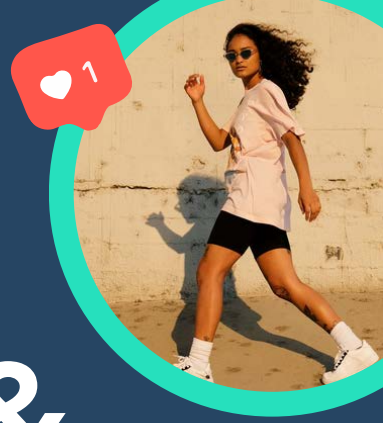# State of Social & User-Generated Content

2023 Edition

TINT

Introduction

Each year we produce the State of Social & User-Generated Content based on critical feedback from marketers and consumers around the world. And this year feels uniquely special.

While many challenges lie ahead – from changes in social media to limited budgets and a refocusing on ROI – there are also many exciting developments in AI, social and video commerce, and new ways for us as marketers to be more creative and effective. Indeed, there has never been a better time to be a marketer.

As marketers respond to continued changes in technology, market trends, company objectives, and consumer habits, this year's report highlights eight trends and ways that brands can maintain and grow revenue into 2023.

We are pleased to share these findings. We hope you find the 2023 State of Social & User-Generated Content report informative and helpful in identifying trends and creating effective strategies.

Matt Greener
Chief Marketing Officer
TINT

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TINT

Executive Summary

Authentic, trustworthy content is the only way forward for marketing.

As the demand for authentic content grows, marketers find that they have more work (and consistently tight budgets). As a result, leading brands are using more social content in their marketing campaigns, leveraging the authenticity, credibility, and scalability of content created by real people to promote their products and services.

More investments across video (and audio)
79% of marketers report investing more in video in 2023. 66% of consumers believe that brands that use video and audio stand out more than those that do not.

Social media as a search engine
76% of consumers have used social media to search for or discover products, brands, and experiences. Optimize your content for social search and commerce.

ROI is expected (but it's complicated)
Only 18% of marketers always measure the performance of their content across marketing channels. Marketing teams could do a better job at measuring their content's performance - time, tools, and know-how are holding them back.

UGC is the most trustworthy content
According to consumers, the most trustworthy content, from most to least, is: UGC, Creators, Brand content, Influencer content, and Staged UGC. Unlike consumers, marketers feel that brand content is more trustworthy than creator content, but it's time for a reality check.

Too much content, so little time
36% of marketing budgets were reported to decrease in 2023 while 61% of marketers claim they don't have enough resources for the amount of content they need.

Stock photography is out. UGC is in.
80% of consumers prefer seeing photos of real customers over stock photos. Consumers want to see real customers showing their experiences with your brand.

Differences between influencers & creators
The terms "influencers" and "creators" have been used interchangeably – but understanding the differences between them can help marketers tailor their efforts to reach the right audience and drive business outcomes.

Consumers want more ratings and reviews
80% of consumers look at ratings and reviews before making a purchase. However, over 93% of marketers aren't fully maximizing the power of user-generated content.

Important Themes in Marketing - 2023

1 **More investments across video (and audio)**

Brands are adapting social media strategies to keep up with consumer behavior and the growing demand for engaging content.

2 **Social media as a search engine**

Consumers use social media to discover new products, brands, experiences, and ultimately purchase.

3 **ROI is expected (but it's complicated)**

Marketing teams could do a better job at measuring their content's performance, so what's holding them back?

4 **UGC is the most authentic content**

Consumers trust authentic, unpaid recommendations from real customers more than any other type of content.

5 **Stock photography is out. UGC is in.**

Consumers want to see real customers showing their experiences with your brand – not the same stock photography plastered across the internet.

6 **Too much content, so little time**

Limited resources prevent marketers from delivering high-quality experiences at a fast pace.

7 **The difference between influencers vs. creators**

As the creator economy expands, the terms "influencers" and "creators" have been used interchangeably – but there is a clear difference between them.

8 **Consumers want more ratings and reviews**

Ratings and reviews help consumers make informed decisions and convert into buyers.

Doubling down on video (and audio) content

Social media platforms that prioritize video and audio are becoming an increasingly important part of people's daily lives. As consumers flock to dynamic platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, video and audio will continue to play a vital role in the future of marketing.

In 2022, the top 3 social platforms brands were more active on were Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn – followed by YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok.
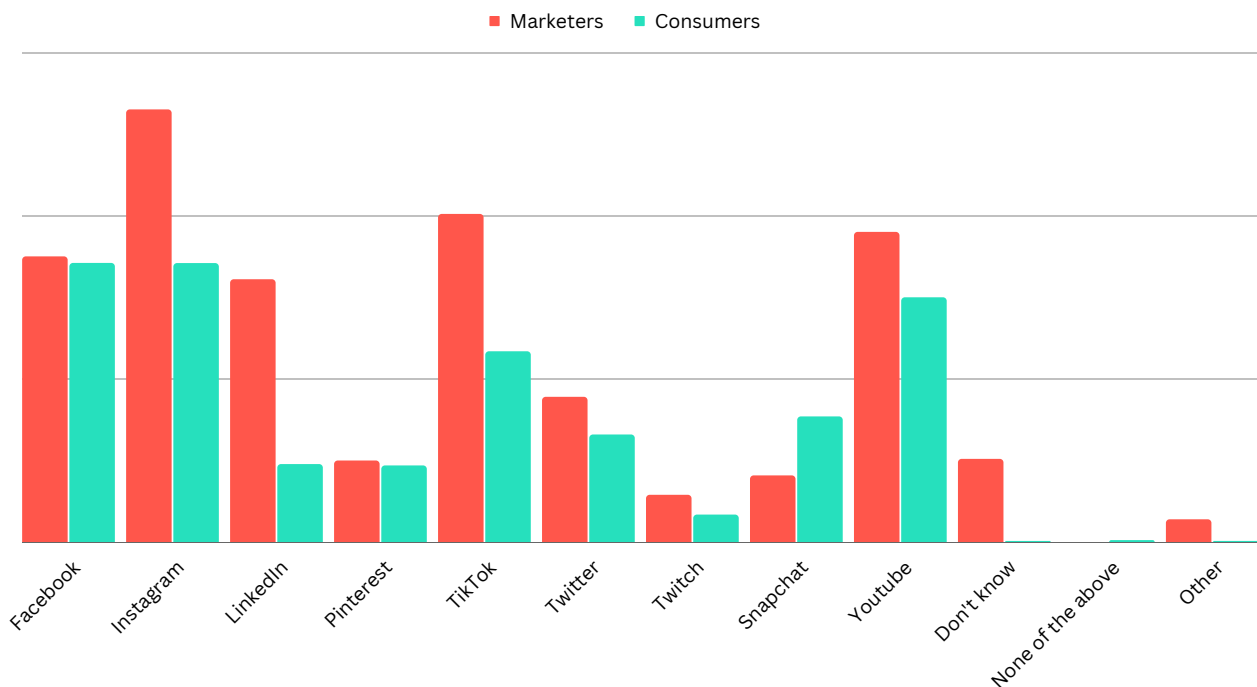
In 2023, **MARKETERS** plan to increase activity on video-friendly platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Youtube.

