



**How Social Media Really Works  
Now and How to Avoid Wasting  
Your Time With It**



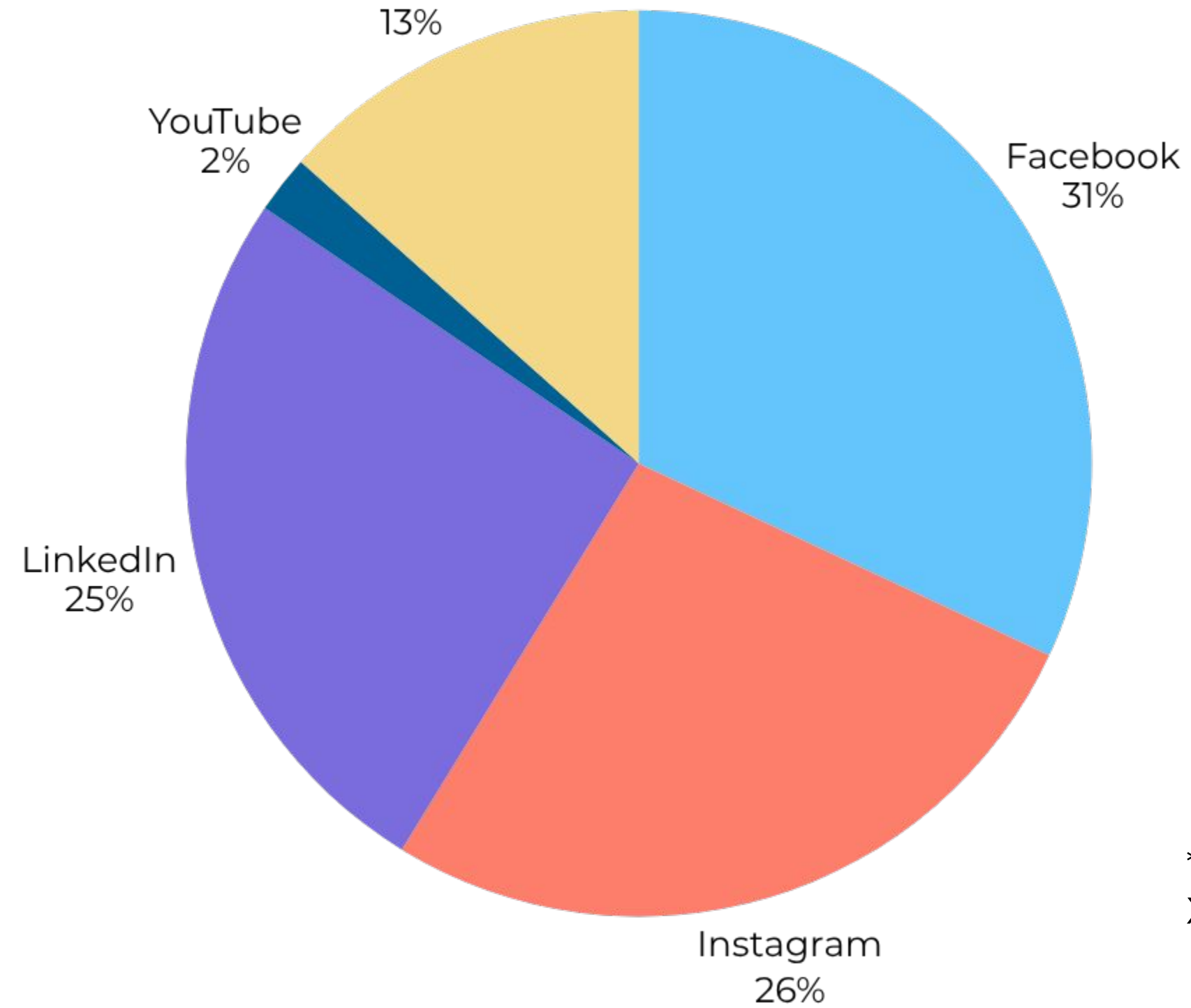
**NONPROFIT**  
MARKETING GUIDE

# State of Social In 2026

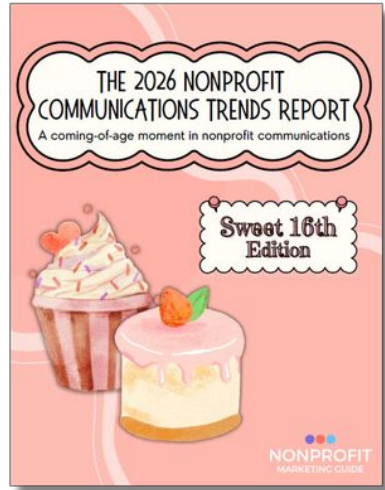


# Which platform most reliably helped you achieve your objectives in 2025?

Social media does not reliably help us achieve our objectives.



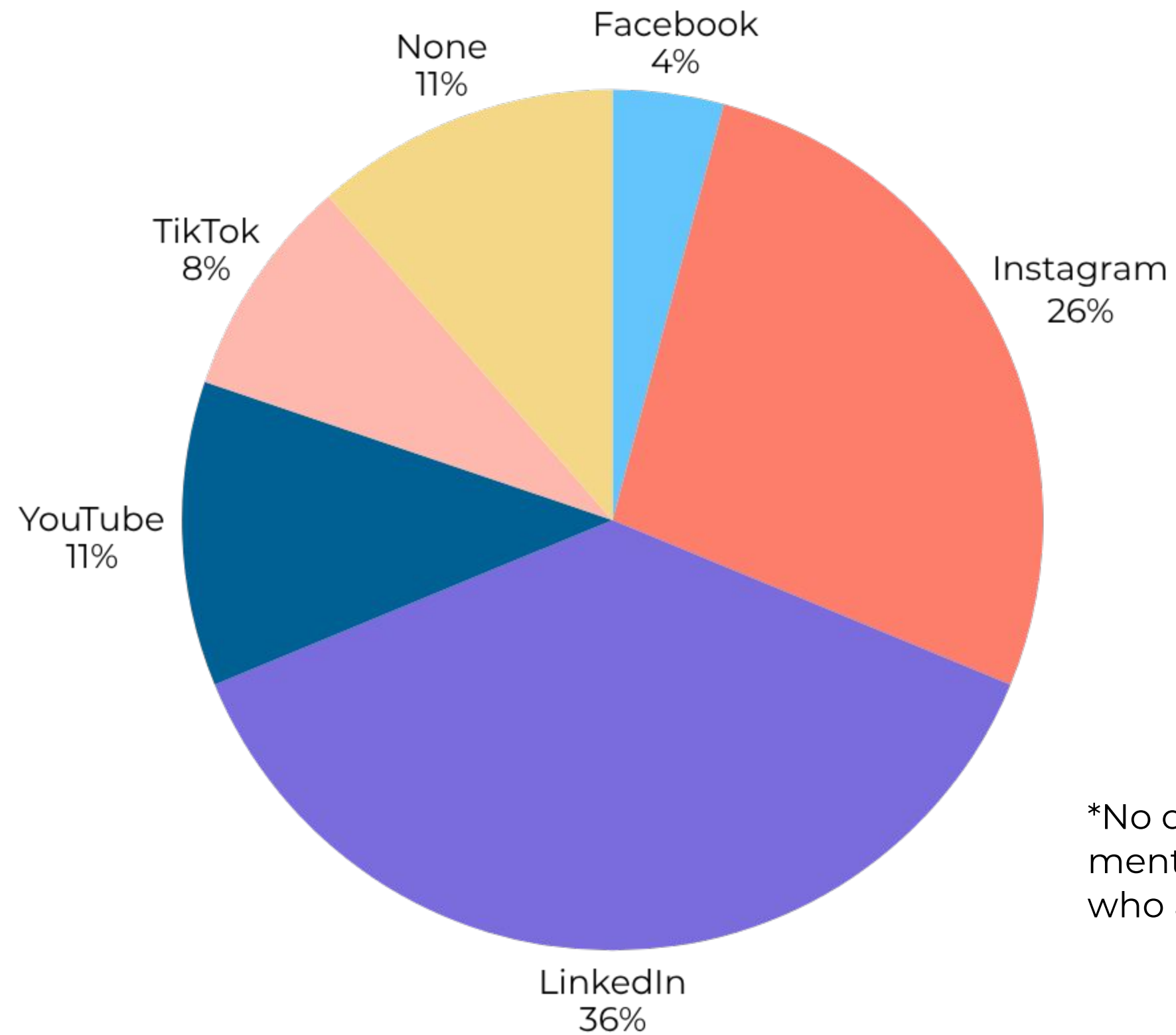
\*Only one person (0.31%) said X and no one said TikTok



