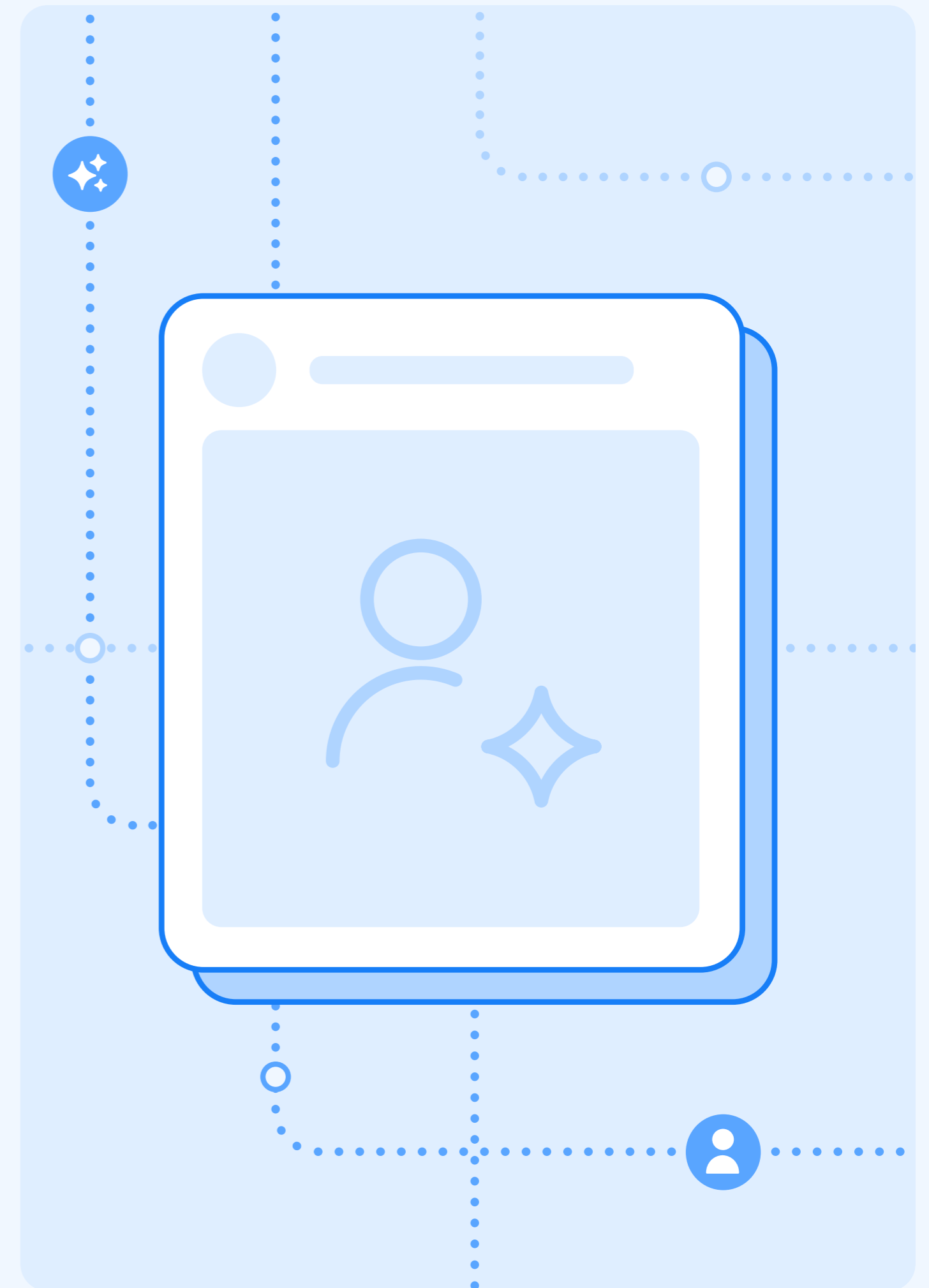


# AI and Creators: Shaping the Next Era of Social Marketing

DASH HUDSON [2024 Social Media Trends Report Issue 2](#)



# Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Social Media Expert Perspective</b>                            | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Platform Benchmarks</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Key Social Platform Updates</b>                                | <b>9</b>  |
| AI Advancements   |           |
| Creator Advancements  |           |
| <b>TREND 1</b>  |           |
| <b>AI Drives Stronger Performance</b>                             | <b>13</b> |
| <b>TREND 2</b>  |           |
| <b>Creators Achieve Superior Performance Metrics on Instagram</b> | <b>18</b> |
| <b>TREND 3</b>  |           |
| <b>Entertaining Content on TikTok Drives Sales Growth</b>         | <b>22</b> |
| <b>TREND 4</b>  |           |
| <b>Creators Propel Social Commerce with TikTok Shop</b>           | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Conclusion</b>   | <b>26</b> |

# Social media stands out for its ability to power culture, connection and increasingly commerce in the global marketplace.

## \$8.14B

Influencer marketing is projected to grow by 16% to \$8.14 billion in 2024.

This is reflected in its growing role in marketing executives' budgets, accounting for an estimated [19% of total advertising spend in 2024](#). Within the retail industry, the largest spenders on digital advertising of any industry, [nearly three-quarters \(72%\) of marketers worldwide](#) plan to increase their advertising spend on social platforms. Despite fragmented audiences and platform experiences and increased competition for attention and engagement, social media's ubiquity and importance are undeniable. But the pace of change that underlies the social landscape requires brands to constantly reshape their strategies to stay ahead.

Chief among the dynamic shifts redefining social media success over the past six months are the evolving roles of artificial intelligence (AI) and creators. These topics dominated the discussions and news coming out of leading

industry festivals like SXSW and Cannes Lions Festival this year, ensuring they were top of mind for every CMO and marketer.

AI has quickly gone from a buzzword to a pivotal component of social media marketing. While early uses primarily focused on finding efficiencies within time-intensive production processes, more teams are beginning to leverage AI to glean insights into audience behaviors and preferences to fuel smarter decision-making and ensure every piece of content performs at its highest level. Simultaneously, creator partnerships continued to gain momentum, with content creators of all sizes playing an increasingly central role in brand marketing strategies. Beyond the authenticity inherent in creator-driven content, brands are seeing high ROI as these posts outperform across key metrics.

## The AI Revolution in Social Media Marketing

AI technologies have significantly advanced, bringing with them a host of new capabilities transforming how brands engage with their audiences.

- 1. Enhanced Content Creation and Curation:** AI-powered tools are revolutionizing content creation and curation, enabling brands to produce high-quality, engaging content and identify trending topics to boost audience engagement.
- 2. Personalization and Targeting:** AI's precise audience segmentation and tailored messaging are driving higher engagement and deeper audience connections through advanced personalization.
- 3. Predictive Analytics and Insights:** AI's predictive analytics provide marketers with actionable insights to optimize content strategies and maximize reach and engagement.

## The Rise of Creator-Driven Partnerships

US social media creator revenues will total \$13.7 billion this year, a 16.5% increase over 2023, reflecting the shift towards more authentic, creator-driven content that deeply resonates with audiences.

- 1. Authenticity and Trust:** Audiences gravitate toward genuine, relatable content, and creators deliver this authenticity, enabling brands to build stronger connections through trusted partnerships.
- 2. Community Building:** Creators build and nurture engaged communities, allowing brands to foster loyalty and advocacy by association. This approach is becoming increasingly valuable as social media platforms prioritize content that generates meaningful interactions.
- 3. Co-Creation and Collaboration:** Brands actively involve creators in the content creation process, contributing to more authentic and engaging content.



# What's Inside

- 1 Learn how creator content outperforms brand-only content across key Instagram benchmarks.
- 2 Explore how insights from Vision AI help achieve top-performing content scores.
- 3 See how a high Entertainment Score on TikTok predicts strong sales performance.
- 4 Discover the secrets to building a winning commerce strategy on TikTok Shop.
- 5 Understand how top-performing brands leverage AI insights and creator partnerships in their social media strategies.



**Matt Navarra** is a social media consultant and industry analyst, as well as the founder of [Geekout Newsletter](#).

# The Next Wave of Innovation and Engagement: Content Creators and AI

An op-ed by: Matt Navarra

As we approach 2025, the creator economy is evolving significantly. Creators are transforming from passionate hobbyists into savvy solo entrepreneurs. We're witnessing the rise of 'creatorpreneurs' — micro-businesses with management teams and business plans. Narrow niches are becoming highly valuable, with audiences increasingly following creators who command specific expertise.

This shift is redefining the relationship between content creators and brands. Creators have become indispensable

partners for brands, valued for their authentic voices and ability to reach diverse audiences. The era of creator co-creation is deepening the relationship between brands, creators and consumers, making creators integral to both product and profit — and technology plays a crucial role in this shift. It has democratized content creation, enabling creators to build engaged audiences and connect with brands. Influencer marketing marketplaces and CRM tools have streamlined partnerships, however, maintaining authenticity while working with brands remains challenging.

The constant need to create engaging content can lead to burnout, requiring creators to explore diverse revenue streams.

Several strategies are essential for brands aiming to develop productive partnerships with content creators: Trust the creator's expertise and give them creative freedom; foster long-term relationships rather than one-off campaigns; seek value alignment with creators whose values and audience match your brand's mission; and, lastly, offer comprehensive support, including resources, tools and mentorship.



The ideal integration of creators and AI in social media marketing lies in a partnership where **creators retain creative control while leveraging AI to optimize their efforts.**

Looking ahead, AI offers exciting prospects and concerns. Hyper-personalization and creative assistance promise highly targeted and relevant content. That said, misinformation, potential job displacement and privacy concerns pose significant challenges. The ideal integration of creators and AI in social media marketing lies in a partnership where creators retain creative control while leveraging AI to optimize their efforts. The best AI tools will enhance creators' work, helping them reach wider audiences and build stronger communities.