CONSUMERS plan to spend more time on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok.

Social media platforms marketers and consumers plan to be most active on in 2023

■ Marketers ■ Consumers

Facebook Instagram LinkedIn Pinterest TikTok Twitter Twitch Snapchat Youtube Don't know None of the above Other

"People don't only get different types of value from different networks, they explicitly use different social networks for different purposes.

On Facebook, they might catch up with a friend overseas. On Twitter, they might skim over the day's breaking news. And on TikTok, they might look for a laugh while searching for the latest viral trends."

Source: Hootsuite Social Trends 2023 report

Insights & Predictions

Video and audio (A/V) drive more interest and engagement than static visuals. Additionally, A/V content often includes dynamic elements such as music, sound effects, and motion graphics – which can help convey information faster and more effectively than written text.

We will naturally see an increase in video content as social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok continue to compete for market share. However, tight budgets and small teams will require marketers to seek cost-effective, trustworthy, and scalable solutions to fill this content production gap – such as leveraging User-Generated Content (UGC), creators, and influencers.

66%
of consumers believe that brands that use video and audio stand out more compared to those that don't

Less than
20%
of marketers have the team and resources to create visual content

79%   of marketers are investing in video in 2023

Recommendations

If video (and audio) don't already make up a big part of your content strategy, this is your sign to start.

Not only are brands and consumers prioritizing A/V-centric social channels – they're repurposing that video content and cross-pollinating it to other channels. From one video you can extract short-video clips for multiple social media platforms, audio for a podcast, and a transcript for a blog post.

A single strong piece of A/V content can be chopped and distributed to save time for marketers – while providing an engaging, cohesive experience for viewers across channels. This can strengthen brand voice and make it more likely for audiences to connect and engage.

Recommended reading:
- **How to Build a Killer Brand ft. Liquid Death**
- **How GoPro sourced video UGC with a contest**
- **How Mastercard is Capitalizing on Sonic Branding**

"In the near term for audio marketing, we're going to see some really cool things coming out with interactive audio ads on platforms like Alexa, but also other platforms where you'll actually engage with an ad by talking back to it."

– Eric Singer, Executive Producer, Coupe Studios Music and Sound Design

Podcast: The Psychology of Audio & Sonic Branding

Don't have enough time or resources to produce video content in-house?

Try asking your customers to record an experience or unboxing video for a chance to appear on your brand channels. Incentives – like contests and giveaways – are a highly effective way to engage and capture content from your biggest fans.
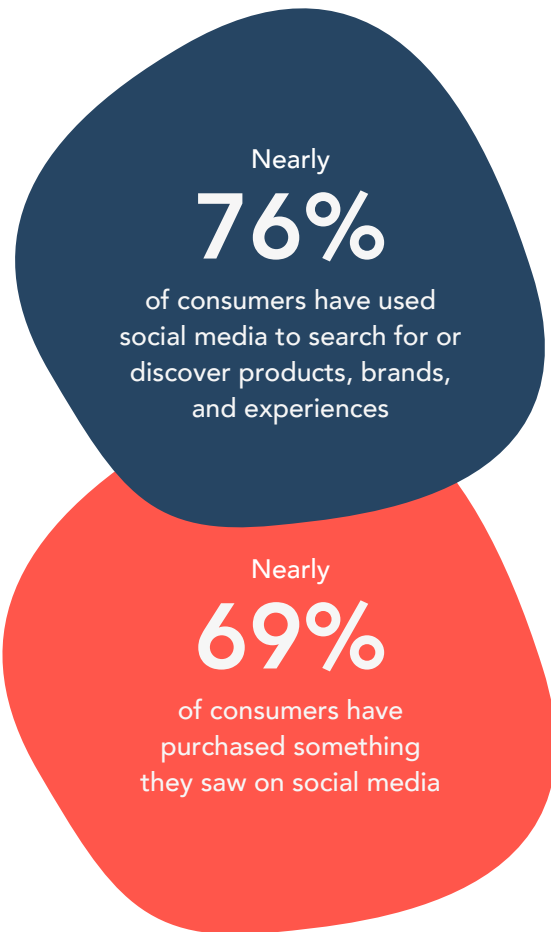
Bonus: Try showcasing your brand and work culture through your team's perspective. You'd be surprised to learn which team members are interested in helping you create content.
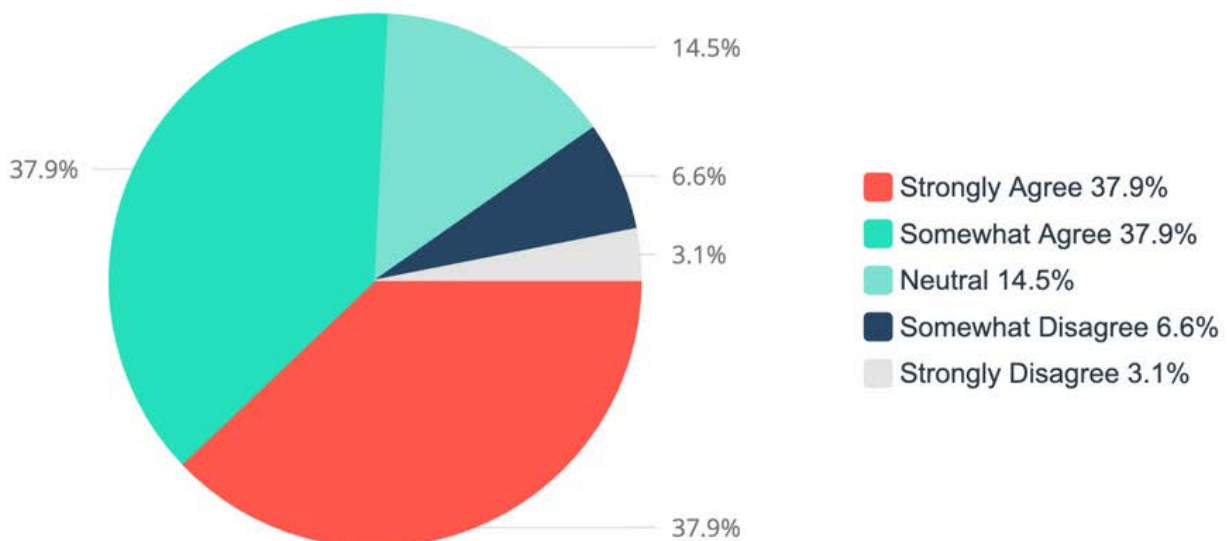
Social media as a search engine