Data from our 2026 Nonprofit Communications Trends Report



## In 2026, which platform would you like to invest more time in?

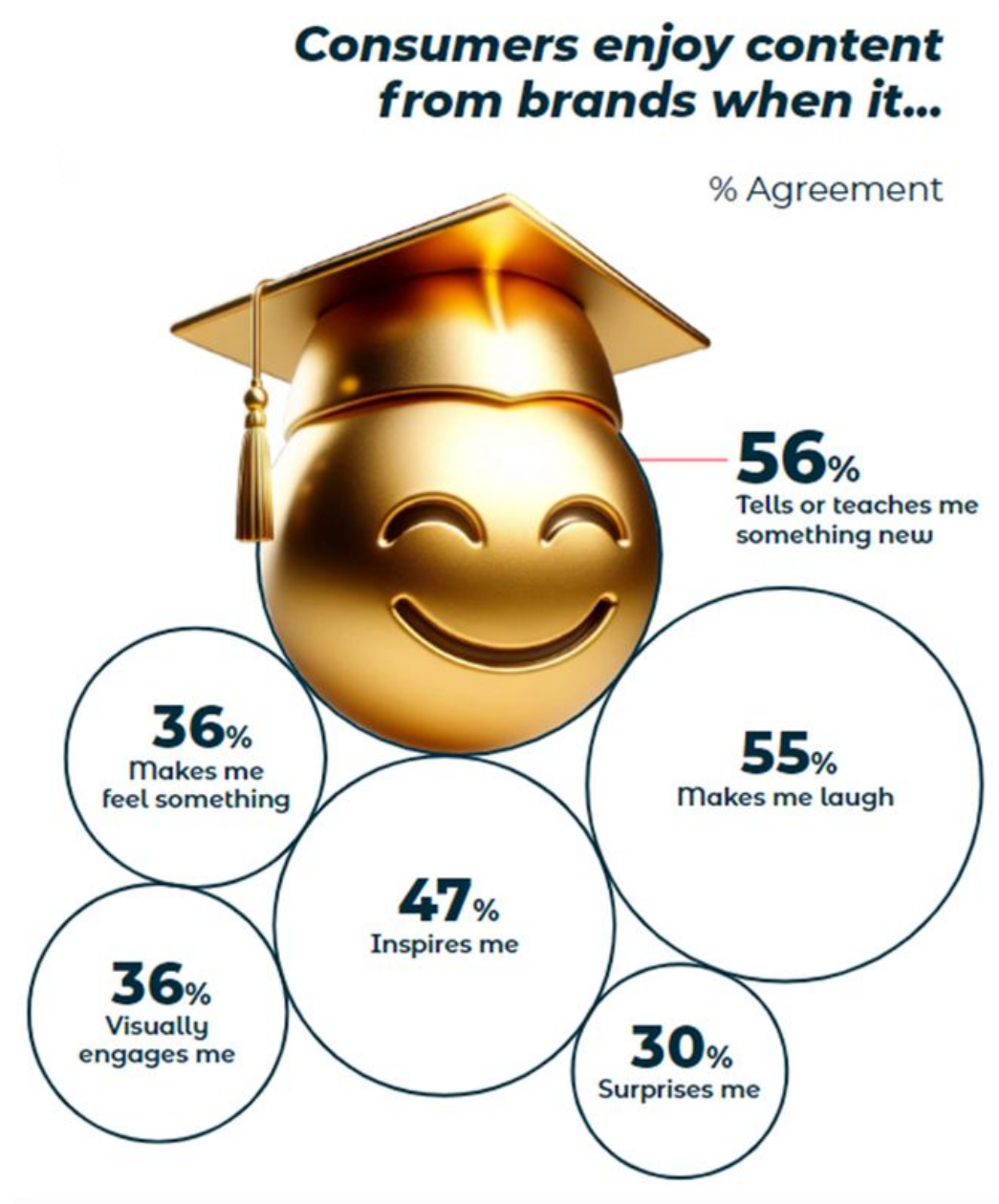


Data from our 2026 Nonprofit Communications Trends Report

\*No one said X and Bluesky was mentioned the most from the 2% who answered "Other"