In the future, content creators will play a bold role in digital marketing. More creators will develop personal brands

and eventually launch their own products and services. Collaborative efforts among creators will amplify their reach and influence. Additionally, marketers can expect a rise in virtual creators powered by AI, offering new opportunities for partnerships and community building.

The evolving world of content creators holds exciting possibilities as technology continues to shape digital marketing. Moving forward, the integration of AI and strategic collaboration between creators and brands will drive the next wave of innovation and engagement.

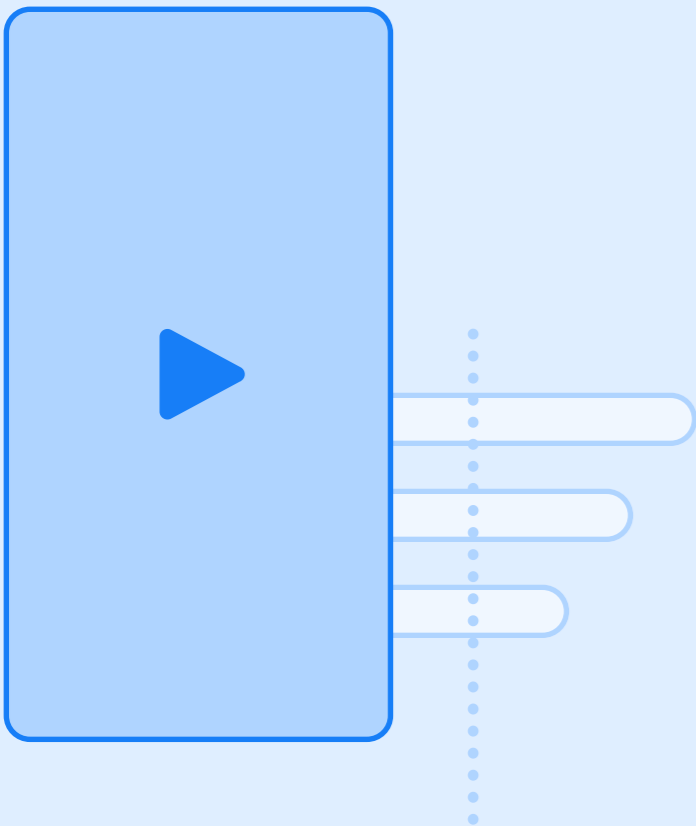
# Platform Benchmarks

While the value and effectiveness of the top social platforms varies depending on a brand's overall strategy, key objectives and target audience, it's important to have general benchmarks in place to understand how you stack up against the competition. If you're underperforming in specific areas or channels, it's critical to reevaluate your approach to get your results on par with the rest of the market.




| Overall Platform Comparison (Average) |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                                       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Followers/Subscribers</b>          | 357K  | 2.1M  | 791K  | 937K  | 235K  | 813K  |
| <b>Monthly Follower Growth Rate</b>   | 5.8%  | 0.8%  | 1.2%  | 0.5%  | 1.3%  | 0.05%   |
| <b>Weekly Posts</b>                   | 6   | 9   | 7   | 8   | 22  | 48  |
| <b>Engagement Rate</b>                | 4.5%  | 0.3%  | -   | 4.0%  | 0.6%  | 13.7%   |
| <b>Reach</b>                          | 105K  | 159K  | -   | 63K   | -   | -   |
| <b>Impressions</b>                    | -   | -   | -   | -   | 3.2K  | 16K   |

\*Customer data only/\*\*Percentage change vs. H2 2023

TikTok Engagement Rate: Likes + Comments + Shares / Reach | Instagram Engagement Rate: (Likes + Comments) / Followers | Facebook Engagement Rate: (Total Engagements) / Impressions | Pinterest Engagement Rate: (Pin Clicks + Outbound Clicks + Saves) / Impressions | X Engagement Rate: (Total Engagements) / Impressions



## Short-Form Video Comparison (Average)

|                               |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Weekly Posts                  | 6<br>5  | 4<br>4  | 4<br>4  |
| Cross-Channel Engagement Rate | 4.5%<br>-2%**   | 3.6%<br>+20%**  | 3.4%<br>-13%**  |
| Reach                         | 105K<br>+5%**   | 109K<br>-7%**   | not available   |
| Video Views                   | 128K<br>-2%**   | 117K<br>-5%**   | 81K<br>+153%**  |
| Shares                        | 142<br>+25%**   | 408<br>+36%**   | 51<br>+21%**  |

\*Customer data only/\*\*Percentage change vs. H2 2023

The Cross-Channel Engagement Rate is a metric that was created to compare each platform's short form video offering equally. **TikTok and Instagram:** (Likes + Comments + Shares) / Reach. **YouTube:** (Likes + Comments + Shares) / Video Views\*.

\*As Reach is not an available metric for YouTube, Video Views was used.

**Methodology**  
 Dash Hudson analyzed brand activity on the major platforms in H1 2024 to identify average growth rates across key metrics and posting frequency. Given the importance of short-form video, we also benchmarked the average performance of content on YouTube Shorts, TikTok and Instagram Reels.

Spring 2024

# AI Advancements

The integration of AI technologies into social media platforms is revolutionizing the way content is created, shared and moderated. Major platforms like Meta, TikTok, YouTube, Pinterest, X (formerly Twitter) and Snapchat are harnessing AI to enhance user experiences and streamline operations. From innovative content creation tools to advanced ad targeting systems and conversational AI, these advancements are transforming social media workflows.



## Gen AI Ad Tools

A host of [new AI-powered tools](#) will be coming to Meta's Advantage+ creative including image and headline variations, creator recommendations for brands and AI "Image Expansion" options for Reels content.

## AI-Optimized Catalog Ads

Brands can upload a "hero" image into the center of their catalog ads and Meta's AI will dynamically show people the best products from their catalog to drive performance.

## AI-Powered Influencer Chatbots

Instagram is testing a program offering top influencers the ability to create chatbot versions of themselves, enabling them to virtually interact with their followers over direct messages through an AI proxy.



## Creative AI Suite

TikTok's Symphony for ad partners combines existing AI tools into one platform, assisting in brainstorming ideas, writing scripts and producing videos. It will also be able to generate video promos based on existing assets.

## Pulse Custom Lineups

This feature leverages generative AI to curate TikTok's hottest trending, brand-suitable content tailored to specific marketing needs.

## AI-Generated Influencers

TikTok is internally testing the introduction of virtual influencers to promote and sell items on TikTok Shop, using scripts generated by advertiser prompts.





## AI Creative Assistance

As part of its new “Inspiration” tab, creators can enter a topic into the search bar to receive AI-generated ideas and notes for videos based on what their channel viewers are likely to be interested in.

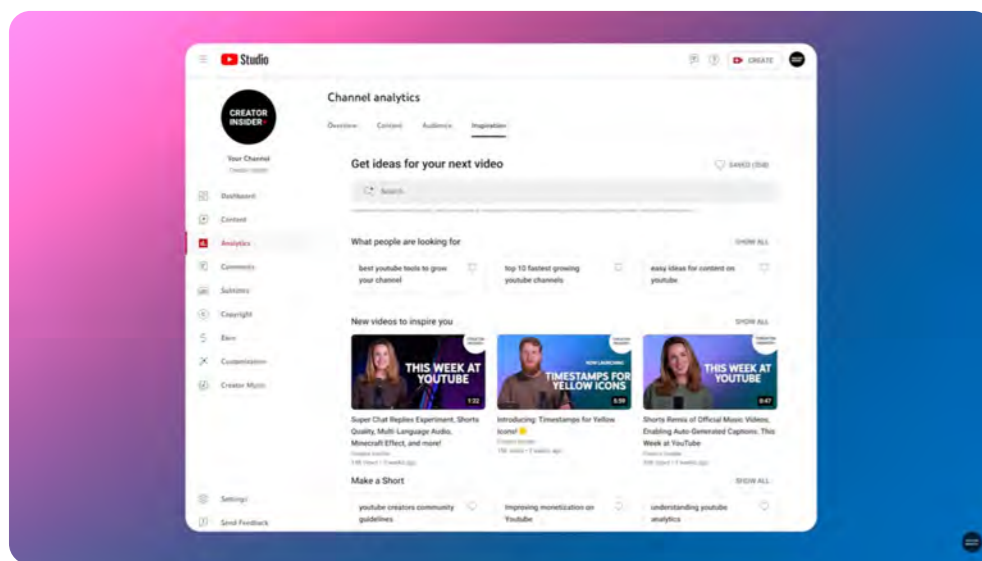


Image Source: [Creator Insider](#)

## Dream Screen and Dream Track Instrumentals

The features enable users to [enter text prompts](#) to create AI-generated background videos, images or instrumental soundtracks for their Shorts.



## Pinterest Performance+

A suite of AI and automation tools currently in testing will help brands increase campaign performance and efficiency.