Consumers are turning to social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to search for news, ideas, how-tos, and recommendations. As a result, social media platforms have developed their own search functions and algorithms (like hashtags and smart recommendations) to surface content relevant to each user's interests – which means the right hashtag strategy is more important than ever.

Overall, consumers mostly use Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube to search for new products, brands, and experiences. However, Gen Z and younger millennials (18-34) tend to use Instagram more than Facebook.

Nearly
76%
of consumers have used social media to search for or discover products, brands, and experiences

Nearly
69%
of consumers have purchased something they saw on social media

I've used social media to search for or discover products, brands, or experiences

37.9%
14.5%
6.6%
3.1%
37.9%

Strongly Agree 37.9%
Somewhat Agree 37.9%
Neutral 14.5%
Somewhat Disagree 6.6%
Strongly Disagree 3.1%

Are social media searches the next Google?

As social media platforms continue to evolve, marketers and creators will focus on optimizing their content for social media searches by using keywords and hashtags strategically. There will be an even stronger emphasis on SEO, particularly platform-specific SEO techniques to help each piece of content perform its best wherever it lives.

This will help content rank higher in search results and make it more easily discoverable by their target audience – which will enable both, marketers and creators, to more accurately monitor the performance of their content and iterate accordingly.

Recommended reading:
- [TikTok SEO in 5 steps](#)

As the market share for search is redistributed to social platforms, this will lead to a shift in budgets and focus on collaborations with customers (UGC), Creators, and influencers to gain traction through discount incentives, shoppable social, and video commerce and livestream shopping on platforms like TikTok.

"Social platforms are evolving into search engines for consumers to discover brands and products. Monitoring what content is performing well in your industry can guide you on what content and influencers to work with on each of these platforms."

– Benjamin Beck, Director of Marketing, Tortuga Backpacks

How to optimize content for social media search

Did you know that adding closed captions on TikTok videos can help boost engagement through Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

Optimize your content for search by strategically adding keywords across post descriptions, profile bios, closed captions, and alt text within your content.

ROI is expected (but it's complicated)

Marketing teams could do a better job at measuring their content's performance, so… what's holding them back?

Here's a hint: it's the lack of resources.

Marketing is an essential part of any business, but it can also be a complex function to measure – especially with limited resources.
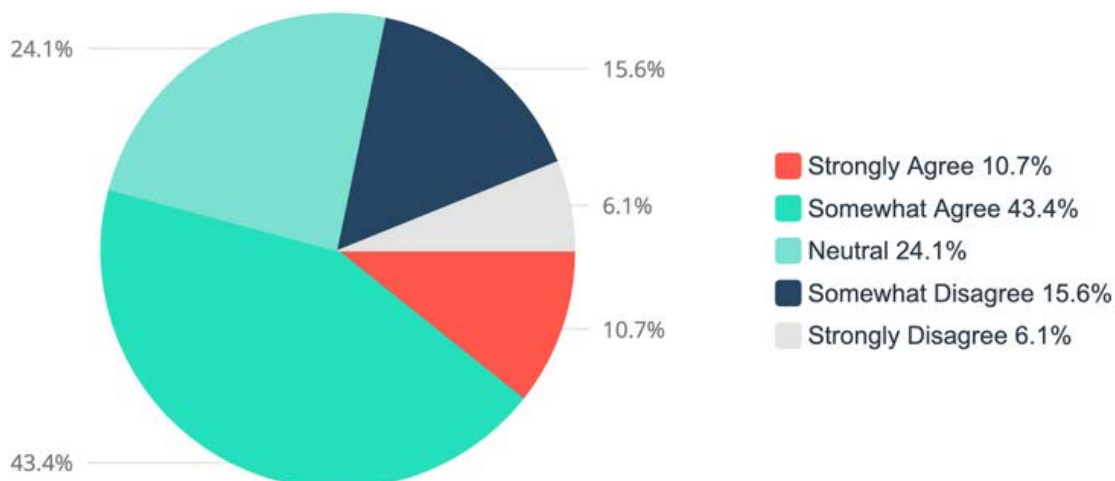
On one hand, consumers expect to be marketed to in a variety of ways, whether it's through social media ads, email campaigns, in-store, billboards, or other formats. On the other hand, marketing is not always straightforward; organic word-of-mouth, for example, cannot always be accurately tracked.

22%

of marketers don't have the methodology to know what visual content will convert across marketing channels

Prediction: More brand investments in A.I. and Machine Learning tools (like TINT) that allow teams to outsource tasks and measure every step of the customer journey – across every marketing channel.

My team has the methodology to know what visual content will convert on web, social, and in ads

24.1%

15.6%

6.1%

10.7%

43.4%

Strongly Agree 10.7%

Somewhat Agree 43.4%

Neutral 24.1%

Somewhat Disagree 15.6%

Strongly Disagree 6.1%

Measuring the ROI of social content

"Across the board, leaders have become more aware of the power of social media and the impact it has on business success but to justify budget spend they want data to back up ideas. As the saying goes, the data doesn't lie. Leaders and social media marketers need to be aligned on the strategy behind their social presence, and work together to gather the right metrics to track and measure progress against that strategy. Leaders then need to create an environment of agility. Social is a fast evolving space and teams need to be given the license to be nimble, to test and iterate tactics, but never lose sight of the objectives.