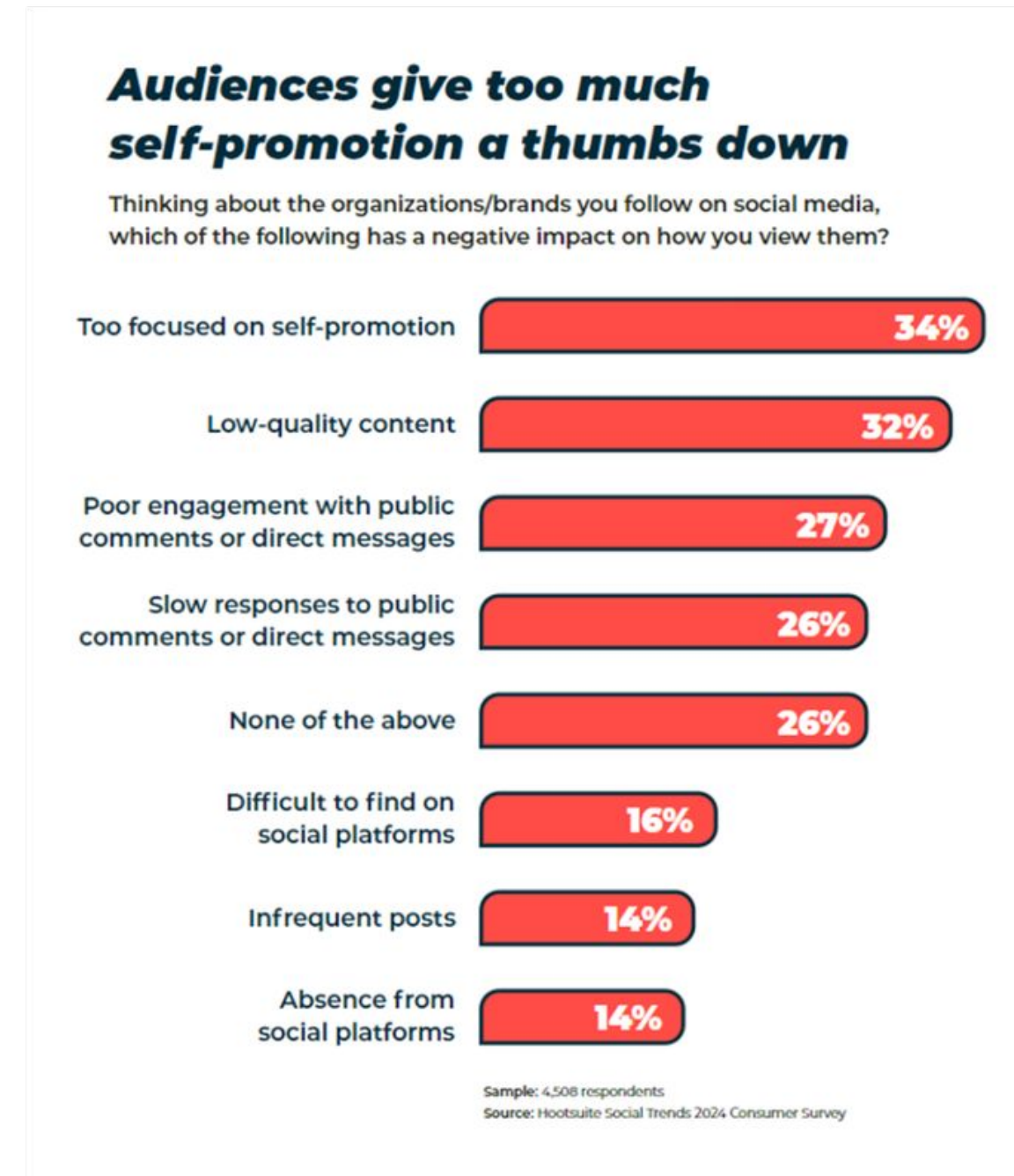


# What They Want



Hootsuite's  
Social Media Consumer Report

# What They Don't Want



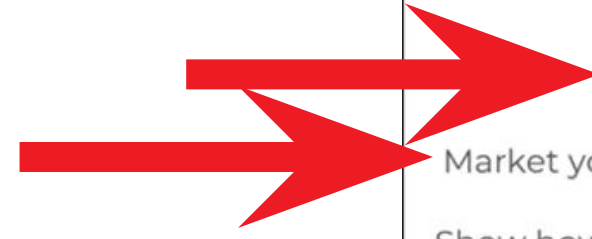
Hootsuite's  
Social Media Trends



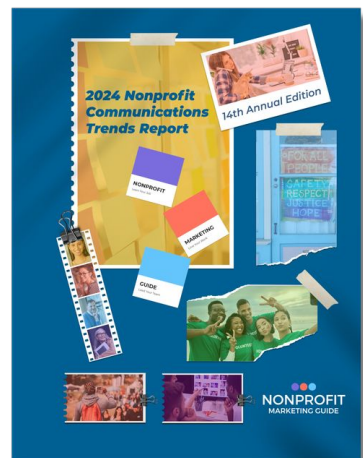
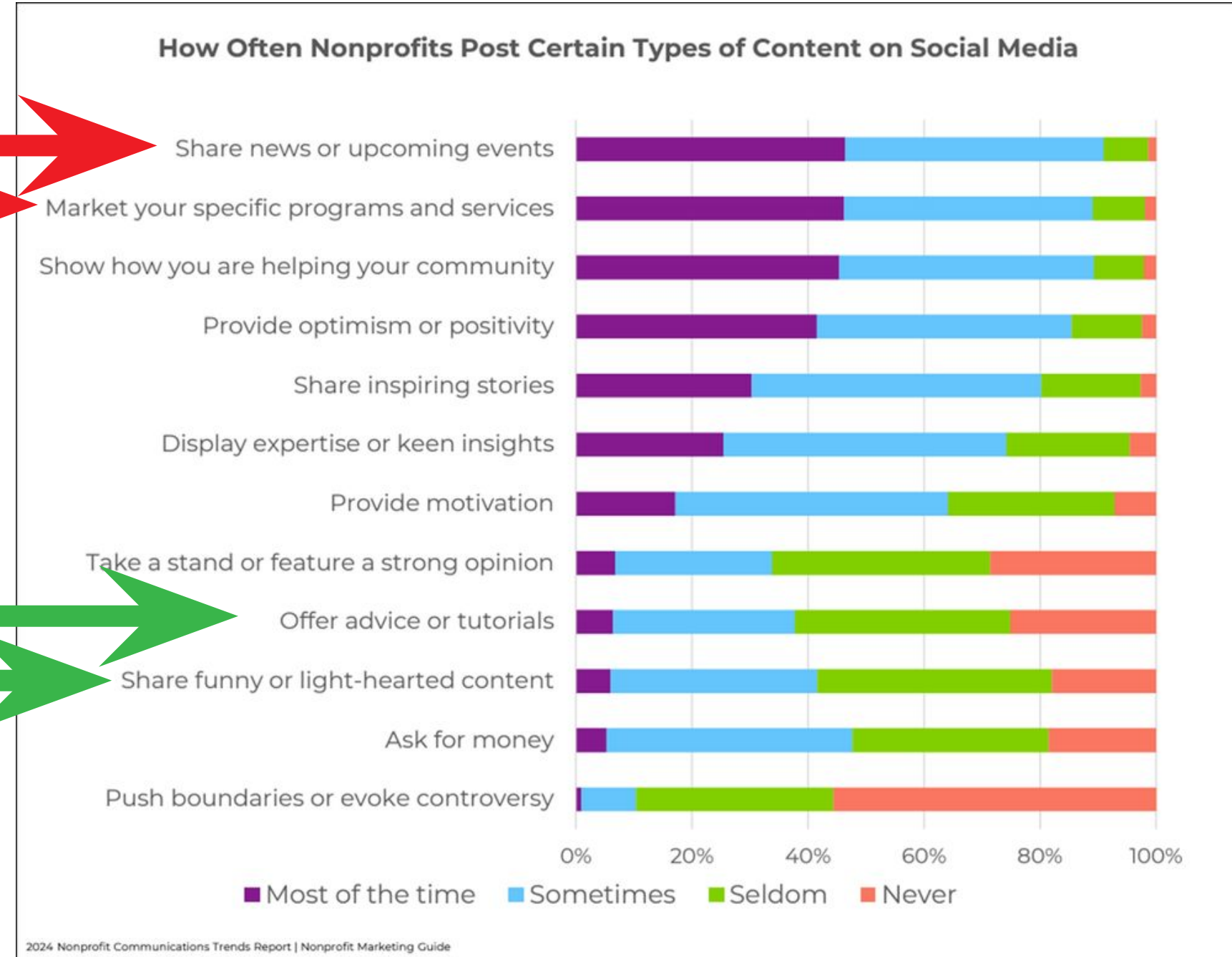
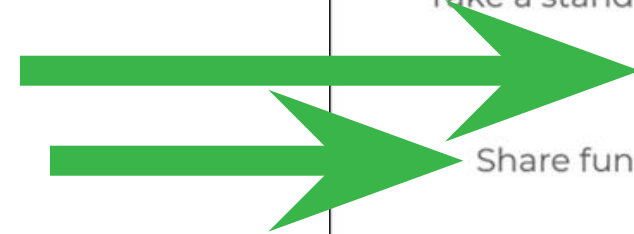
# What You Give Them

Uh  
Oh!

Self-Promoting



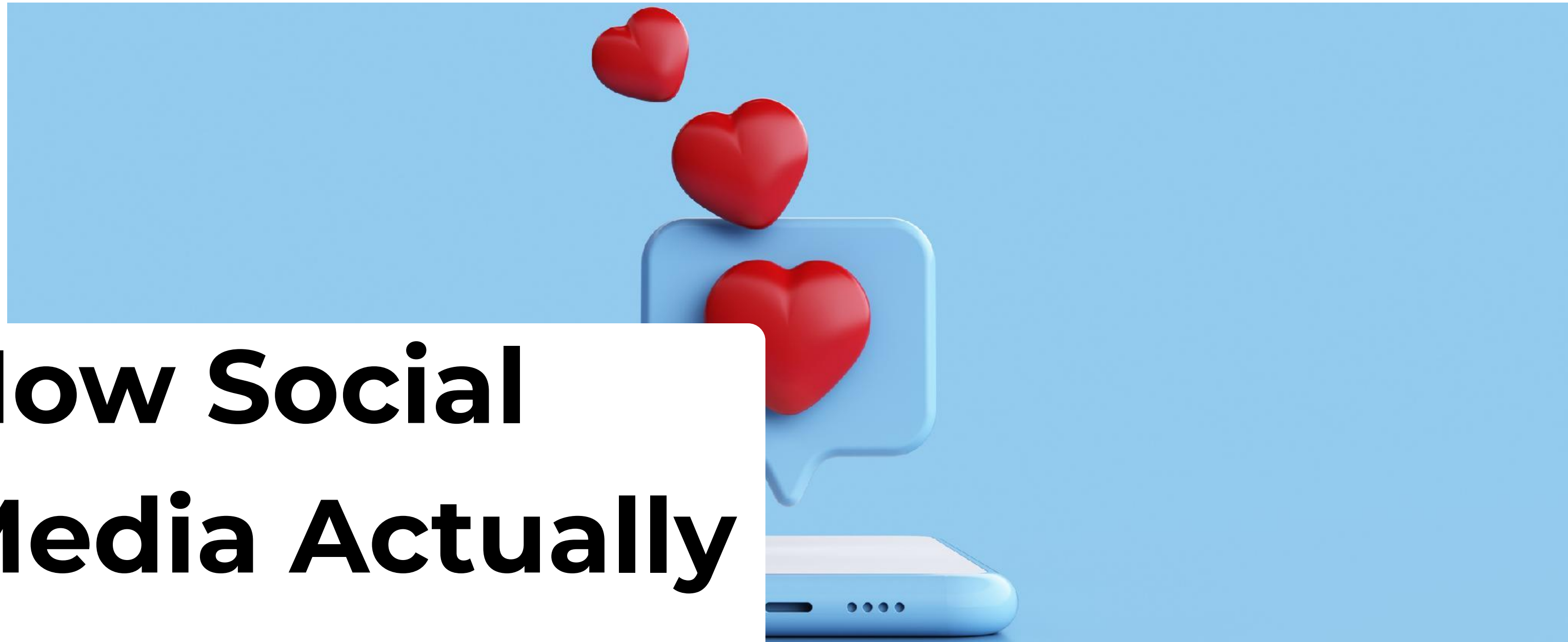
Educating  
Entertaining

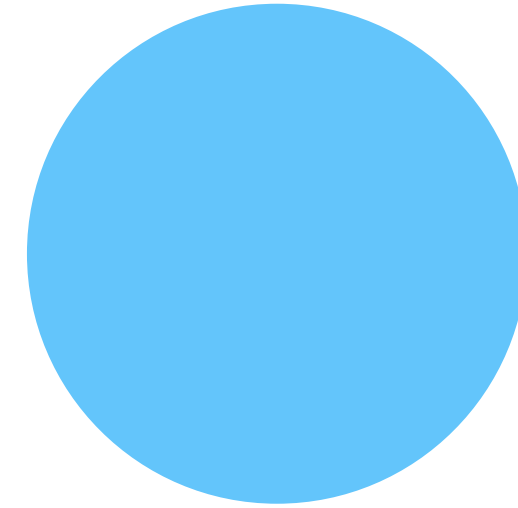


From our 2024 Trends Report



# How Social Media Actually Works Now





**Social Media  
Isn't Social  
Anymore**



# Algorithms Have Replaced Relationships

- Social platforms are optimized for time and revenue now
- Feeds prioritize predicted interests, not relationships
- Connection is no longer the primary goal - consumption is.





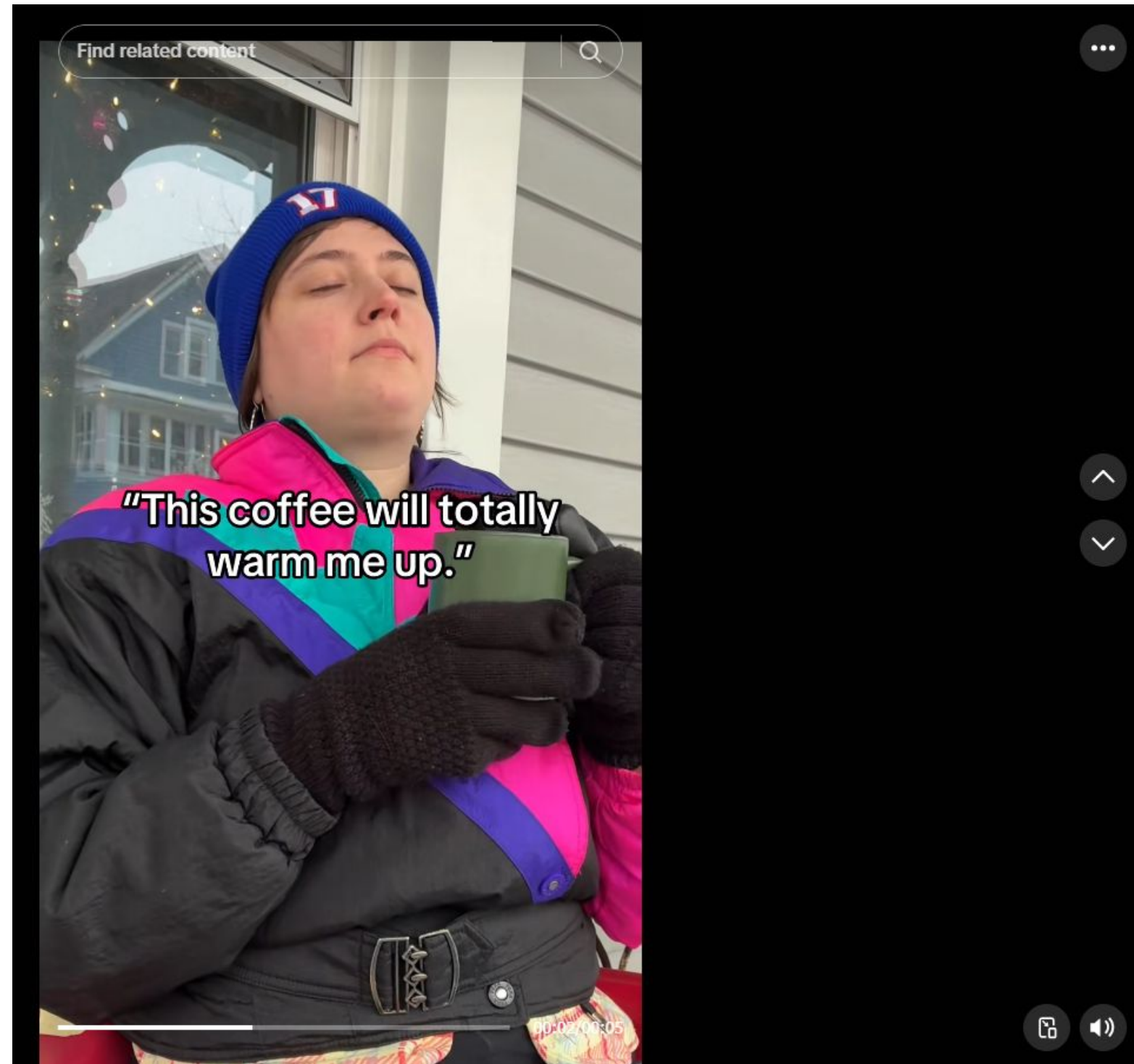
# The Effects

- People see less content from people they know and pages they follow
- You're competing with entertainment and news not other conversations
- Organic reach is down
- Engagement is down (fewer likes and comments specifically)
- Shares are happening privately in DMs as opposed to personal feeds