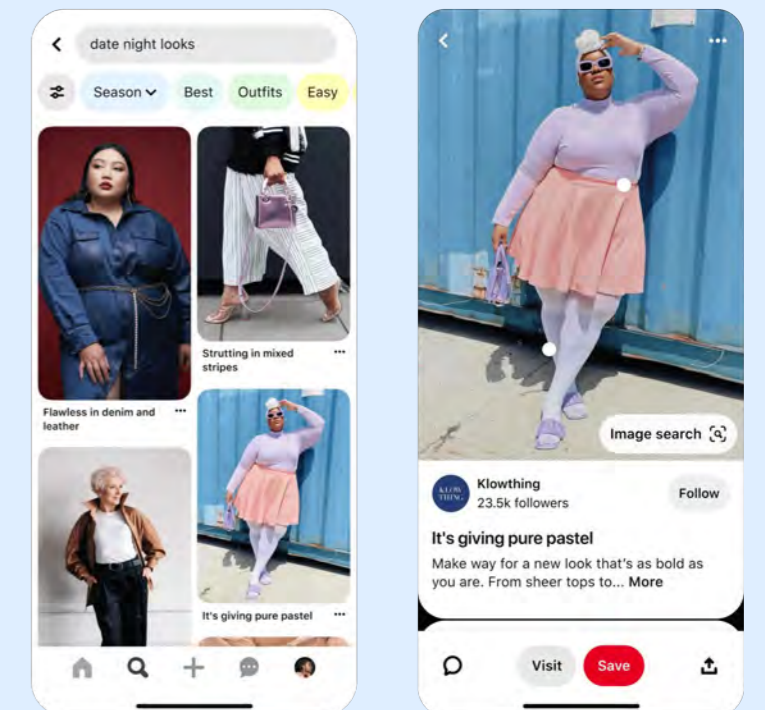
## Enhanced Search Filters

To promote inclusivity and relevance, Pinterest introduced [AI-driven search filters](#) based on body type, skin tone and hair pattern, allowing users to customize search results based on their preferences.



## AI Audiences

Brands will be able to briefly describe their target audience for their ads and X’s AI systems will instantly generate a pool of the most relevant users to target.



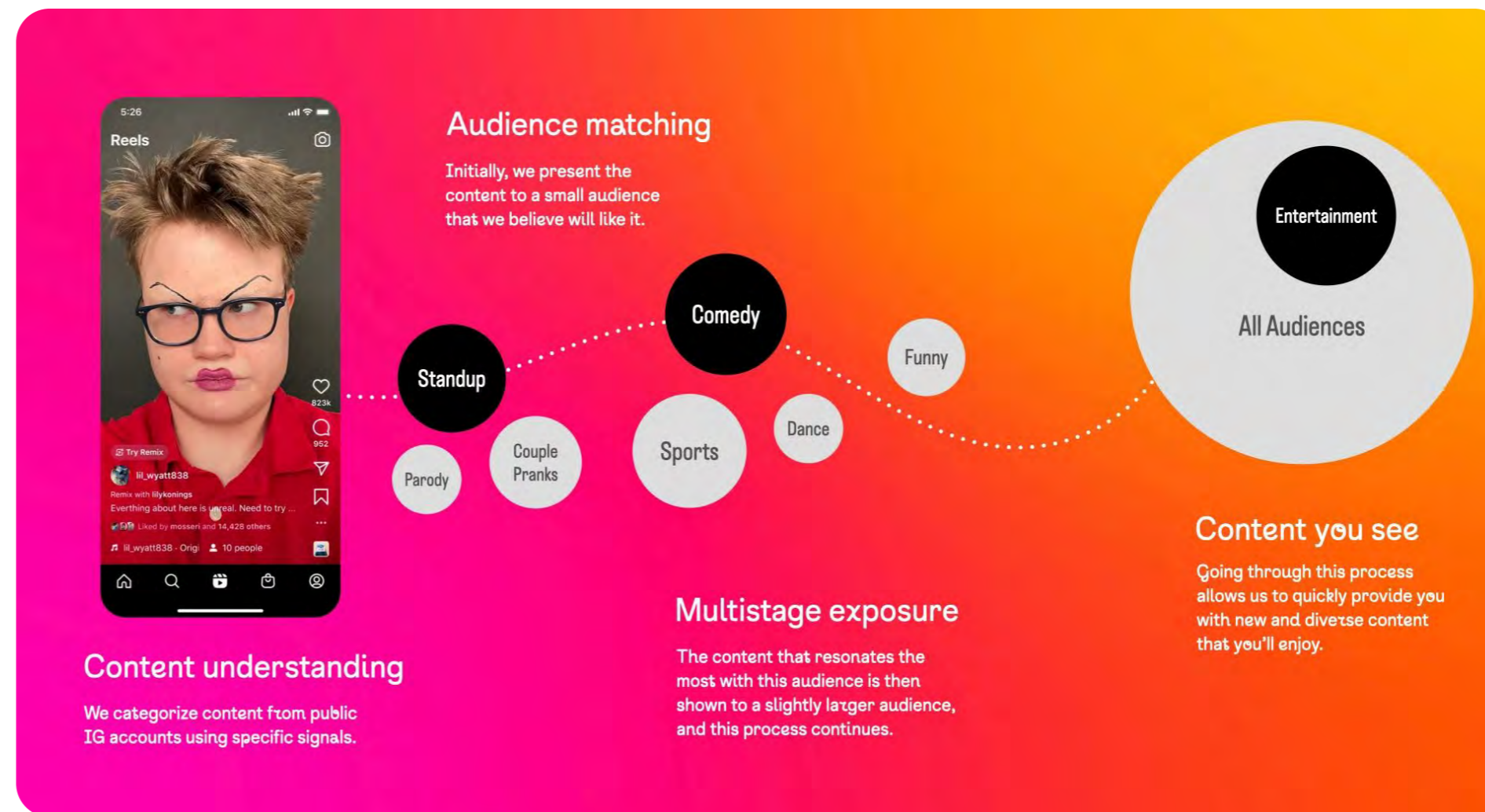
Pinterest uses AI to make search results more inclusive.

Image Source: [Pinterest](#)



# Creator Advancements

Platforms are also prioritizing features aimed at enhancing discovery, connection and monetization opportunities for creators. To understand the latest creator trends, Dash Hudson analyzed external news from the marketplace along with internal data on brand-creator partnerships and performance on Instagram. Platforms are prioritizing features aimed at enhancing discovery, connection and monetization opportunities for creators. While performance metrics highlight the importance of creator partnerships for brand success, creator content generates significantly higher engagement and effectiveness rates compared to brand posts.



Instagram's algorithm now prioritizes entertaining creators.

Image Source: [Instagram Creators](#)

## Driving Discovery of Creator Talent

- Instagram [updated its feed algorithm](#) to prioritize original and emerging creators and Instagram launched a new [interview series with top creators](#).
- TikTok created the [TikTok Change Makers Program](#), its first-ever global social impact creator elevation program that spotlights creators and non-profits who create meaningful change in their communities through TikTok.
- Pinterest announced the latest installment of its [Creator Inclusion Fund](#) to support creators from historically marginalized communities within the fashion and beauty sectors.

## Facilitating Partnership Opportunities Between Creators and Brands

- Meta launched [Creator Management Tools](#) in its Meta Business Suite, a centralized hub designed to help agencies and creators manage their relationships on Facebook.
- Instagram has further expanded access to its [Creator Marketplace](#) to 10 new regions, allowing brands to easily search for creators to partner with. The platform is also testing a [Creator Insights display](#) on creator profiles, enabling brands to view a snapshot of account performance over the last 30 days.
- TikTok introduced [TikTok Studio](#), a new comprehensive creation and management platform for creators to manage and analyze their TikTok account and content performance, and it has expanded its [‘Out of Phone’](#) campaigns, enabling brands to use TikTok creator content on billboards, within in-store displays, cinema promos and more.
- X announced a [Creator Targeting](#) ad option allowing brands to run ads against a curated list of premium content creators.

## Enhancing Relationships Between Creators and their Communities

- Instagram is testing the next stage of its [Creator AI program](#), giving more creators the option to build AI versions of themselves to facilitate communication with fans and it will enable creators to add a [Notify Sticker](#) to their posts to encourage fans to sign up to receive reminders anytime they post new content.
- X announced an update to its algorithm ensuring that [Pinned Posts](#) are shown to all of an individual’s followers.



## Expanding Monetization Opportunities

- Instagram has added new features to its [Creator Subscriptions program](#) providing creators with better insight into performance and encouraging non-paying fans to become paying subscribers.
- TikTok expanded access to its [Subscription offering](#), creating new opportunities for creators to monetize their fandoms, and launched updates to its [Creator Rewards Program](#) to reward high-quality, original content that is over a minute long.



## TREND 1

# AI Drives Stronger Performance

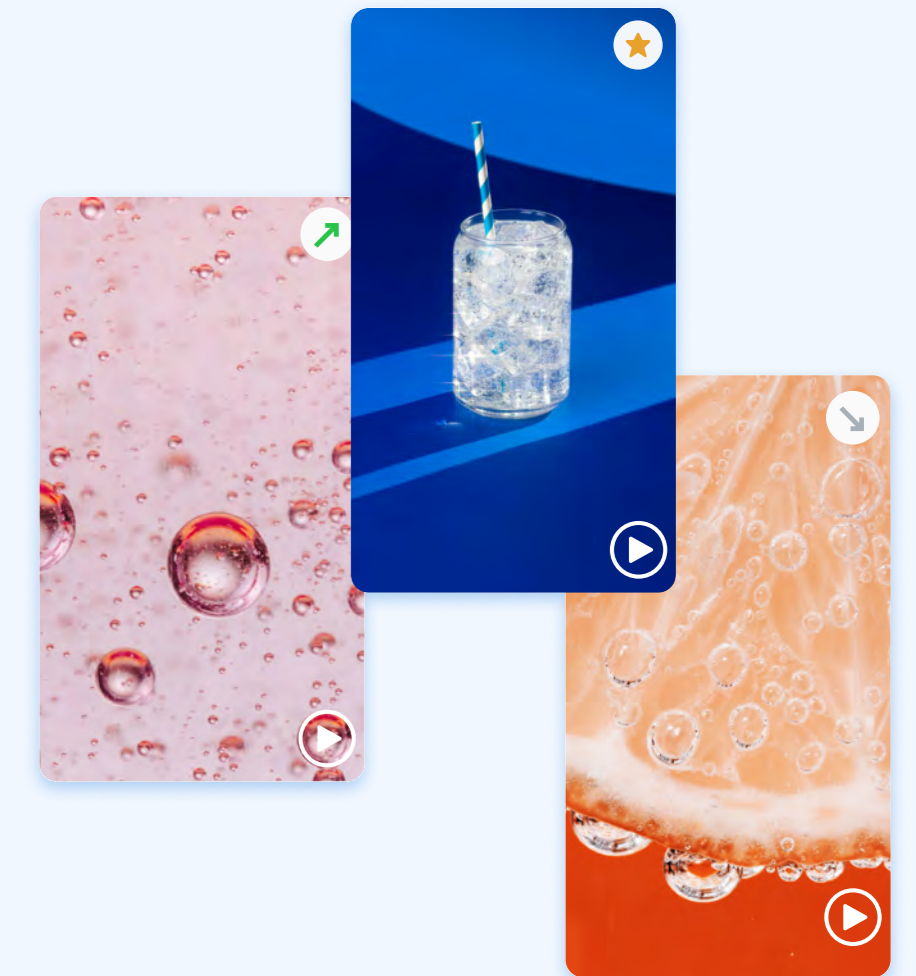
At its core, social media is a visual medium. Because of this, selecting the right imagery and video is critical to ensure a post resonates with a target audience. Until recently, social media managers had to rely on instinct, skill and a bit of luck when making their aesthetic choices. With so many variables to consider, even when a piece of content broke out, there was no guarantee that similar decisions would achieve comparable future results.