If the reason for using social is unclear, proving ROI can be extremely difficult. Social is an ever-evolving space and a myriad of factors contribute to a successful social post or social campaign. But knowing if that campaign is having the intended impact depends on the reason for creating that campaign.

Marketers who track metrics that align with business objectives, create processes and ROI reports that show the true impact of social and keep the big picture in mind will ultimately increase their chances of generating buy-in and support from leadership teams.

Don't forget that the big picture of social media ROI includes returns far beyond the marketing department. You can use social media to improve customer service and strengthen employee relationships—both worthwhile and valuable achievements that you should measure and include when you consider ROI."

MELANIE GABORIAULT
GLOBAL HEAD OF CORPORATE
COMMUNICATIONS
HOOTSUITE

"Social is a fast evolving space and teams need to be given the license to be nimble, to test and iterate tactics, but never lose sight of the objectives."

18% of marketers <u>always</u> measure the performance of their content across marketing channels

(which means the remaining 82% have plenty of room for improvement)

UGC is the most trustworthy content

Consumers trust authentic, unpaid reviews from real customers more than any other type of content – but where does <u>other</u> content rank in the "trust scale?"

According to consumers ranked from most to least:

Most Trustworthy

1. Authentic UGC

2. Creators

3. Brand content

4. Influencers

5. Staged UGC

Least Trustworthy

75%

of consumers claim they know when they are being advertised to

Unlike consumers, marketers feel that brand content is more trustworthy than creator content.

Perhaps marketers trust brand content more than creator-generated content because it is produced and vetted by the brand itself. This means that the content has been carefully crafted to align with the brand's message and values, and has been reviewed to ensure that it meets the brand's standards for quality and accuracy.
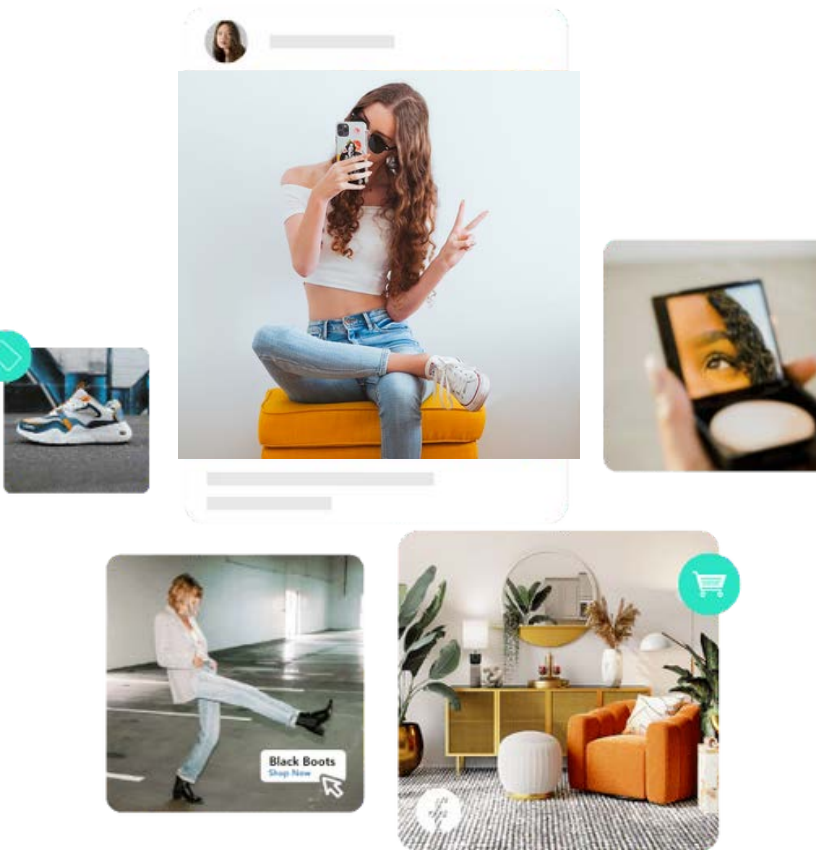
Creator-generated content, on the other hand, is produced by individuals who may not always have the same level of expertise or knowledge about the brand.

This doesn't mean consumers are wrong for trusting creators over brands; in fact, 75% of consumers claim they know when they are being advertised to. This can make Creators seem like objective third-parties; they can extend their expertise and audience connection to help brands cut through the noise and build stronger connections.

But they do agree on this...

Authentic UGC is the <u>most</u> trustworthy content.

Staged UGC is the <u>least</u> trustworthy.

Authentic UGC

> Reply to kenzieabigail's comment
>
> **Just a skin tint ???! Girl your skin looks so good**
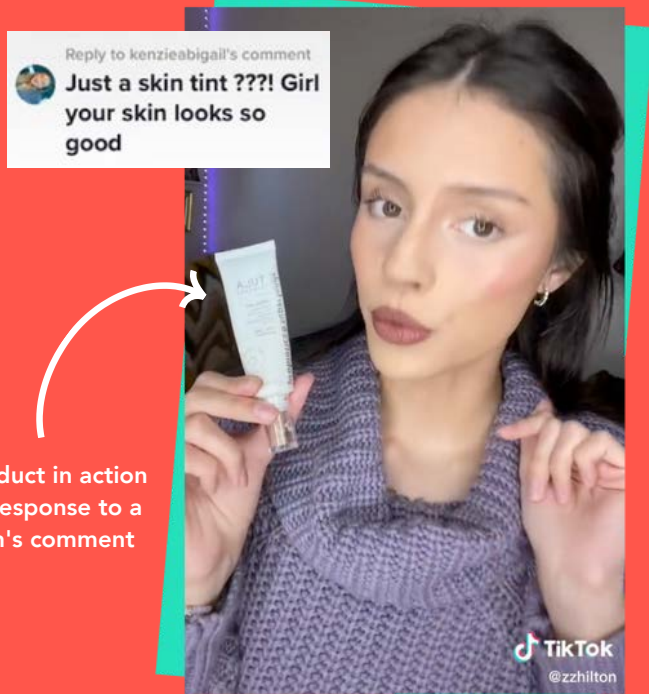
Product in action in response to a fan's comment