American Red Cross on TikTok



 **americanredcross** ✓  
American Red Cross · 6d ago Following



When you realize you're about to make the situation worse. 😬  
Don't reach for coffee or an alcoholic drink to keep war... [more](#)

🎵 original sound - COMPLEX

👍 179    💬 2    📌 3    📺    📄    📱    🗣️    📧    ➔

<https://www.tiktok.com/@americanredcross/video/759...> Copy link

**Comments (2)**    Creator videos


-  **Purposeful Educator**  
Warms up my panic for an attack 😬  
4d ago    Reply    📌 1
-  **Everything** 🗣️ — 🗣️ in between  
FIRST  
6d ago    Reply    📌 1



Add comment...    @    😊    Post








Cleveland Clinic on Instagram




 **clevelandclinic** • Follow  
Tony Dark Eyes • Dollar (Instrumental) ⋮

 **clevelandclinic** If your time on social media has become an emotional roller coaster of comparison, perfectionism and unwelcome opinions, it might be time to take a break. It's not necessarily about the amount of time you're spending on social media, but rather the negative effect it may be having on you.   
3d

 This reel has 2 comments from Facebook.

     
224 likes  
3 days ago

 Add a comment... Post

# What This Means for You

- Stop chasing engagement
- Shift to recognition being the goal
- Design content that is understood instantly
- Treat social as a doorway not the destination
- Be explicit about why your content matters



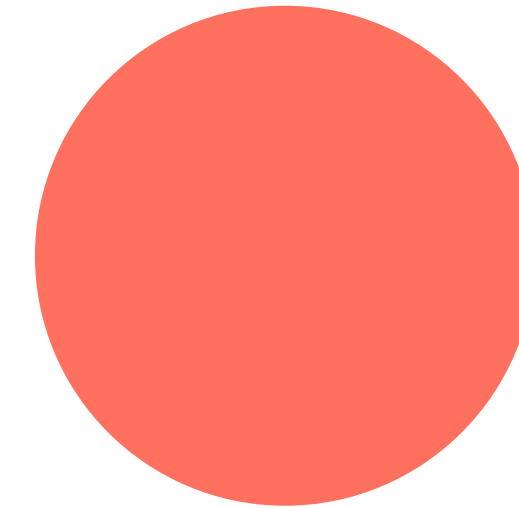
# Can You “Beat” the Algorithm?

**Not really but the algorithms do reward:**

- Content that “stops the scroll”
- Retention (did they keep watching or reading?)
- Familiar formats over time
- Consistent keywords and topics

**So you can work WITH it**



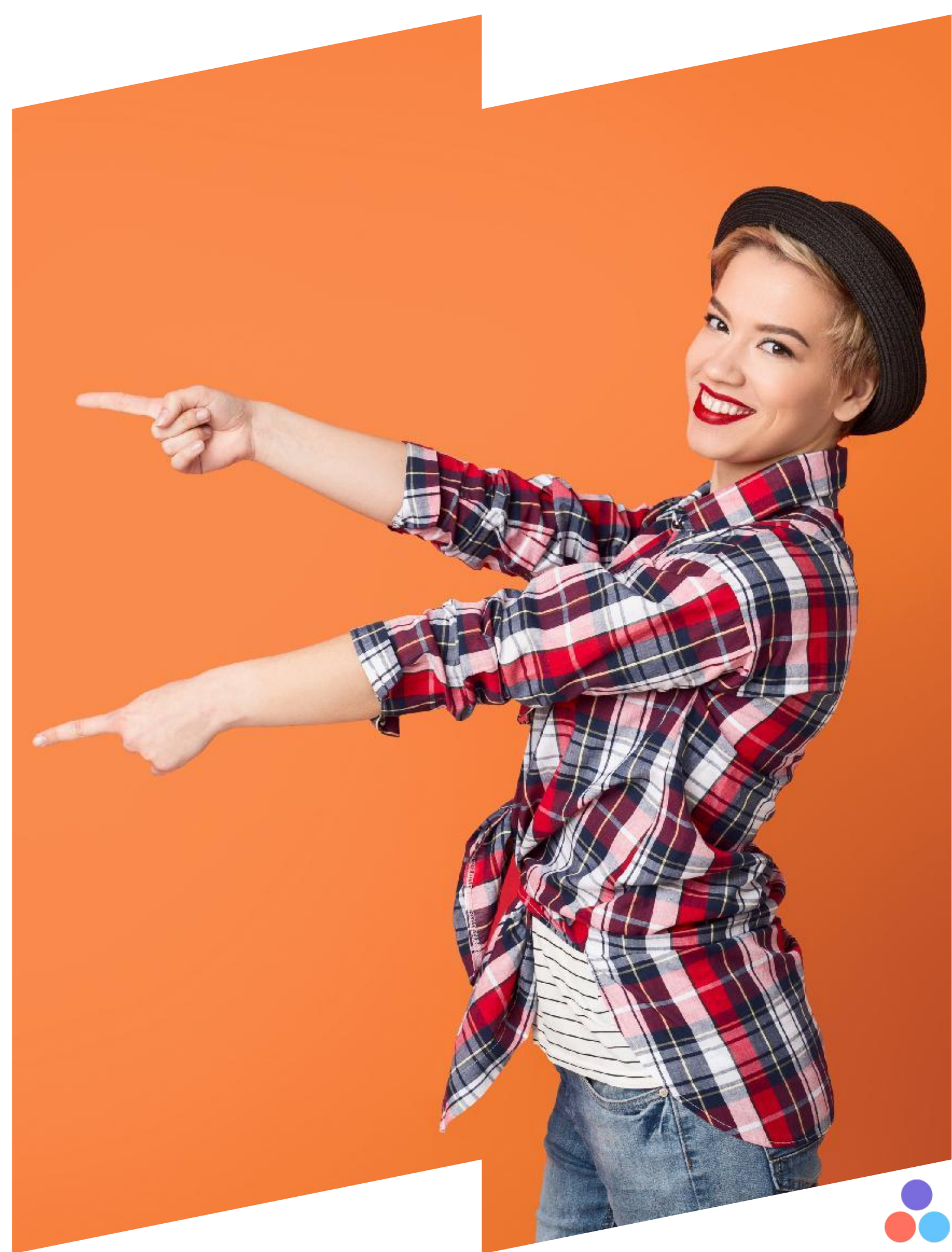


**Attention Is a  
Scarce  
Resource**



# The Realities of the “Attention Economy”

- Attention is limited and fragmented
- Feeds are algorithmically curated, not chronological
- Again, your posts compete with entertainment
- And most content is consumed passively, not interacted with





