for their customers on their platforms (e.g. FAQs, auto-responders).

Similarly, Facebook and Instagram have taken it to the next level by partnering up with software providers - such as ManyChat - who can help brands automate and streamline their social customer service directly on the platform with social chatbots.

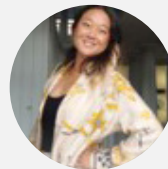
Social Chatbots allows users to reach out to them via Direct Messages and get instant updates on product inventory, delivery status as well as discounts and offers.

As you know, the consumers' attention span is limited. They want the information they're looking for now.

And despite most consumers still preferring human contact, most of them (especially Gen-Z and Millennials) have no issue with chatbots - especially with basic requests, such as order status or inventory info.

This doesn't mean that you should neglect community management altogether, but with AI-based chatbots becoming increasingly smarter they can help you create a better customer experience by providing personalized, efficient, and accurate customer service that is available 24-7.

One thing is certain, customer service will continue to migrate to where the consumers are. And if there's one place you'll find them in the future, it'll be on social media.

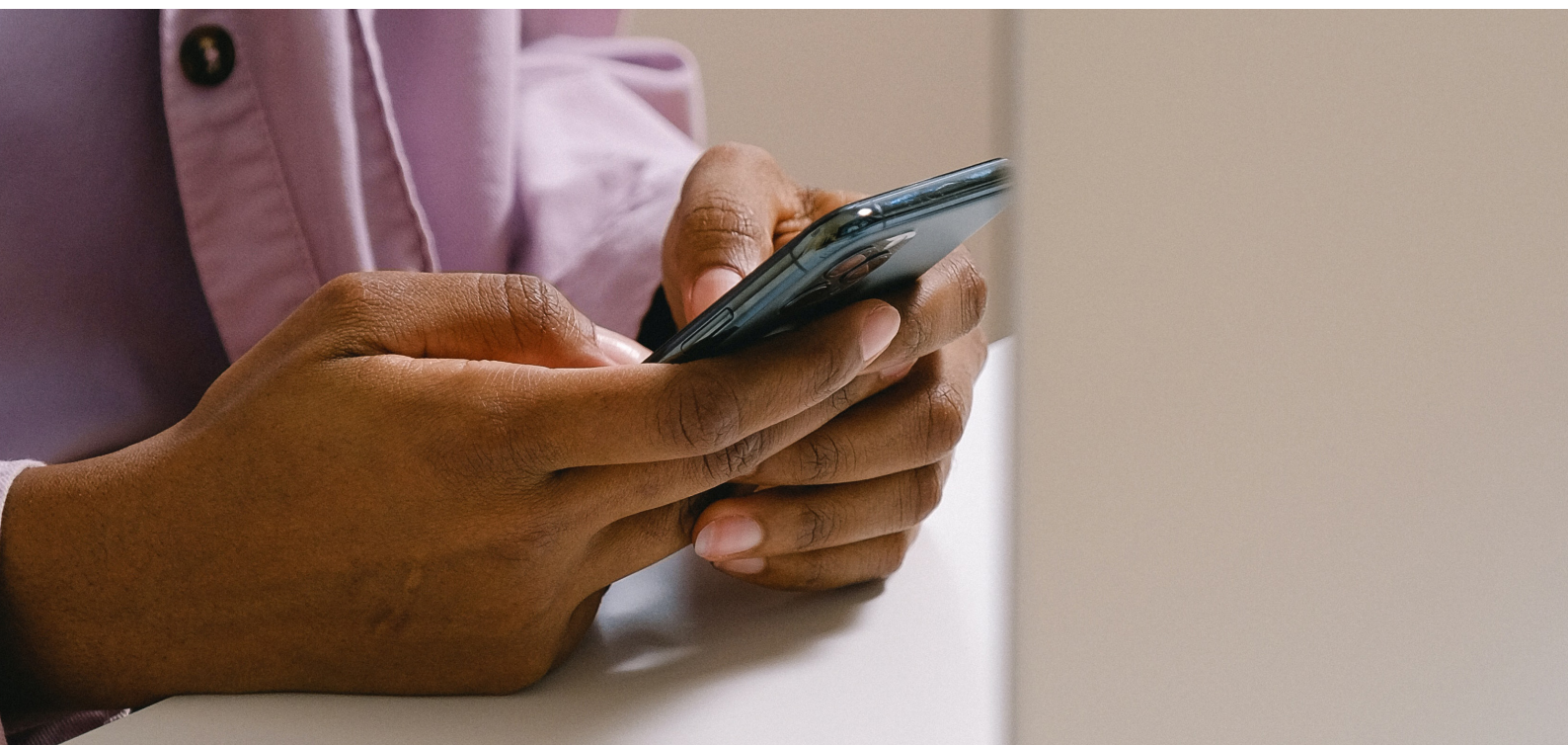


**MAJA FABECH**

Head of Social Media & Influencers  
Matas



Given more options, fiercer competition, and more touchpoints with consumers, creating great brand experiences have never been more crucial. People come to social media to engage and interact with others, and they expect brands to respond back if they reach out to them. Brands need to be active where the consumers are, and today that's social media."





#10

**Taking a  
Stand**





## #10 Taking a Stand

The days where brands could stay cozily under the radar and avoid taking a stand on societal issues seem to be behind us.

Up until now societal issues have been considered dangerous grounds by many brands, but now it may be even more dangerous not to do it.