Source: @zzhilton
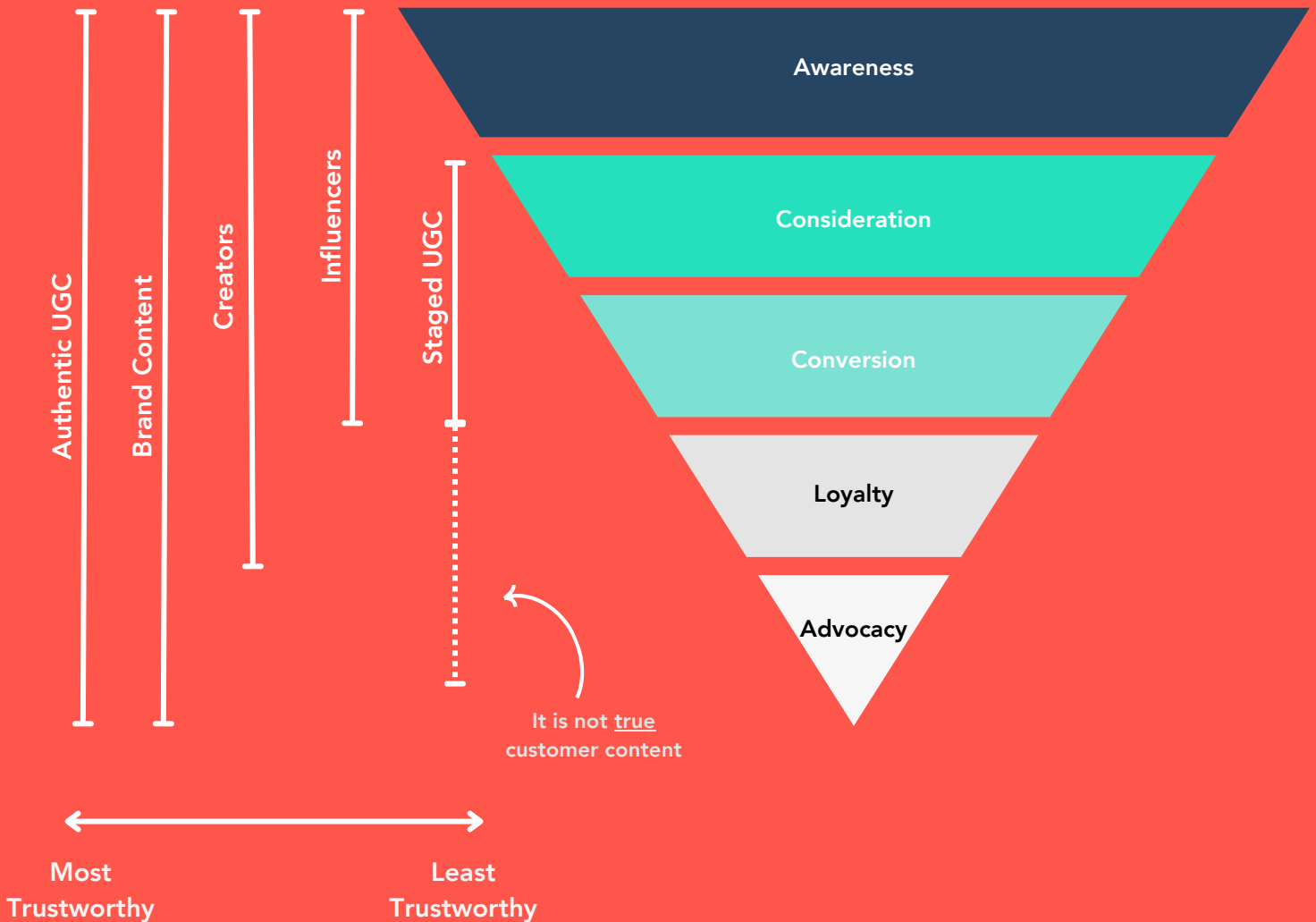
Staged UGC

UGC EXAMPLE
from my portfolio

Keyword: "portfolio"

Source: @rachvanschyndel

Staged user-generated content is user-generated content (UGC) that LOOKS genuine — but has actually been planned, rehearsed, or otherwise orchestrated by a brand in order to promote a product or service.

Staged UGC can be useful for businesses because it allows them to control the narrative and messaging around their products or services, but it can also be seen as less trustworthy than authentic user-generated content. <u>However</u>, if used strategically, Staged UGC can help guide your customers to create high-quality, authentic UGC.

Different content supports different stages of the marketing funnel

Awareness

Consideration

Conversion

Loyalty

Advocacy

Authentic UGC

Brand Content

Creators

Influencers

Staged UGC

It is not <u>true</u> customer content

Most Trustworthy

Least Trustworthy

In general, all of these types of content can play a role in influencing the marketing funnel by driving awareness, interest, and consideration for a brand or product. The specific influence of each type of content will depend on the goals of the marketing campaign and the target audience.

TINT

All-in-One Social Content Platform

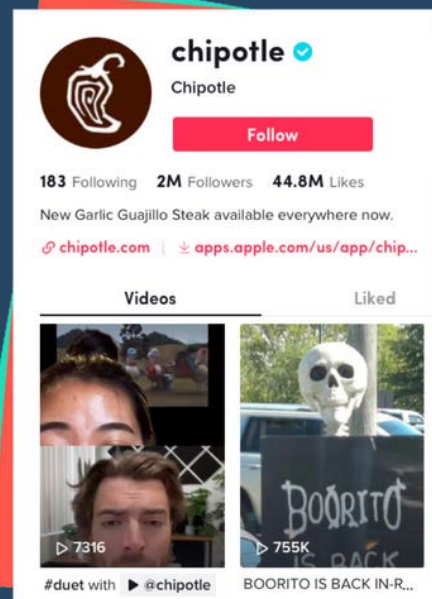**Build Trust, Grow Engagement, & Increase Sales**

Discover the best authentic content created by your fans and customers – and scale it across your marketing channels to maximize reach, engagement, and sales – better and faster with AI.

[Learn More]

Learn from Chipotle

Your audience wants their voices represented across your marketing channels. It nurtures the brand relationship while inspiring more customers to create UGC. Brands like Chipotle have dedicated their entire social media feed to user-generated content — that's how well it works.

How to create UGC: try hosting a giveaway and collaborate with an influencer to spread the word.

chipotle ✔
Chipotle

[Follow]

183 Following   **2M** Followers   **44.8M** Likes

New Garlic Guajillo Steak available everywhere now.