# Luckily, More Posts is NOT the Answer

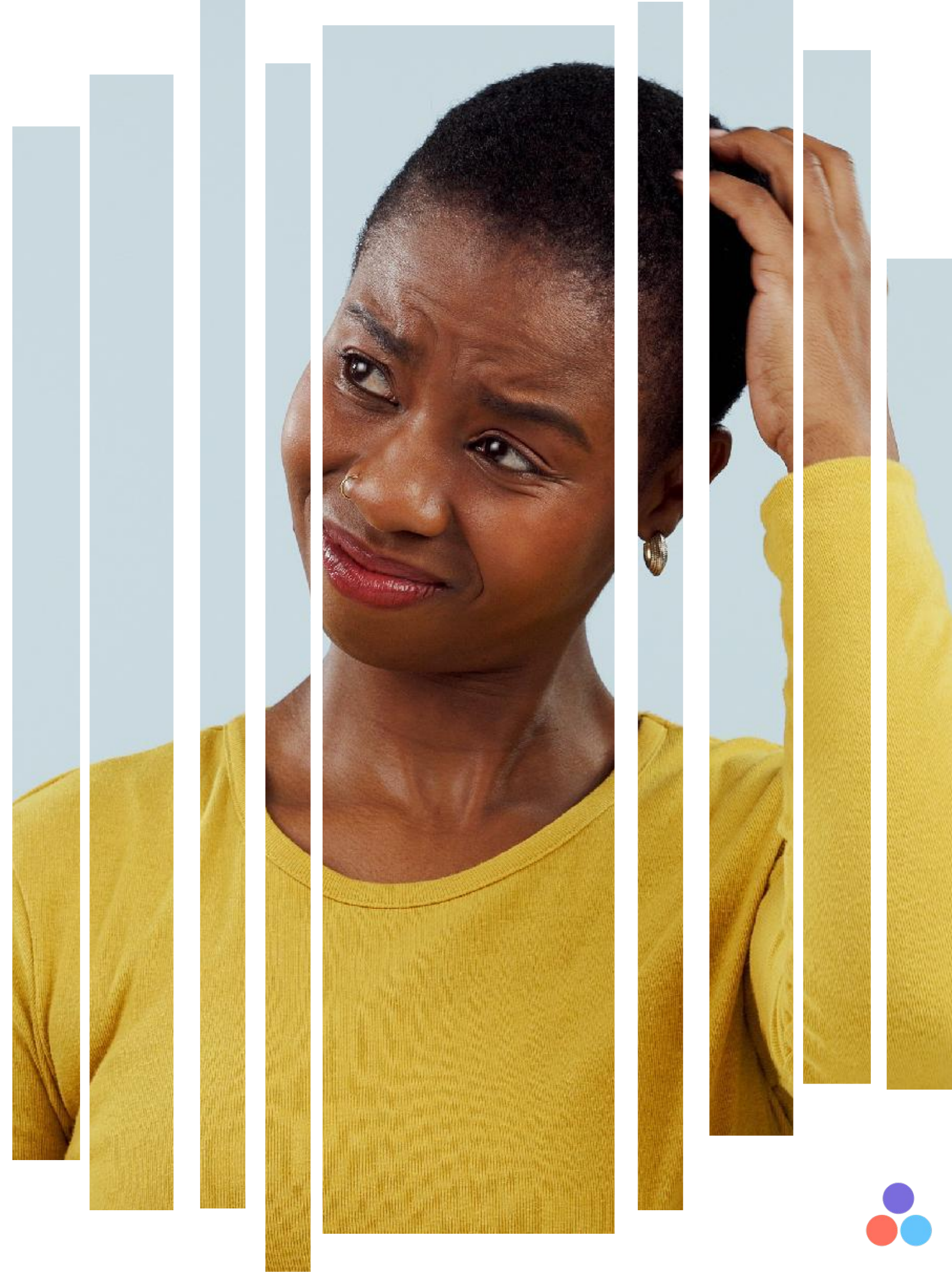
- More content doesn't create more attention
- Oversaturation reduces clarity
- Algorithms reward retention, not frequency
- Volume can make it harder for messages to land

**Yes, this means you have  
permission to post LESS  
frequently! You're welcome.**



# So What Is the Answer?

- Be clearer, not “louder”
- Give each post a specific job
- Repeat what matters instead of adding more
- Amplify your strongest content



← Posts

mercycorps



**WHAT'S GOING ON IN HAITI?**

5 things you need to know




72 1 9

mercycorps REMINDER: Don't forget about #Haiti.

Home Search Add Post Reels Nonprofit

← Posts


mercycorps



**1.**

Haiti is enduring a multi-faceted crisis worsened by the unchecked expansion of gang violence.

In 2024, approx. 5.5 million Haitians —almost half of the population—were in need of humanitarian assistance.



72 1 9

mercycorps REMINDER: Don't forget about #Haiti.

Home Search Add Post Reels Nonprofit

← Posts

mercycorps



**3.**

Supply chains have been disrupted, causing prices of essential goods soar.

Increased transportation costs are driving up the prices of essential goods, causing widespread food insecurity and competition over resources.



72 1 9

mercycorps REMINDER: Don't forget about #Haiti.

Home Search Add Post Reels Nonprofit

← Posts

mercycorps



**WHAT CAN WE DO?**

- Spread awareness and elevate Haitian voices
- Co-create economic opportunities with and for youth
- Deliver lifesaving assistance to those in need
- Support Haitian civil society in charting a new path



72 1 9

mercycorps REMINDER: Don't forget about #Haiti.

Home Search Add Post Reels Nonprofit



1/4

# STATEMENT from RESOLVE

On President Trump Signing Executive Order on IVF



resolveorg Barbara Collura, President and CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Associa... more

2/4

Barbara Collura, CEO, RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association issued the following statement in response to President Donald Trump signing an executive order related to in-vitro fertilization (IVF).



resolveorg Barbara Collura, President and CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Associa... more

3/4

“RESOLVE looks forward to reading the executive order, understanding its impact, and providing our expertise on infertility and family building.

We understand what the best access to care looks like for people who struggle to build their family and know what they need and deserve.”



resolveorg Barbara Collura, President and CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Associa... more

4/4

## Act Now

Stay tuned @resolveorg as the Executive Order is released, and we can provide further updates.

And join RESOLVE's Advocacy Network in our bio or at resolve.org



resolveorg Barbara Collura, President and CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Associa... more

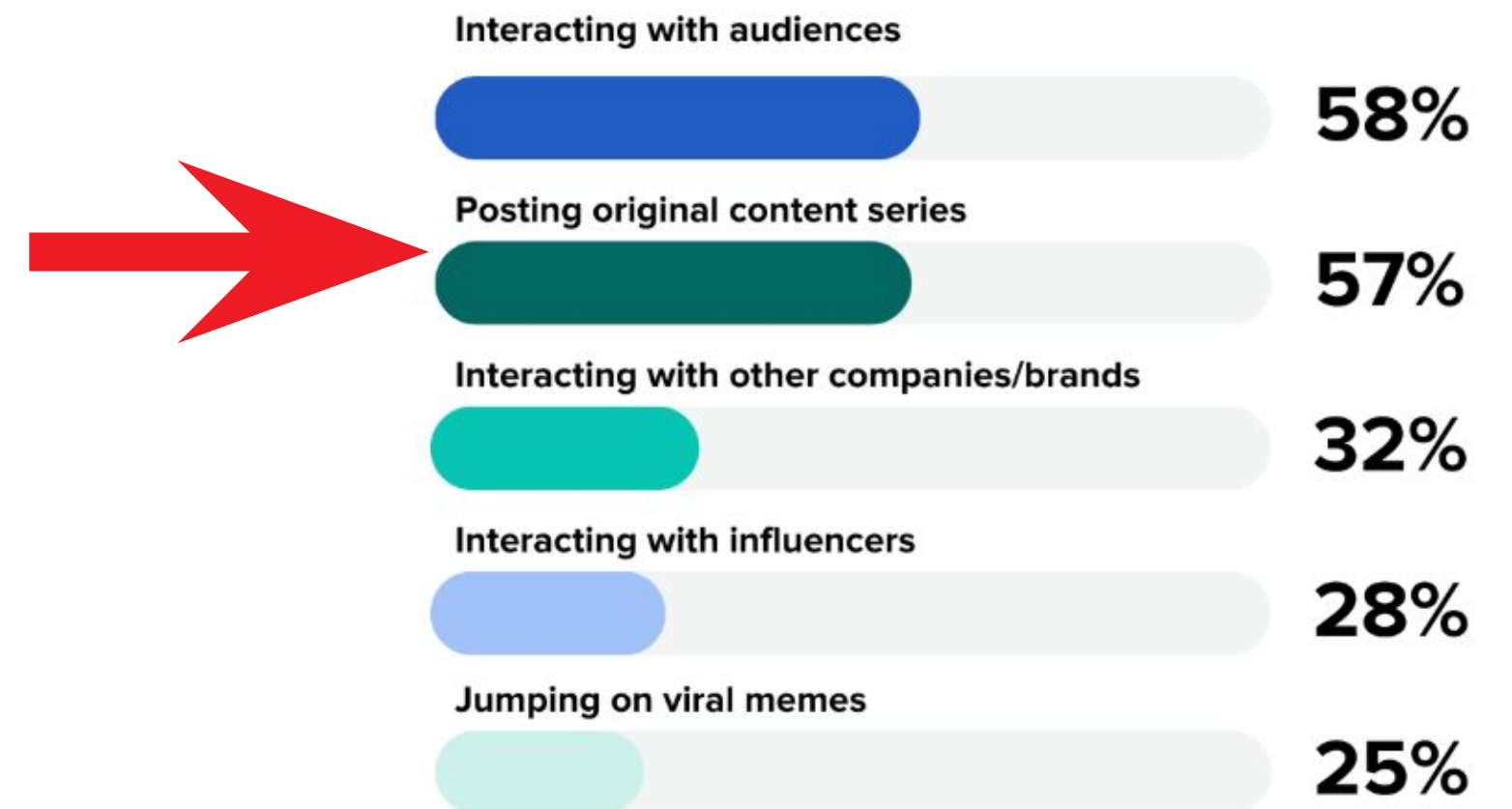


# Serialized Content

## Why Episodic Content Works

- People will click to your profile to find other posts in the series
- They will actively seek out your content to catch up on the next “episode”
- Story arcs help viewers feel like they are part of the journey
- Serial content triggers higher retention, longer watch times, and stronger engagement

## What social media users want brands to prioritize most



Q2 2025 Pulse Survey

sproutsocial





!!! Needs HELP !!!  
This baby needs help. He/she is located in Anniston and has been seen at the McDonalds drive through in down town Anniston.  
Anyone near or there that can help this baby!!!  
Preferably rescue!!!  
Woof Ave Rescue can take him we just don't have the man power atm to head to Anniston.