With the emergence of sophisticated AI-enabled visual analytics tools that process has finally been demystified. By evaluating the performance of brand, competitor, and creator content alongside broader audience and

platform trends, these tools can help marketers determine which photos and videos are most likely to succeed. This saves time and expense when creating, editing, and selecting photo and video assets and provides deeper intelligence on what competitors are doing and how best to capitalize on viral UGC moments.

Dash Hudson has been a pioneer in bringing visual analytics tools to the market since the launch of its proprietary Vision AI in 2016. Based on a brand's historical performance, the feature can predict how content will perform, helping teams make the most of every piece of content. To understand how effective visual analytics tools are at forecasting content performance, Dash Hudson

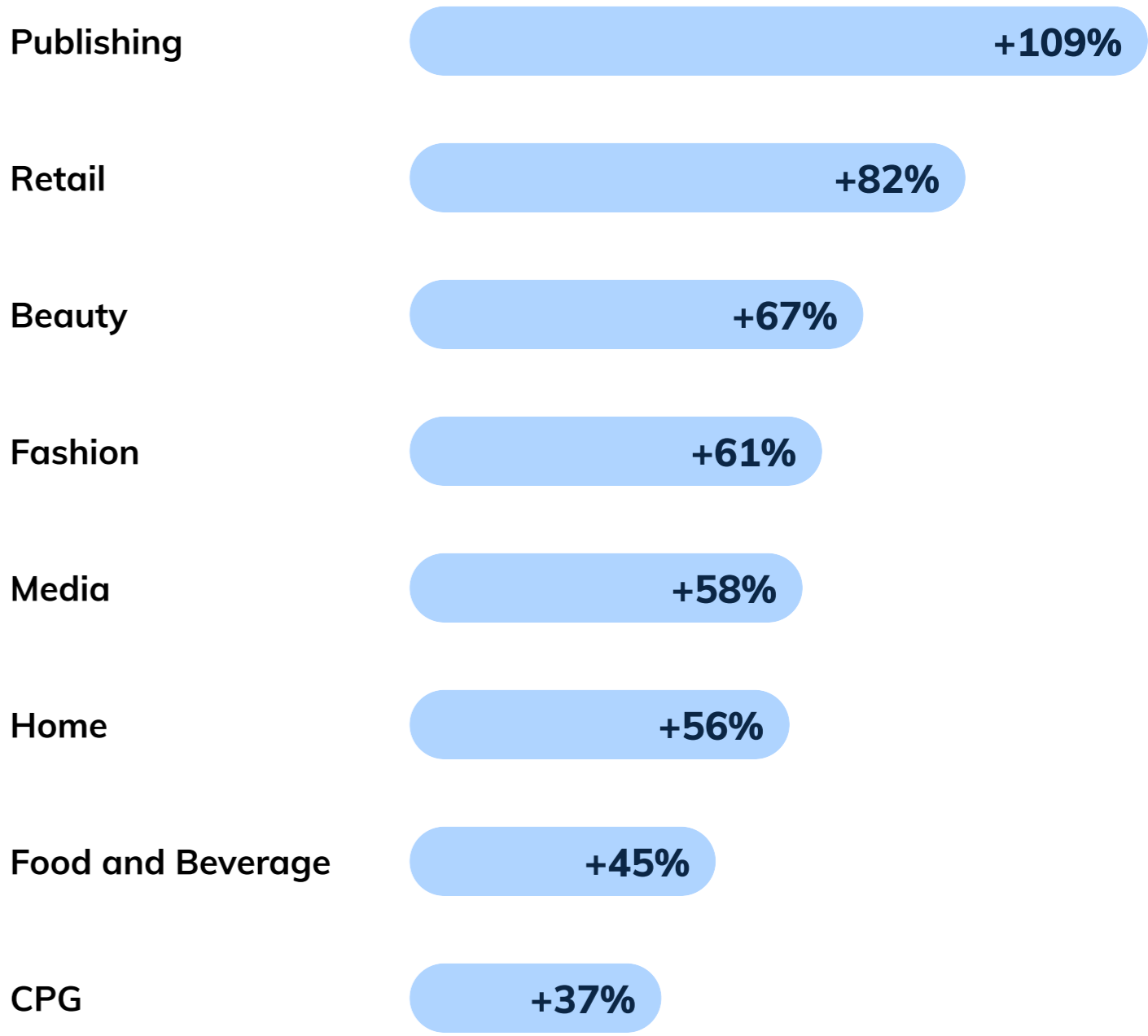
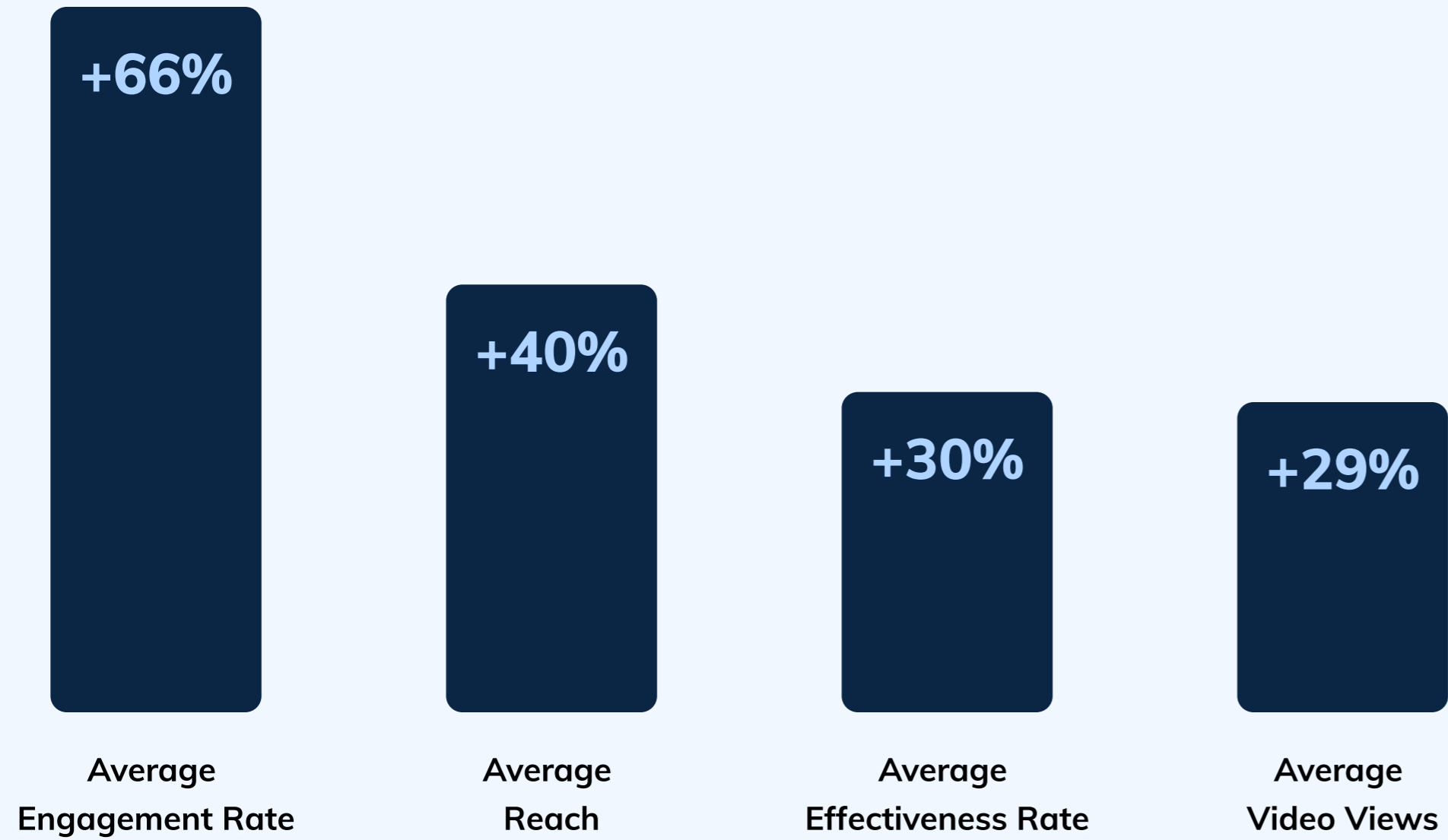
explored cross-industry results from brands utilizing Vision AI to plan their Instagram posts between 2023 and 2024. Among the brands analyzed, **top-predicted content received higher engagement, effectiveness, video views, and reach than low-predicted content.**



★ Top Performer    ↗ Above Average    ↘ Below Average

# Top-Predicted Performers vs. Low-Predicted Performers

Among the brands analyzed, top-predicted content received higher overall engagement, effectiveness, video views and reach than low-predicted content.