🔗 chipotle.com | ⬇ apps.apple.com/us/app/chip...

Videos   Liked

▶ 7316   ▶ 755K

#duet with ▶ @chipotle   BOORITO IS BACK IN-R...

Recommended reads:
[Creators, Influencers, and UGC](#) | [UGC Creators vs. Influencers](#) | [Using Influencers to Create UGC](#)

The Future of the Creator Economy

Authentic UGC	Creators	Brands	Influencers	Staged UGC

Most Trustworthy   **Least Trustworthy**
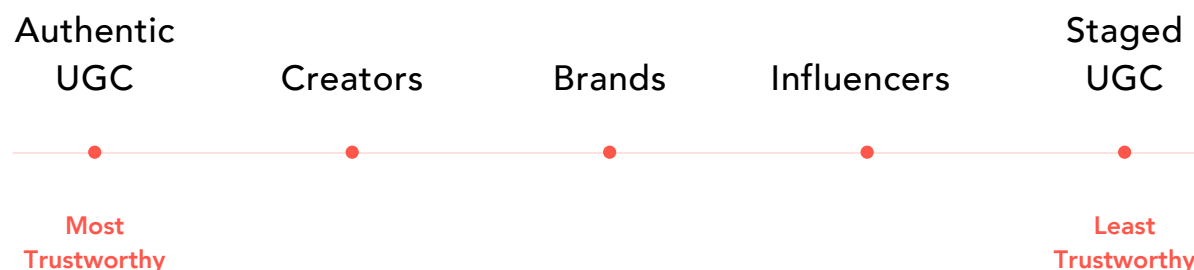
In the future, businesses will likely continue to use user-generated content to engage with their audience and build trust and credibility across all key channels. However, it is also possible that the use of staged user-generated content may become more prevalent, as businesses seek to control the narrative around their products or services. As a result, it will become increasingly important for consumers to distinguish between authentic and staged UGC.

As staged user-generated content grows, it is likely we'll see additional transparency guidelines from governing agencies to ensure that consumers know when an individual has been compensated for their work. This will lead to a swift formalization of "UGC Creators" and the establishment of collectives dedicated to that specific purpose.

The lines between users, Creators, and influencers will continue to blur. Enterprise marketing organizations will develop plans to use all of them together simultaneously to drive action throughout their channels – while smaller marketing teams will need to pick and choose to find the right combination to accelerate their campaigns.
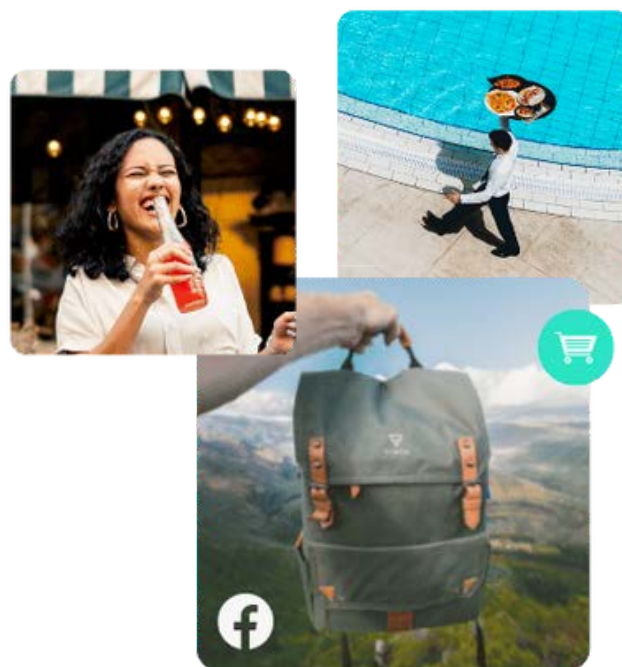
How to generate UGC

The key to generating user-generated content is to be creative and open to experimenting. By thinking outside the box and finding new ways to engage with customers and generate content, brands can create a more dynamic and engaging online presence.

01 ### Create a branded hashtag

Encourage customers to use your hashtag when sharing content relevant to the brand. This can help to generate a stream of UGC that can easily be curated and re-shared with a platform like TINT.

02 ### Run a contest or giveaway

Leverage fun experiences to customers to create UGC and share it with the brand. This can be a fun and engaging way to generate a large volume of content and reward customers for participating.

03 ### Collab with influencers & creators

Work with influencers or other content creators to produce UGC that promotes the brand. This can help to reach a wider audience and also add credibility and authenticity to campaigns.
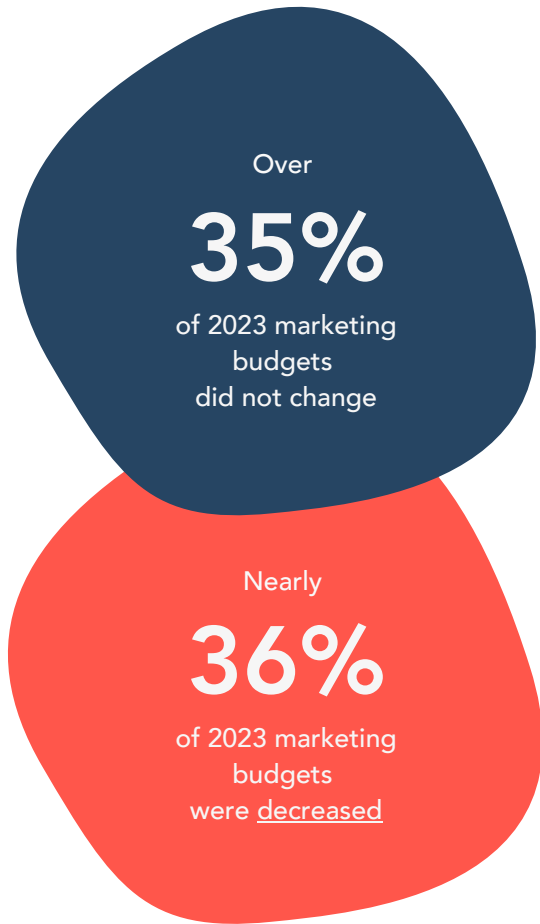
04 ### Repurpose user-generated content