Woof Ave Rescue  
October 30, 2020

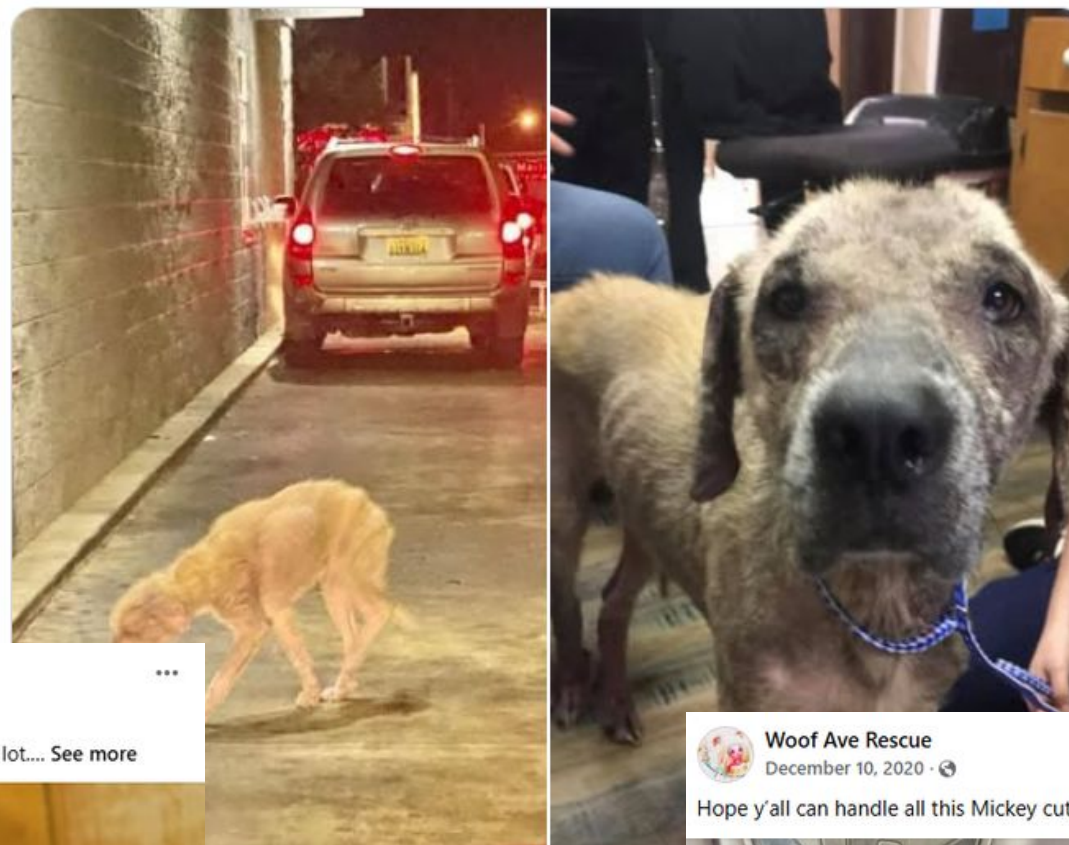
Today's update on our sweet Mickey boy!!!!  
It is apparent this boy has been on his own for a long time and has endured a lot.... See more

Woof Ave Rescue shared a memory.  
October 21, 2020

Sadly we have no update on this baby!!  
A few people have reached out in attempt to locate him/her after the last sighting near a beauty salon not too far from this same M  
This baby is going to take an exp  
However we are not local to Anni  
there are a few other animal advo  
Wish we had a better update and  
Our offer still stands...if this boy c  
under our wing and give him a ch  
help.  
Thank you from the bottom of ou  
spent time looking, and just carin  
There are now so many people av  
We've been referring to him as M

Woof Ave Rescue  
October 26, 2020

Spotted today at a car wash across from the old Ruby Tuesday's.  
Is there anyone who can go look?



Woof Ave Rescue  
December 10, 2020

Hope y'all can handle all this Mickey cuteness!!!!

Woof Ave Rescue  
October 28, 2020

The Anniston McDonalds baby has been caught. He is spending the night with his brave capturer and he will make his way to us tomorrow afternoon.  
This poor boy is in horrific shape and is beyond terrified.  
More updates tomorrow....his name is now Mickey.



You, Vicky Hristovski Santos and 484 others

93 comments 32 shares

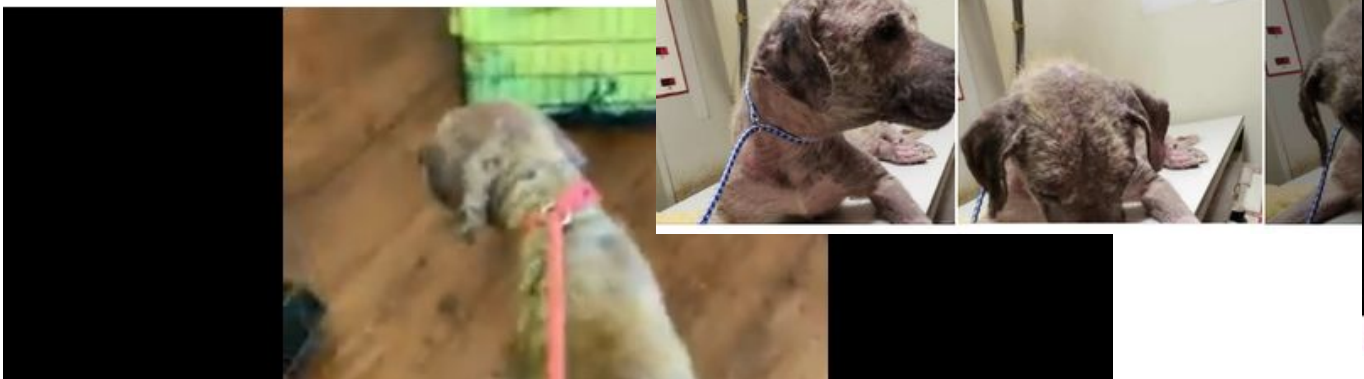
Woof Ave Rescue  
October 28, 2020

Mickey is here....  
Well he's at the vet now.  
Thank you SO MUCH Brooke Levons for finally getting t  
way to Auburn.  
This boy seems to be in much better spirits today. He saw e  
ok!!!  
And Brooke and her family for loving him through the nigh  
love and to the lady who helped grab him and was letting o  
Countryside vet has been waiting his arrival today to help h  
Thank you to everyone for sharing, and sharing some more  
absolutely would NOT be possible without the help of socia  
To those who have asked how to donate, you can donate d  
calling (334)749-1212, [PayPal.me/woofaverescue](https://www.paypal.com/woofaverescue) or jonna  
Thank you all soooooo much and we will post Mickey reg



Woof Ave Rescue  
November 30, 2020

A little Mickey!!!!  
I swear he gets happier and happier by the day!!!!