Each industry's Vision AI model boosts engagement rate with top-predicted content.

**Methodology**  
For each industry, we analyzed brands' owned in-feed Instagram content posted in 2023-2024. We calculated the median Engagement Rate, Effectiveness Rate, Reach and Video Views for top-predicted performers and low-predicted performers.



# Brand Spotlight

Top-predicted content delivers higher engagement.



ARHAUS®

**+270%**

Engagement Rate



UGG

**+161%**

Engagement Rate



Explore Charleston

**+174%**

Engagement Rate

**Methodology**

For each brand, we analyzed owned in-feed Instagram content in the past year. We calculated the average engagement rate for top-predicted performers and compared it to the brand's own engagement rate.

# AI is the Unbiased Decision Maker

In a crowded social media landscape, the ability to attain a deep understanding of a target audience's behaviors and preferences is a huge competitive advantage. Savvy brands can effectively leverage these insights to ensure their content strategy is always aligned with their community's tastes to maximize the performance of every post. By utilizing AI-powered visual analytics tools like Dash Hudson's Vision AI, social media teams can now do this at unprecedented speed and scale, enabling them to keep pace with the ever-changing attitudes of consumers and the activity of competitors to refine and pivot as needed.

To see these insights in action, Dash Hudson highlights how Made by Nacho is tapping into Vision AI to monitor how its community responds to its content to continually tweak its strategy and uncover surprising insights about questions it didn't even think to ask.



## Average Effectiveness Rate for Reels:

229%

Made by  
**Nacho**

34%

CPG Industry

Effectiveness Rate is a Dash Hudson metric.

Effectiveness Rate = (Likes + Comments + Saves + Video Views, if applicable) / Reach

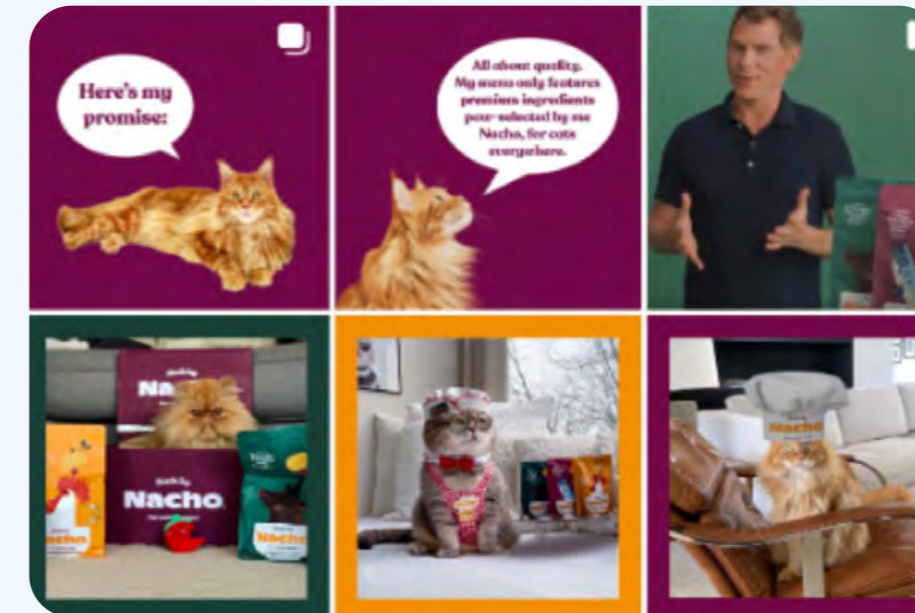


Based on a brand's historical performance, Vision AI can predict how content will perform, helping teams make the most of every piece of content while allowing brands to save valuable time. Beyond content optimization, The Made by Nacho social team sees Vision AI as a powerful source for gaining intel into its audience's changing behaviors and tastes. By utilizing the tool, they discovered that their audience preferred content featuring the brand's (and Nacho's) signature orange, which enabled them to quickly pivot away from the purple color scheme they had primarily used in their posts, driving an uptick in performance.

While this is a relatively small visual detail, the brand's ability to pick up on it by using Vision AI is significant for multiple reasons:

- 1. Agile Performance:** In a crowded market for consumer attention, the ability to quickly learn audience preferences and refine content strategies to align with them can positively impact long-term performance.
- 2. Speed and Scale:** Gaining audience insights and testing brand assets used to require multiple rounds of costly consumer panels. Now brands can achieve the same results in real time and at scale.
- 3. Untapped Discovery:** The most powerful insights are often the result of surprising discoveries rather than testable hypotheses. AI-enabled tools can analyze the questions brands don't think to ask to surface valuable answers.

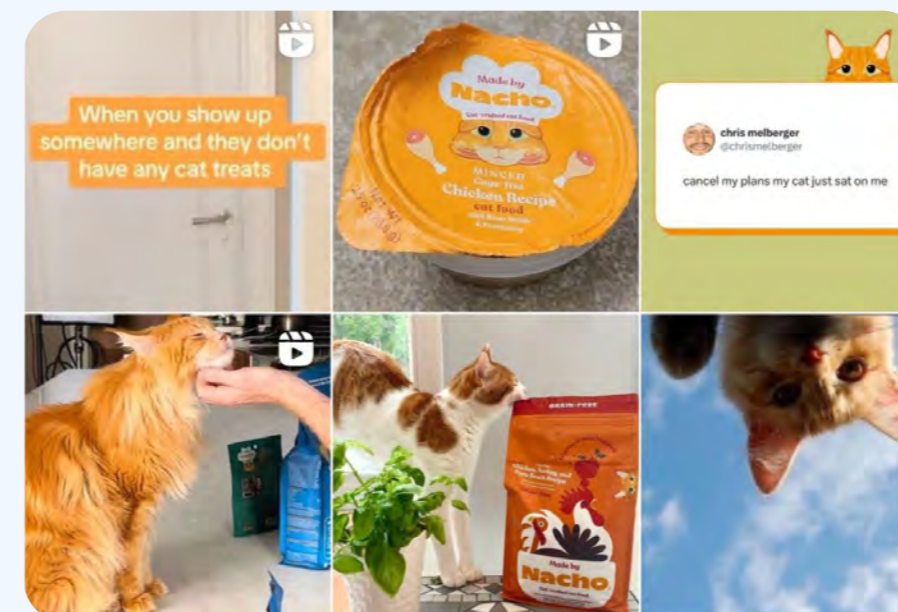
## Before Using Vision AI



**0.78%**

Average Engagement Rate

## After Using Vision AI



**2.20%**

Average Engagement Rate



## TREND 2

# Creators Achieve Superior Performance Metrics on Instagram

Creators continue to captivate audiences on social media, driving culture and commerce through their unique content and POV. Regardless of the size of their follower counts, creators stand out for their relatability and the authentic connections they've developed with their communities. The deep level of trust and engagement they've cultivated among their fans gives their endorsements and opinions outsized influence, making them sought-after brand partners.

Emarketer found that spending on influencer marketing continues to rise with budgets in the U.S. growing by [16% YOY to an estimated \\$8.14 billion in 2024](#).

With increasing ad costs, creators have proven to be an effective way to get brand messages and products in front of target customers without feeling like they're being overtly sold to. 51% of U.S. consumers reported making a purchase after seeing a product used by an influencer and consumers under 45 say influencer posts are the number one way to get them to try a new product according to a [2024 report from IZEA](#). As further evidence of the integral role that creators play in the social ecosystem, the platforms continue their investment in new tools and programs aimed at attracting and retaining talent.

## Creator partnerships outperform average brand performance.



# 12x

## Engagement Rate

Engagement Rate: Likes + Comments / Followers

## Outperform With Creator Content

On Instagram, creators significantly outperform brands in terms of engagement rate (3.5% vs. 0.3%), total engagements (6.7K vs. 3K), and effectiveness rate (65.4% vs. 4.8%).

## Prioritize Short, Entertaining Video Content

Regarding brand-creator partnerships, 51% of creator posts and 61% of brand posts are Reels, demonstrating a strong preference for the format.

## Leverage Long-Term Partnerships

The average creator posts ten pieces of content per brand partnership, indicating that brands favor ongoing relationships rather than one-off posts.