Repurpose user-generated content across marketing channels, such as featuring customer photos or testimonials in ads or a gallery of UGC on the website.
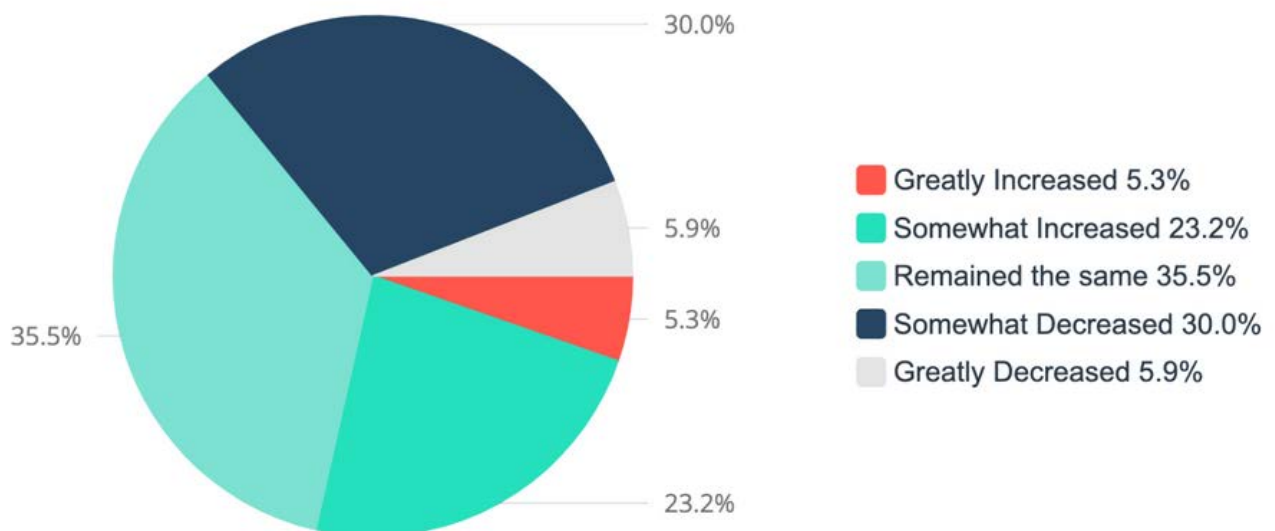
Too much content, so little time

As marketers, we often face the challenge of limited resources when it comes to creating content. Whether it's time, budget, or personnel, there are always constraints that make it challenging to produce the high-quality content (and experiences) that the audience – and leadership – expects.

Over

35%

of 2023 marketing budgets
did not change

Nearly

36%

of 2023 marketing budgets
were decreased

How has your 2023 marketing budget been affected?

- Greatly Increased 5.3%
- Somewhat Increased 23.2%
- Remained the same 35.5%
- Somewhat Decreased 30.0%
- Greatly Decreased 5.9%

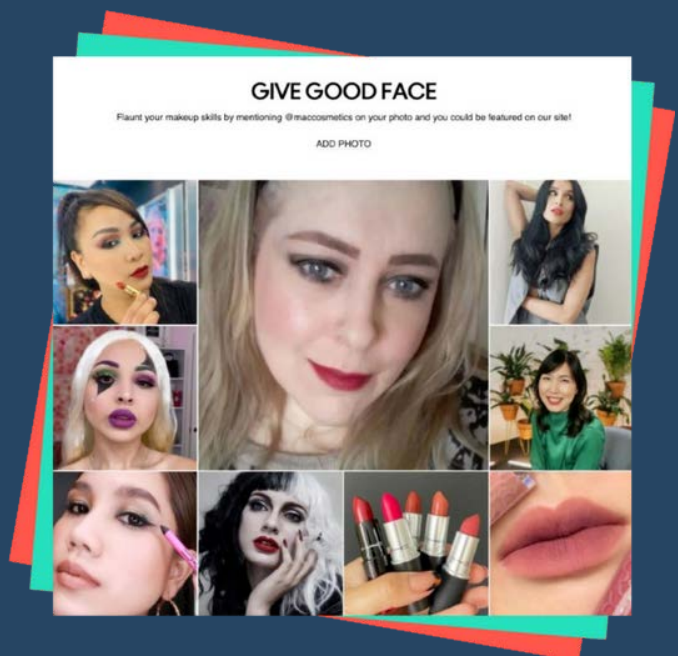# Top 3 marketing challenges: budget, engagement, time