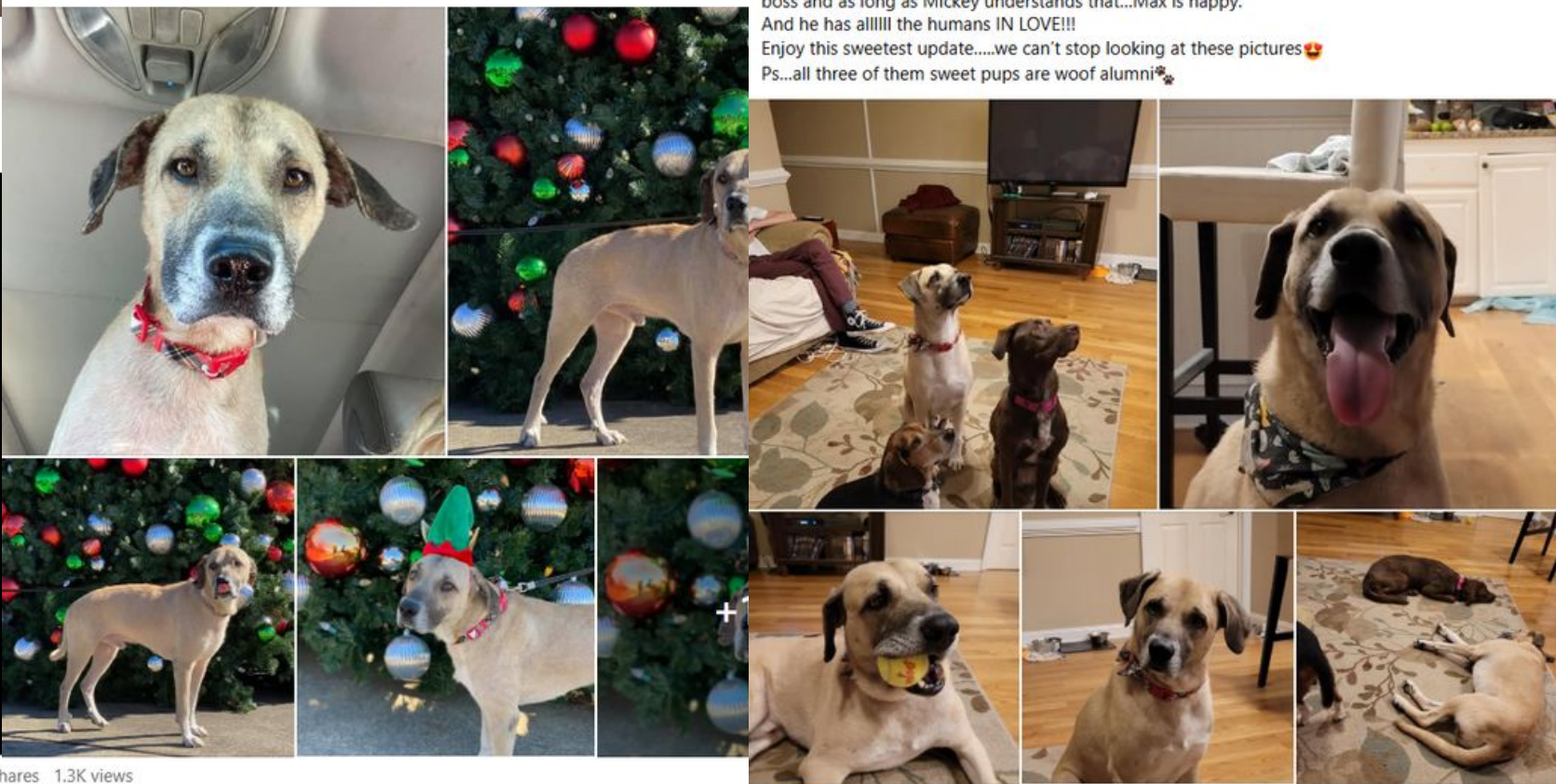


137

16 comments 3 shares 1.3K views

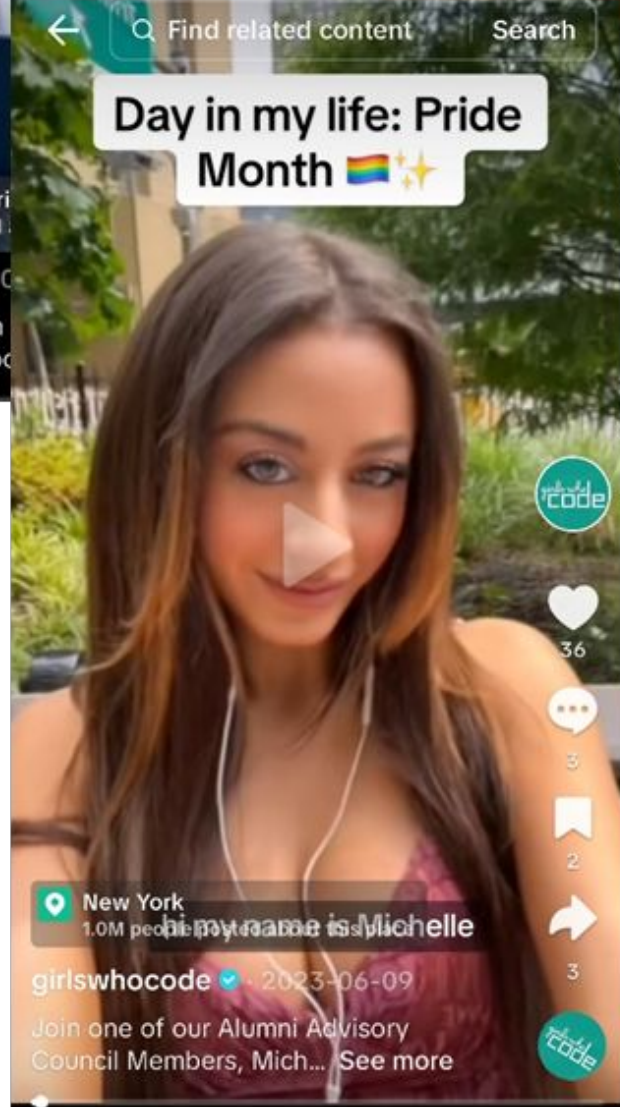
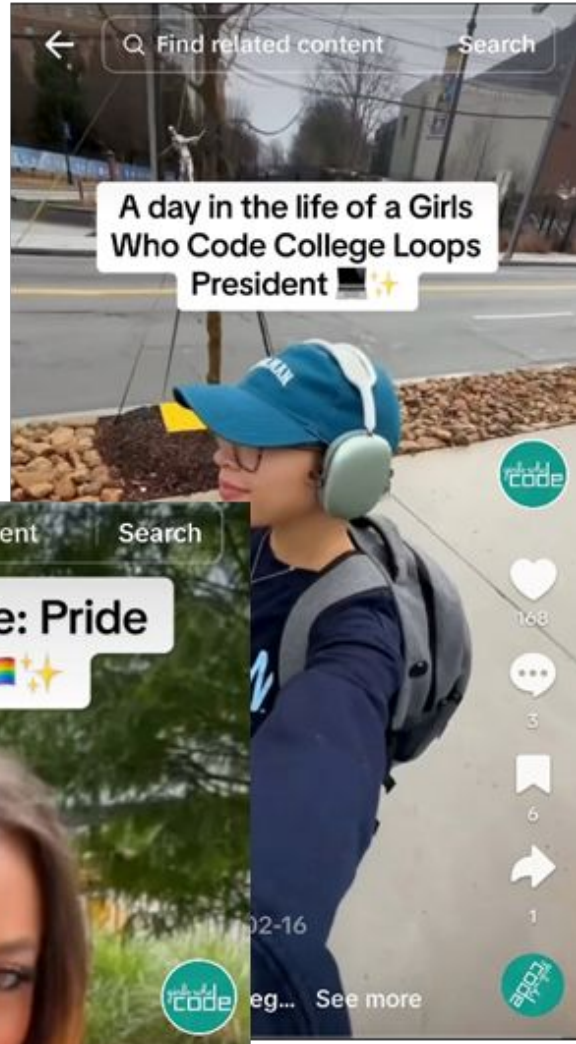
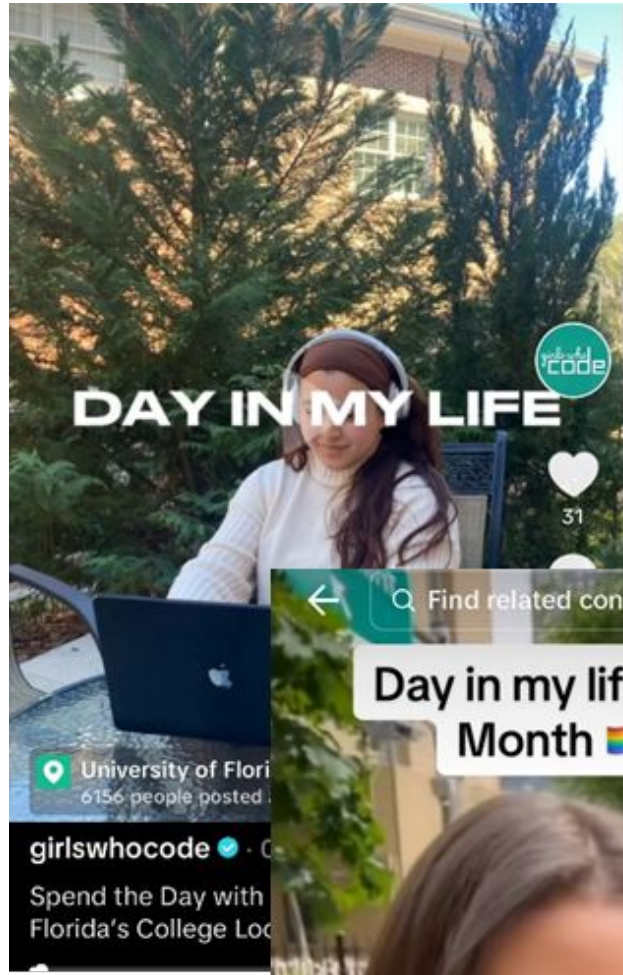
Woof Ave Rescue  
July 3, 2021