## Creator Instagram Benchmarks (Average)

|                    | Overall | >10K  | 10K-100K | <100K |
|--------------------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| Engagement Rate    | 3.5%    | 4.0%  | 3.6%     | 3.2%  |
| Engagements        | 6.7K    | 160   | 1.3K     | 16.7K |
| Effectiveness Rate | 65.4%   | 36.6% | 76.4%    | 63.4% |
| Followers Gained   | 104     | 14    | 30       | 248   |

Most Effective

Engagement Rate: Likes + Comments / Followers

Engagements: Likes + Comments

Effectiveness Rate: Likes + Comments + Shares + Saves / Reach



# Enhancing Engagement

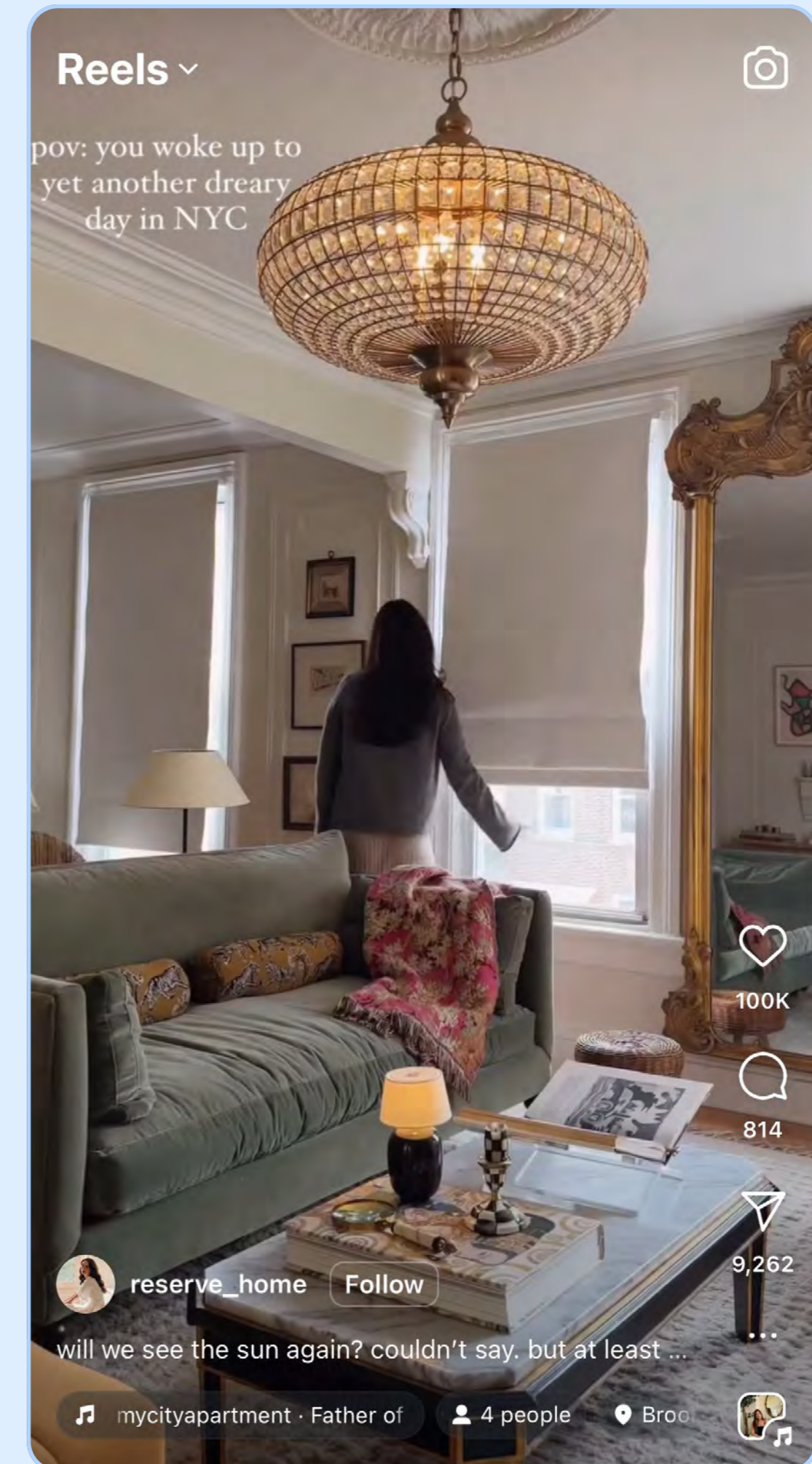
Average for creator partnerships:

**5.0%** Engagement Rate      **102%** Effectiveness Rate

“Working with creators has been essential to our strategy at McGee & Co. This year, we rolled out a tiered ambassador program which has given us the opportunity to work with more creators than ever and support their ongoing success. Creators have built audiences that they know well and that really trust them. For that reason, we put a lot of trust in our partnerships. From product selection to content direction, we give a lot of creative liberty to allow creators to do what they do best.”



Amanda Houston,  
Influencer and Affiliate Marketing Manager at McGee & Co





## Enhancing Engagement

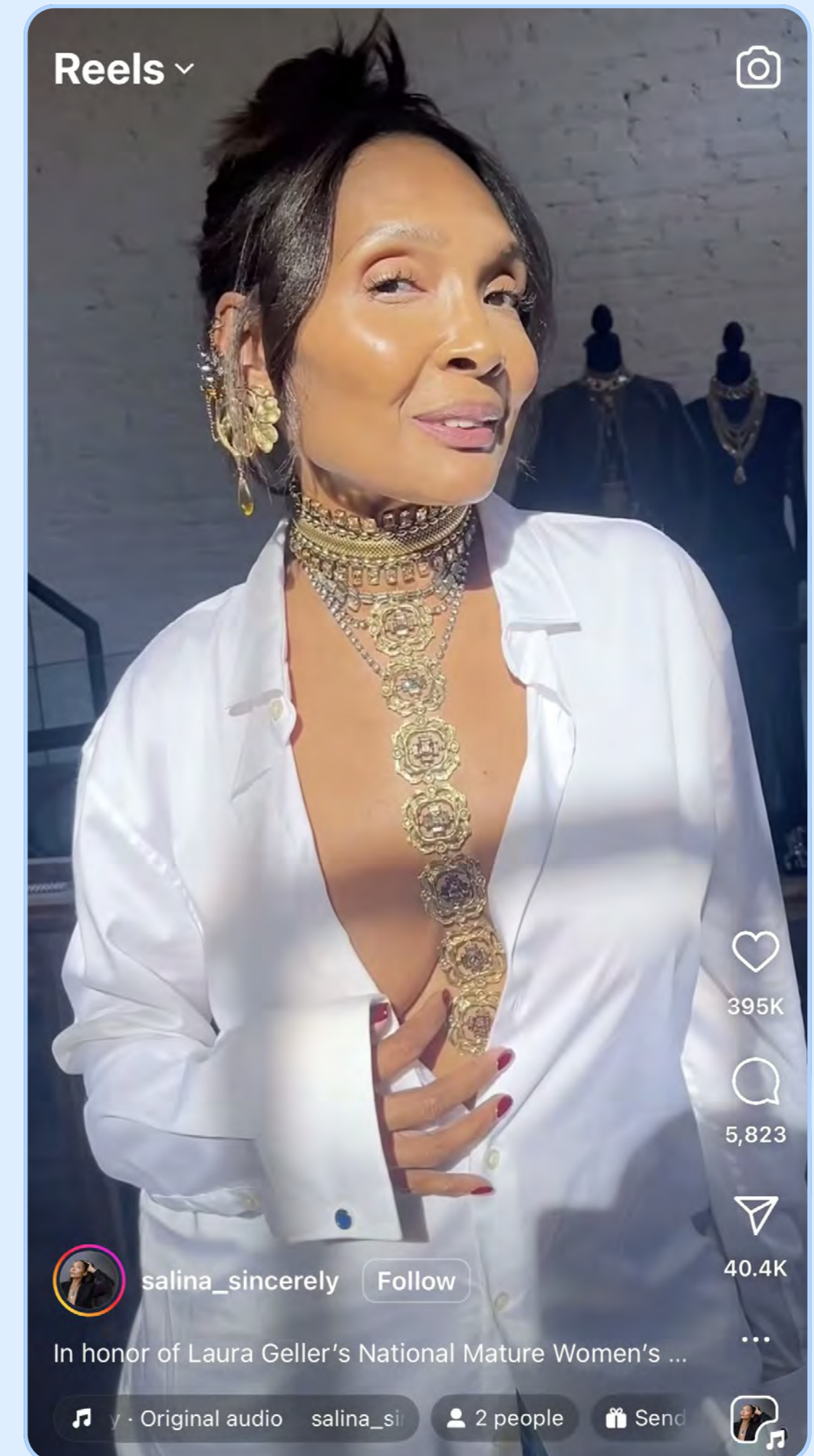
Average for creator partnerships:

**9.0%** Engagement Rate      **163%** Effectiveness Rate

“Partnering with creators is a very important factor in our marketing strategy. Their authentic engagement and unique perspectives have not only amplified our brand's reach but also fostered a deeper connection with our audience. Collaborating with creators has allowed us to tap into diverse communities, driving both brand awareness and customer loyalty. The genuine interactions and content created through these partnerships have consistently met our expectations in results, making influencer collaborations an invaluable asset in our overall marketing approach.”



Kim Dorce,  
Senior Marketing Manager at Laura Geller Beauty



TREND 3

# Entertaining Content on TikTok Drives Sales Growth

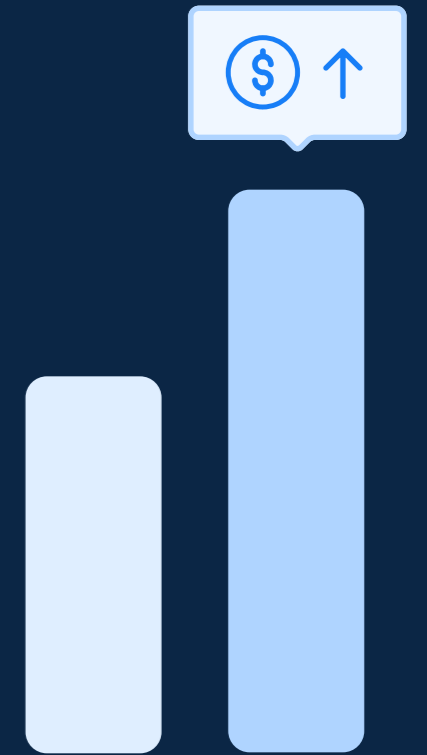
Between shifting platform priorities, rapidly rising and falling trends and ever-changing audience behaviors, the social media landscape is in a constant state of flux. Social teams must continually adapt their strategies to keep up. Entertainment, however, is one of the few exceptions. It stands out for its consistency and reliability in determining how well a post will perform across key platform metrics and even drive sales growth.