Today, it doesn't take much to be called out and end up in a bad PR situation. The shitstorm is always right around the corner.

Thus, consumers are increasingly expecting companies to be authentic and transparent in their efforts on all parameters, including on social media.

In fact, **70 pct.** of consumers believe it's important that brands "take a stand". And not just for show, 66 pct. believe that brands can help create real change. Similarly, **38 pct.** of consumers will actively unfollow a brand if they don't agree with its values.

Following this notion, a brands' values may be even more important in the future than the brands' actual products or services. Crazy right?

To take it even further, another study showed that **37 pct.** of consumers have either tried to talk someone into either stop or start buying from a brand based on their stance on societal issues.

With this in mind, it's no surprise that many brands have begun to jump headfirst into the big societal conversation pools, such as BLM, LTBTQ, or the conflict in Ukraine.

This, however, is not to say that you should simply jump on every societal bandwagon just to stay on the consumers' good side. It needs to be authentic.

Simply posting a rainbow-colored social media post during pride week doesn't cut it.

So, how do you take an effective stance?

### Key take-away:

Earlier it has been considered dangerous grounds to take a stand by brands. But today, it may be even more dangerous not to take a stand.

Brand values continue to become even more important, sometimes even trumping the actual *products* or *services themselves*.

Well, a **study** found that consumers find it more credible if the issue that brands take a stand on is directly impacting their customers (37 pct.) or business operations (36 pct.). So perhaps you could start there.

As brand values and personality become increasingly important, we believe that the brands of tomorrow are the brands that manage to create meaningful relationships with their target audience through personal and meaningful interactions.