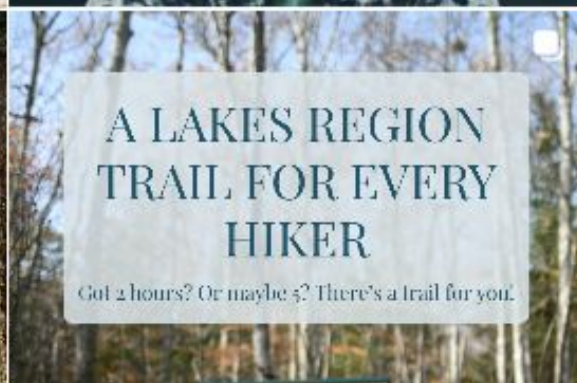
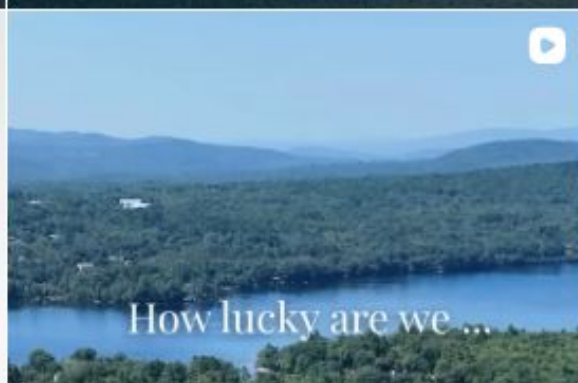
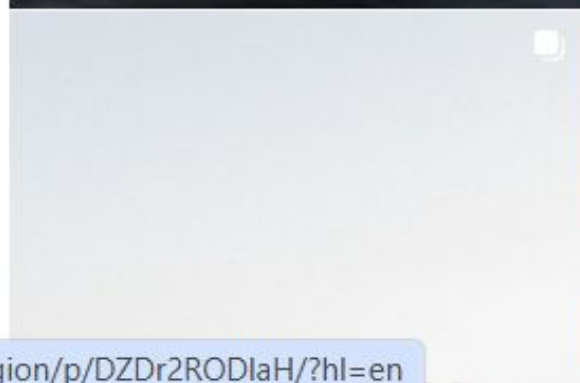
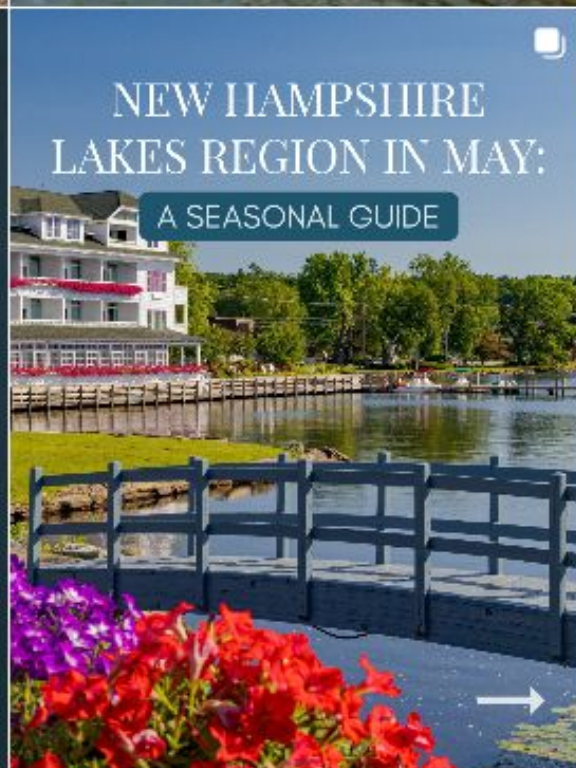
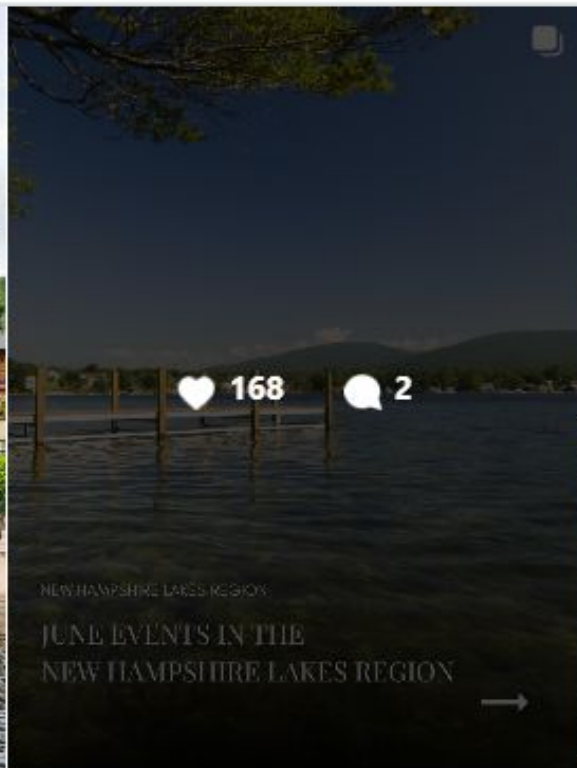
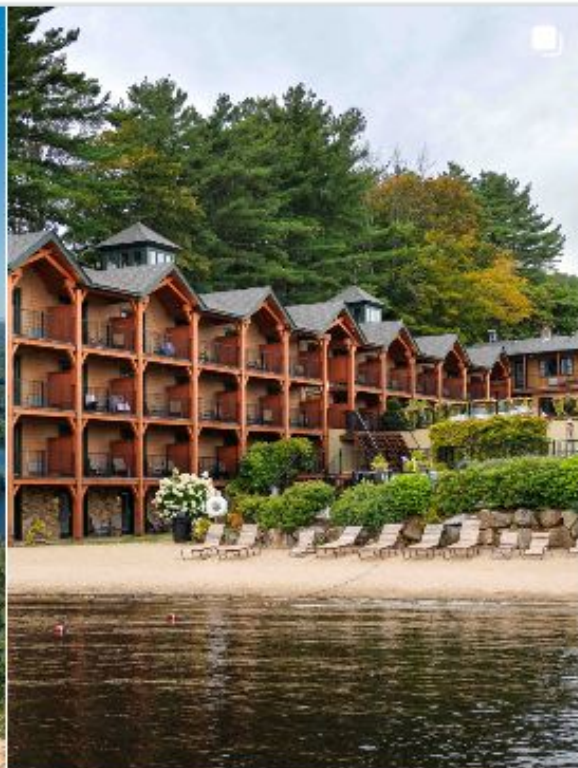
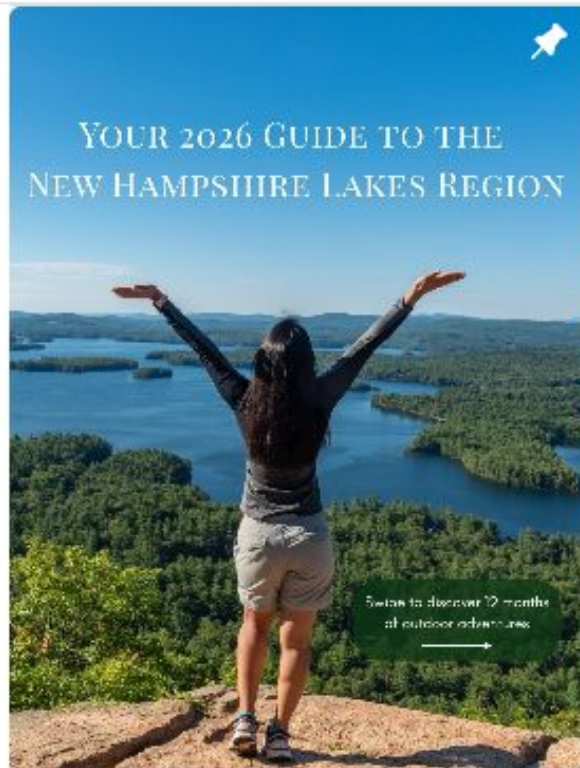
Mickey update....  
We know lots of you have followed this sweet boy since he first came to us...  
He's made soooooo much progress and is now currently working on forever!!!  
So far...him and his new fur sister are best buds and play non stop. His big/little brother max is the boss and as long as Mickey understands that...Max is happy.  
And he has alllllll the humans IN LOVE!!!  
Enjoy this sweetest update....we can't stop looking at these pictures 🥰  
Ps...all three of them sweet pups are woof alumni🐾



You, Lauren Kirk Tyson, John Cooper and 213 others

9 comments 13 shares







# Ideas for Serialized Content for Nonprofits

- Testimonials/Impact Stories
- Educational series (How tos, What people get wrong about XYZ, etc)
- Your take on current events
- Policy, Advocacy, Issue Explainers
- FAQs as a series
- Staff or Expert Voices



# **F\* Social Media**

**Formula =  
Focus +  
Faces +  
Feelings**





# **Choose Your Focus**

**What is your “show”  
about?**

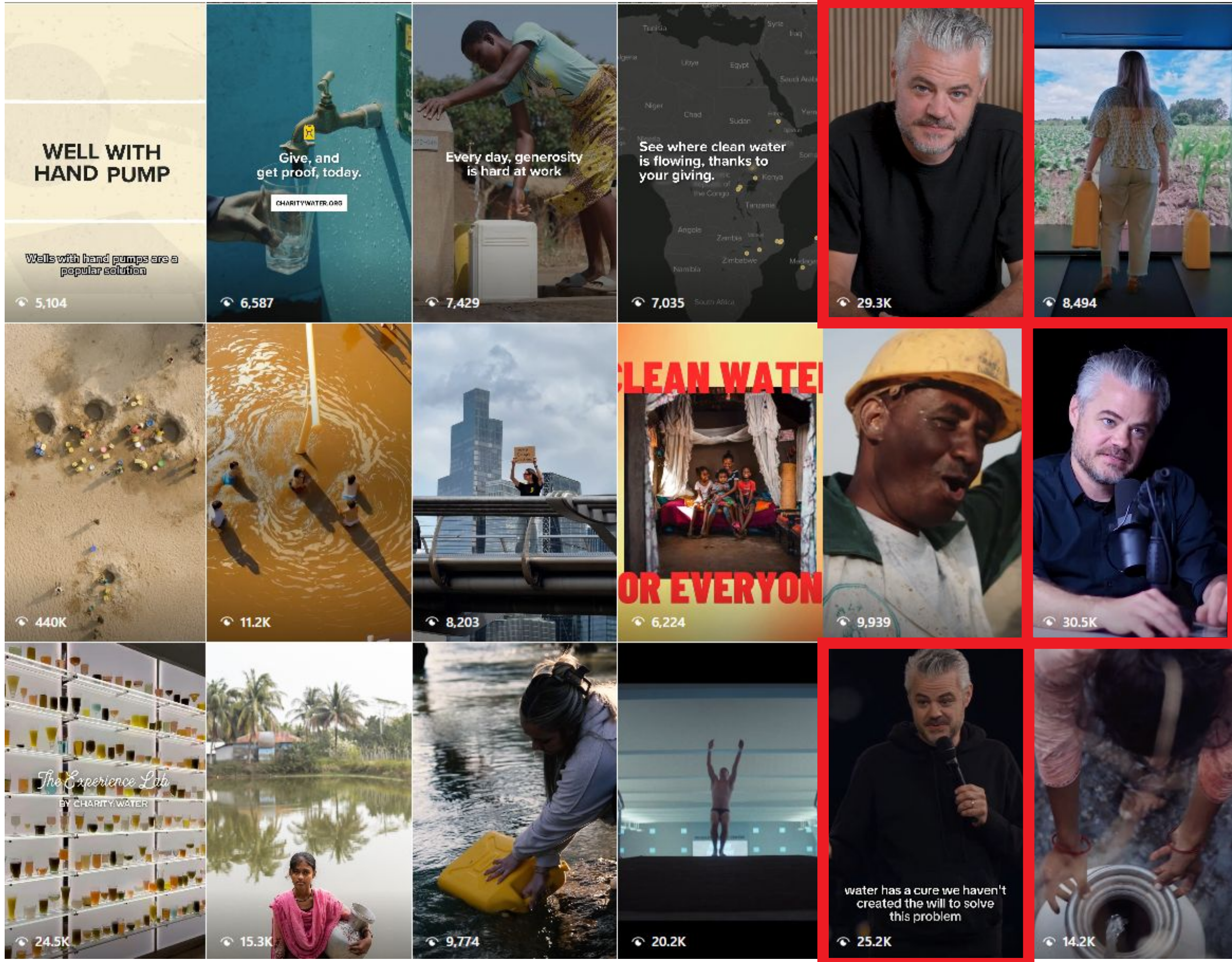




# **Show Your Face**

**Being a real person is  
EVERYTHING  
on social media.**





Charity: Water on Instagram



# **Express Your Feelings**


**You should always have a point of view.**



# Let's Practice!

**Formula =  
Focus +  
Faces +  
Feelings**





**What else do  
you want to  
discuss?**