In partnership with NielsenIQ, Dash Hudson analyzed its proprietary metric of Entertainment Score (Engagement

Rate/Retention Rate, 0-low, 10-high) for 150 beauty brands on TikTok over the past 52 weeks to see if there was a connection between a higher Entertainment Score and a brand's overall sales growth. Entertaining content's ability to more effectively engage audiences not only contributes to increased brand awareness and perception but also higher sales. While there are some exceptions, the overall data suggests a positive correlation between entertaining TikTok content and sales growth.

67%

sales growth achieved by brands with a TikTok Entertainment Score of 5+



Three brands on TikTok with high Entertainment Scores and sales growth

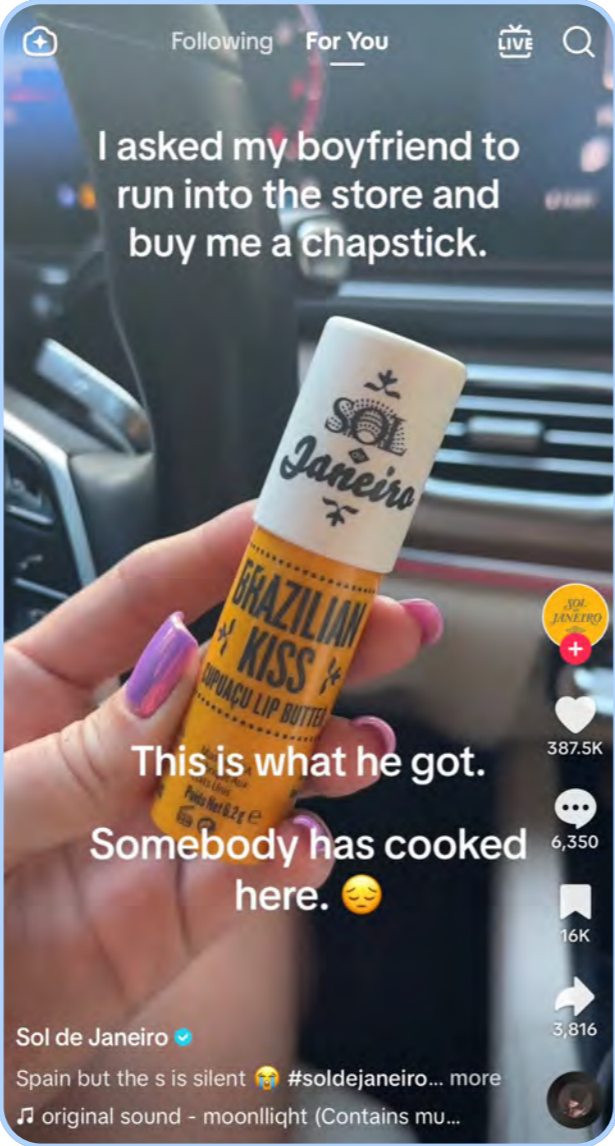
*SOL DE JANEIRO*

Rare Beauty

**STARFACE**



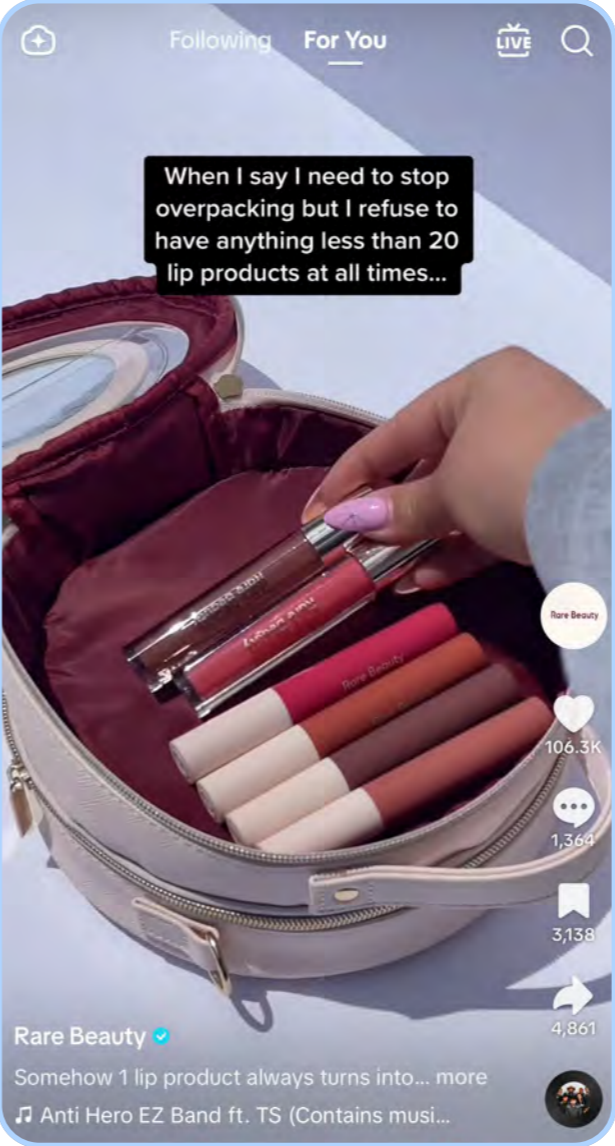
# Brand Spotlight



## SOL DE JANEIRO

Average Entertainment Score: **6.4**

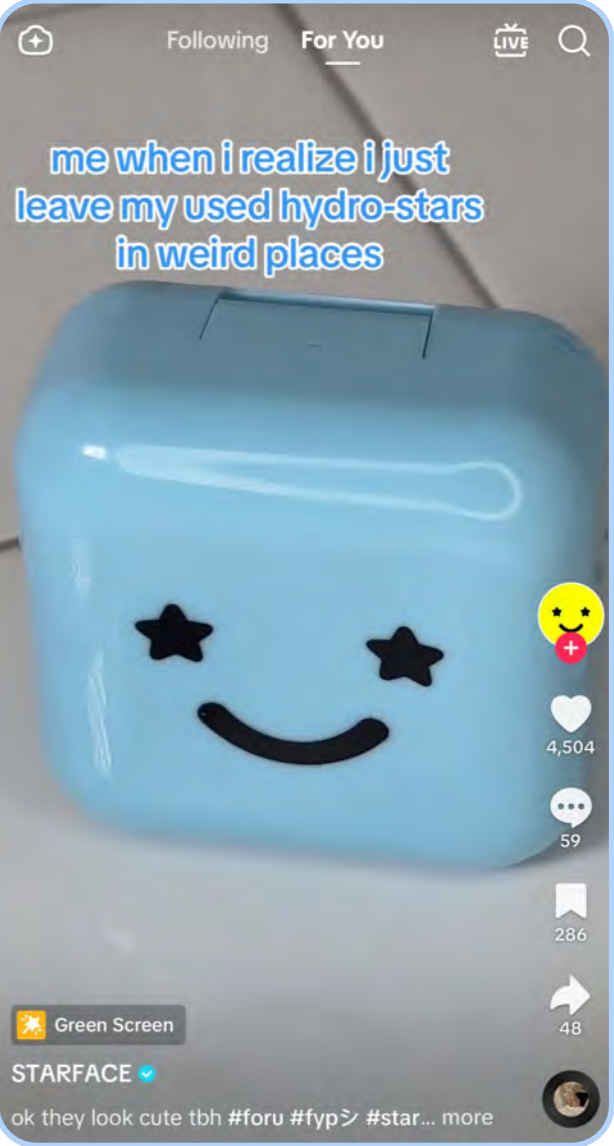
The brand leans into its Brazilian DNA on TikTok with vibrant content that showcases its beauty products through engaging tutorials and testimonials.



## Rare Beauty

Average Entertainment Score: **5.1**

The brand's message on self-acceptance and embracing individual beauty shines through on TikTok with fun and relatable beauty content that celebrates the joy of makeup.



## STARFACE

Average Entertainment Score: **5.0**

The brand destigmatizes acne by decorating rather than covering it up with its unique line of pimple patches. This same playful attitude resonates on TikTok through bright visuals and fun skincare tutorials.

### Methodology

Dash Hudson partnered with TikTok and NielsenIQ to highlight to what degree higher Entertainment Scores positively impacted sales. Entertainment Score is a proprietary Dash Hudson metric that measures how entertained a user was by a video.

Dash Hudson analyzed over 150 beauty brands' TikTok performance and sales data between May 1, 2023 and May 1, 2024 to determine that brands with an Entertainment Score above 5 had increased sales within the same time period.

TREND 4

# Creators Propel Social Commerce With TikTok Shop

Since the launch of TikTok Shop in the US at the end of 2023, there has been renewed excitement around social media's viability as an effective commerce channel. More than one-third (39%) of Gen Z aged 18-26 and (37%) of millennials said they'd made at least one purchase on TikTok Shop according to research by Morning Consult. Brands have been quick to take advantage of new direct sales opportunities in TikTok with those in the Health and Beauty category leading the way. In 2024, TikTok has emerged as the 9th largest beauty e-commerce retailer in the US market and the 2nd largest in the UK market.



This incredible growth trajectory over such a short period points to the power of TikTok Shop and, despite the uncertainty surrounding TikTok's future in the US market, highlights it as a must-have component of a strong social media strategy. To understand how top brands are successfully driving sales on TikTok Shop, Dash Hudson analyzed data provided by NielsenIQ as part of their Foxintelligence E-receipt Consumer Panel. High performers are leaning into creator content that features their hero products to build awareness, generate excitement and push people down the purchase path.



# Creators Drive Success for Brands Using TikTok Shop by Leveraging Hero Products

Hero products generate millions of creator and UGC posts.