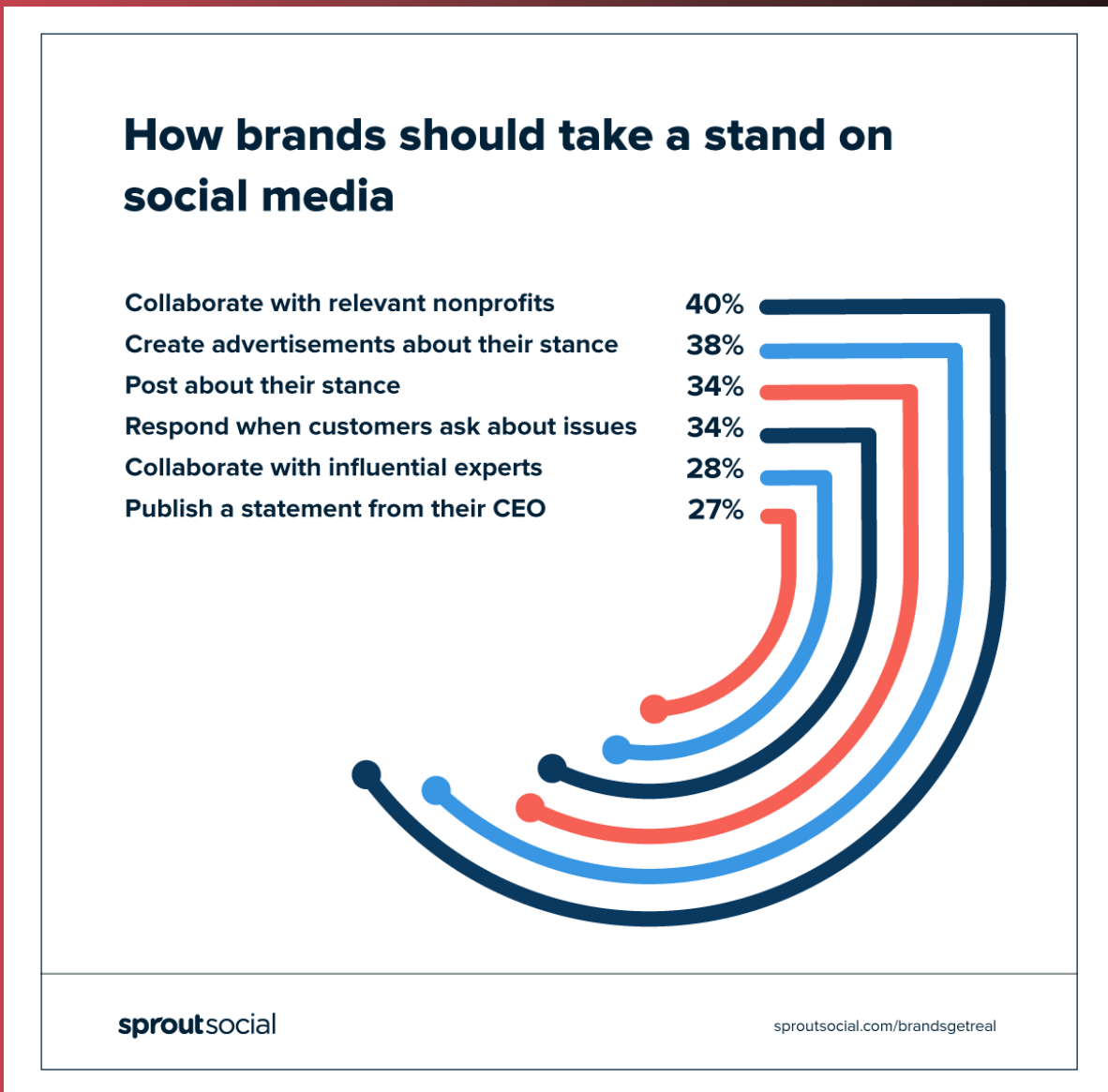
This will not only help foster a good relationship with consumers but may also positively influence brands' bottom lines. Win-win.



**MILA HVILSHØJ**  
Marketing Manager  
Domino's



Domino's is proudly outspoken about matters that affect the communities we serve. We are not afraid to take a stand that ensure a better slice for everyone. I believe it is crucial that brands realise that they can be a powerful platform to amplify opinion, driving positive societal and cultural change."







# Future-Proof Your Brand.

This e-book has shed light on some of the major social media trends that will continue to be more prevalent throughout 2022 and beyond. As you know, social media is incredibly dynamic and changes all the time.

However, you shouldn't try to tap into every single social media trend that arises.

You don't want to be the dog that barks at every car it sees.

As with everything else, you need to choose your battles carefully.

Start with the initiatives with the most 'bang-for-the-buck' for your brand, and move down the list from there.

To stay relevant and ahead of the competition, brands need to be on top of their game.

And that's where we come into the picture.

At Nordic Social, we specialize in one thing and one thing only.

Social Media.

Since starting our agency in 2018, we've worked with clients such as Red Bull, L'Oréal, Domino's, Just Eat, Faxe Kondi, and a host of other exciting brands.

We're now offering a limited number of free social media analyses for brands looking to step up their game.

**Apply down below.**

**Request a free social media analysis here.**