**Guru Nanda** Oil Pulling: **173M**

**MySmile** Teeth Whitening Kit: **62M**

**VEYES BEAUTY** *VB* Lash Tutorial: **47.8M**

**Lattafa** YARA: **33.5M**

**tarte** Maracuja Juicy Lip Plump: **31.4M**

**tarte**<sup>TM</sup>

Maracuja Juicy Lip Plump

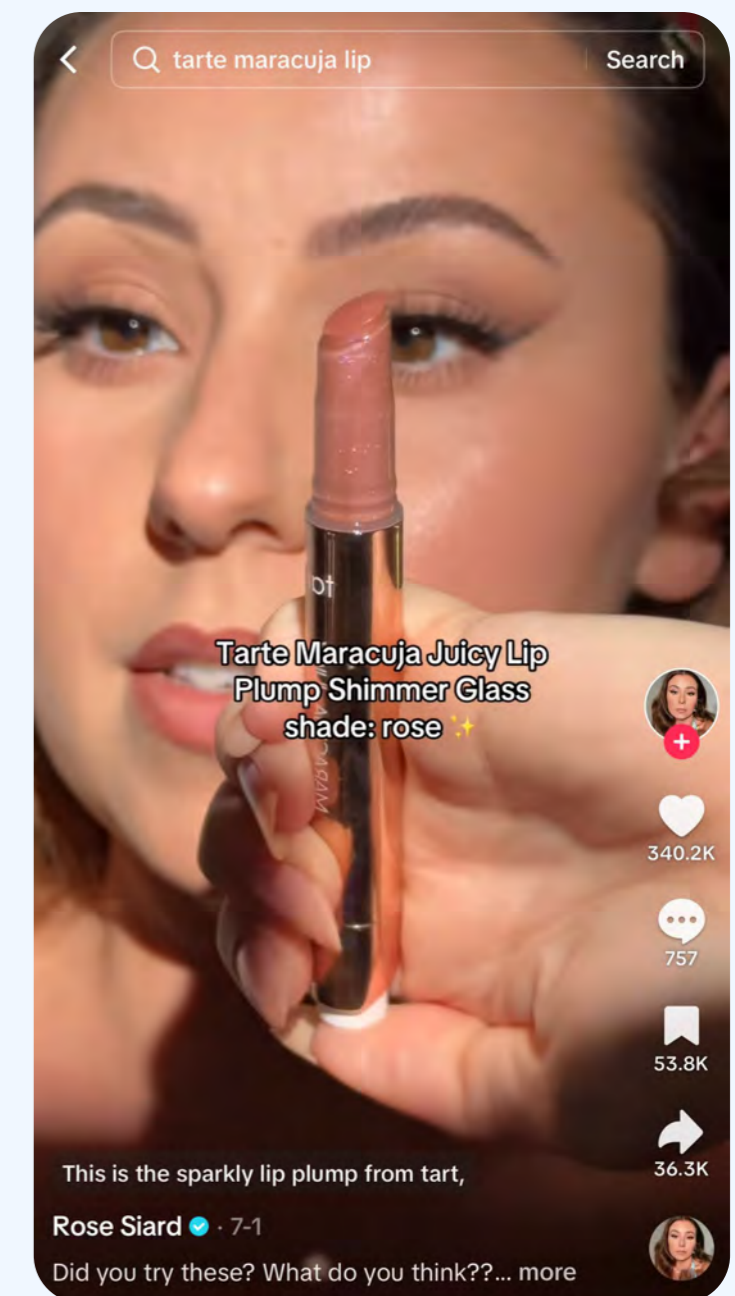
Rose Siard Partnership

Engagement Rate:

**9.6%**

Video Views:

**3.9M**



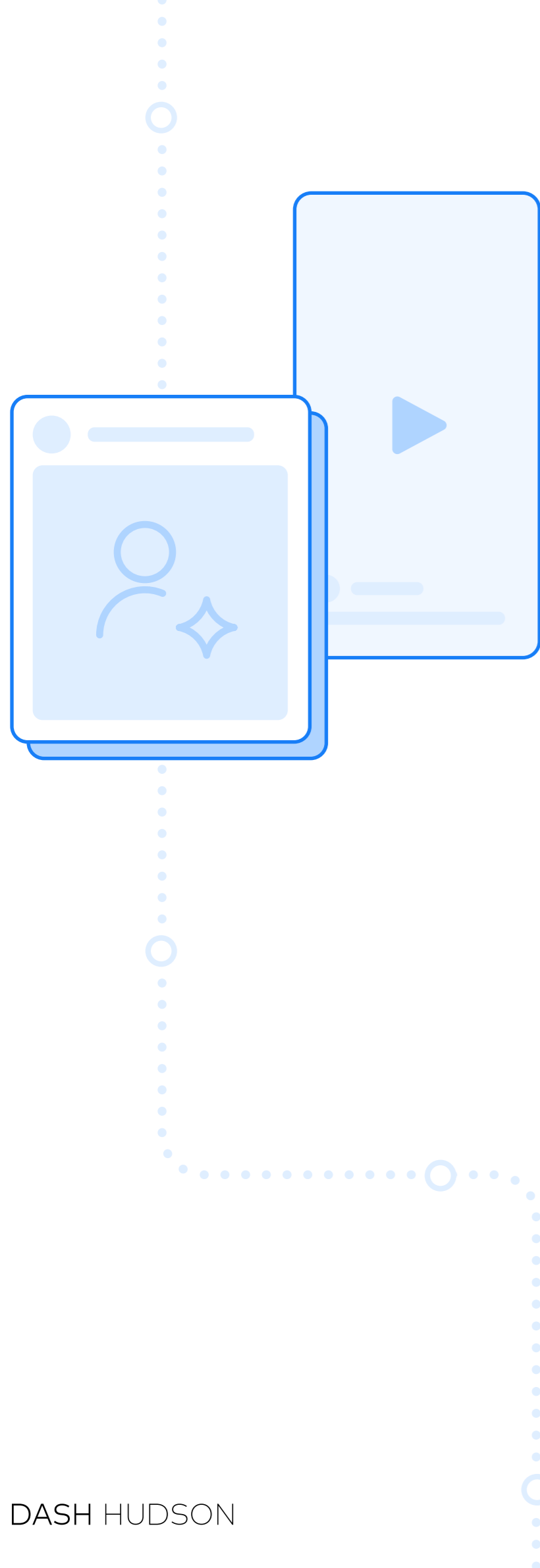
# Conclusion

As the social media landscape evolves, two pivotal shifts have become top of mind for CMOs and brand marketers –advancements in AI and the growing impact of creator partnerships. Understanding and leveraging these changes is crucial for developing a successful content strategy.

AI-powered tools have revolutionized content creation, transforming beyond drivers of productivity and efficiency into intelligence powerhouses. These technologies enable brands to produce high-quality, engaging content at scale, precisely target the right audiences with the right message and gain actionable insights through advanced analytics. The ability to analyze past performance and predict future trends empowers marketers to continuously refine their strategies, ensuring content remains relevant and effective.

Simultaneously, the rise of the creators has transformed brand engagement. Successful partnerships pair the authenticity and loyal followings that creators have cultivated with entertaining content to resonate with audiences and drive higher engagement. Brands that collaborate effectively with creators benefit from close-in associations with their communities, while also experiencing higher ROI.

Through analysis of Dash Hudson’s platform and partner data and the strategies of top-performing brands, we’ve created a set of guidelines to deepen your understanding of how to take advantage of advanced AI tools and creator partnerships to confidently navigate the rapidly changing landscape, enhance your social media strategies, and drive sustained success.



## AI Drives Stronger Performance

Data from brands leveraging Dash Hudson's Vision AI shows that top-predicted content received higher overall engagement (+66%), effectiveness (+30%), video views (+29%), and reach (+40%) than low-predicted content.

## Creators Achieve Superior Engagement Metrics on Instagram

Creators earn higher engagement rates (3.5% vs. 0.3%), total engagements (6.7K vs. 3K), and effectiveness rates (65.4% vs. 4.8%).

## Brand-Creator Partnerships Have Evolved on Instagram

Brands with effective creator strategies trust the creator's expertise and give them creative freedom, seek alignment with values and audience and foster long-term relationships rather than one-off campaigns.

## Entertaining Content Drives Sales Growth

Dash Hudson's Entertainment Score proves to be a powerful indicator of social commerce success. Brands with an average entertainment score of 5.0 or higher on TikTok experienced an average sales growth of +67% versus those scoring below 5.0 during the same timeframe.

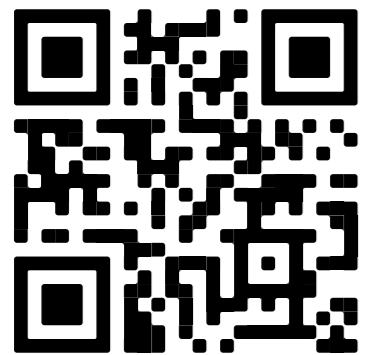
## Creators Propel Social Commerce With TikTok Shop

The brands achieving early success on TikTok Shop tend to share a higher volume of organic posts and rely heavily on creator and UGC support. Guru Nanda's Oil Pulling product has generated an impressive 173M creator and UGC posts, illustrating how hero products can drive significant engagement and visibility.

DASH HUDSON

# Outsmart Social

Dash Hudson is a social media management platform that equips brands with intelligence and speed to stay ahead of the curve. Through its sophisticated cross-channel insights and workflow tools, Dash Hudson enables brands to create content that entertains, engages, and drives consistent business results. To discover how Dash Hudson empowers brands to outsmart social, visit [dashhudson.com](https://dashhudson.com).



Scan the QR code to sign up  
for a free demo of Dash Hudson.



**Andie** Social Media Manager

Hey team! Sharing our weekly social performance dashboard for review.