What are the top 3 challenges you currently face with social and visual content production?
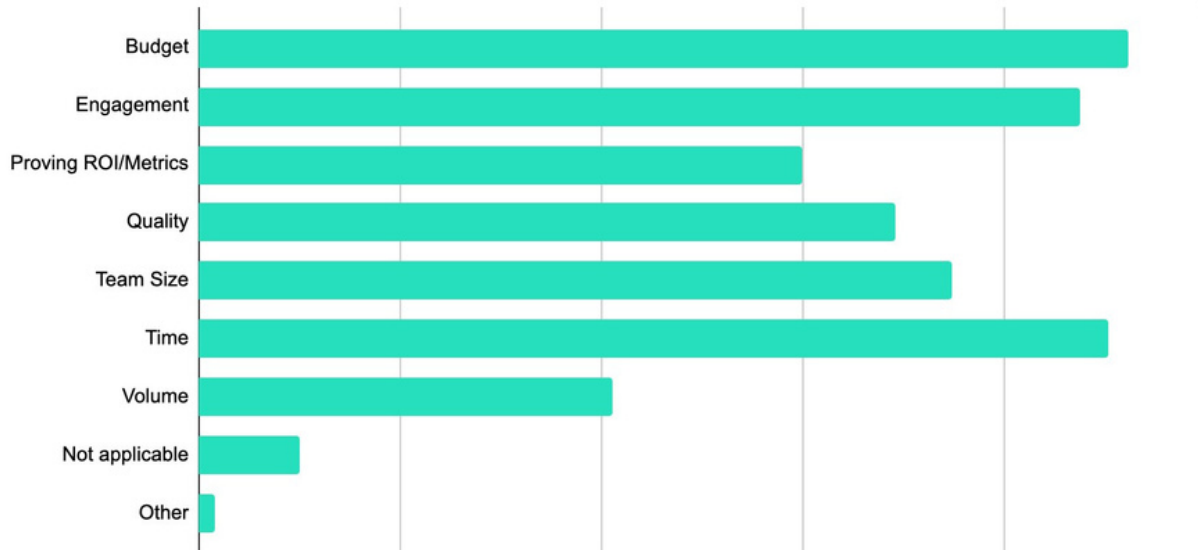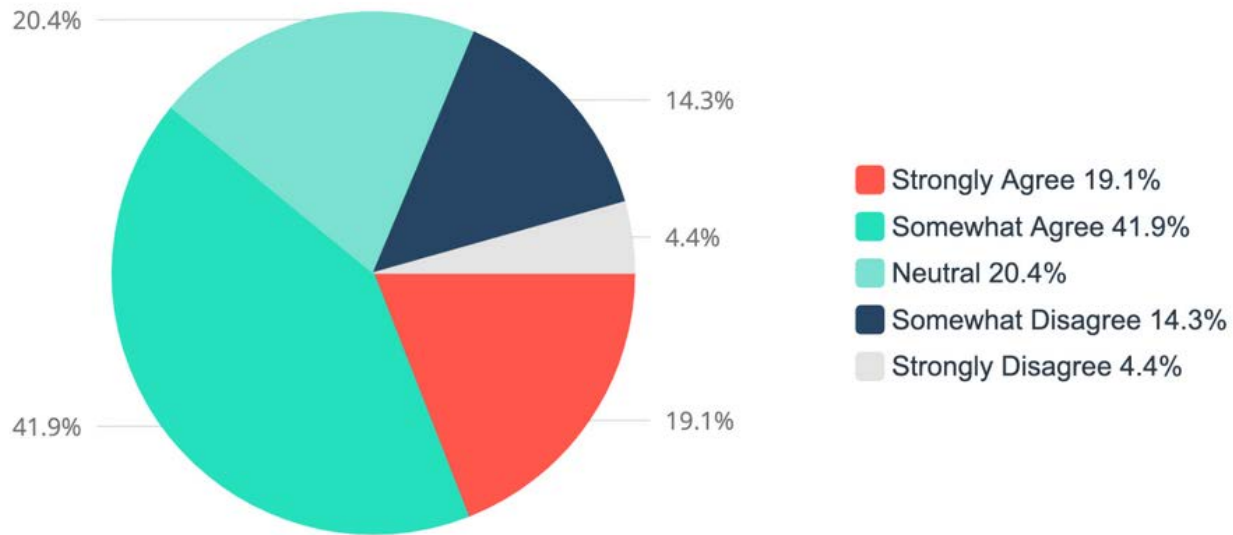

Learn from MAC Cosmetics

MAC Cosmetics uses UGC galleries to showcase user-generated content featuring their products. This not only saves time and money, but it helps build social proof and encourages potential buyers to make a purchase – ultimately improving ROI.

By leveraging the power of social media and features such as shoppable posts and UGC galleries, MAC Cosmetics can also effectively engage with their audience, leading to increased sales and a better ROI.

We don't have enough resources for the amount of content that we need

20.4%
14.3%
4.4%
41.9%
19.1%

- Strongly Agree 19.1%
- Somewhat Agree 41.9%
- Neutral 20.4%
- Somewhat Disagree 14.3%
- Strongly Disagree 4.4%

Did you know CMOs have one of the most complex jobs of all C-Suite?

Yet, marketing teams consistently report tight budgets (SOUGC 2021 & 2022). As a result, it's not uncommon to hear that one marketer takes on multiple roles – writer, editor, graphic designer, data analyst, web designer, event planner, social media manager, photographer, videographer, PR manager, public speaker… the list goes on.

This places marketers on a hamster wheel of content creation and distribution, perpetually trying to churn out media to service all their channels. How can marketers save their stamina, energy, and sanity when stuck rolling a boulder up a content hill? The answer: user-generated content.

One of the key benefits of authentic UGC is that it is free to use, which can alleviate budget constraints. Additionally, UGC has a high level of authenticity and credibility, which can help build trust with your audience.

Resources:
- **Defining the CMO of the future**

61%
of marketers claim they don't have enough resources for the amount of content they need

Prediction: Marketers will increasingly invest in A.I. software to alleviate their challenges – and engage customers, employees, influencers, and creators to help produce trustworthy content.

"A lot of the time, bandwidth is so limited... you don't have the opportunity to test new things."

Brayden Cohen, Social Media Manager, Hootsuite

Listen to the podcast

"You should be leveraging any and every piece of help you can in order to [spread] the word and scale your visibility – employees, users, and [customers] are a great way of doing that."

Jason Bradwell, Fractional CMO, Host of the B2B Better podcast

Listen to our episode

The difference between influencers and creators

The terms "influencers" and "creators" have been used interchangeably – but there is a clear difference between them.

There are many blurred lines between influencers and creators. The simplest difference is the purpose of their content. Influencers create content to portray a lifestyle and establish a parasocial relationship with their followers, letting people aspire to be them. Creators make original content to educate or entertain a specific audience. The Creator is focused on content first, while the Influencer is about audience first.

Both have measurable metrics like followers, engagement, and views. Both come in different sizes, audiences, and niches. Both will monetize their content through brand partnerships and affiliate marketing.

Plot twist: Creators can also be influencers if their audience is large and engaged enough. However, like mentioned before, a creator's focus isn't necessarily about growing an audience – it's about self-expression and creating beautiful content.

Over
65%
of CONSUMERS feel there is a difference between influencers and creators...

Over
72%
of MARKETERS agree

"There is a duality with how you can classify in the social media space: It's how you want to show up vs. how your community sees you... I'd say I'm both, [an influencer and a creator]."

– Veronica Gaskey,
Creator and Influencer,
@SouthernFriedKorean

53.7% of marketers agree influencer content converts higher than brand content

Creators don't "need" an audience (but influencers do)

Influencers are able to influence the purchasing decisions of their followers. This can be through sponsored posts, product endorsements, or other forms of content that promote a brand or product. Influencers are typically paid by brands to promote their products or services.

Creators, on the other hand, are individuals who produce content on a regular basis. This can include things like videos, blog posts, podcasts, or other forms of content.

Creators are often focused on a specific niche, style, or topic, and they may have a dedicated audience that follows their work. While some creators may be paid by brands to produce sponsored content, many creators are independent and produce content on their own terms.

Then, there's authentic vs. staged user-generated content – which we covered in previous themes.

Creators	Influencers	Authentic UGC	Staged UGC
Content-first	Audience-first	Created with no expectation	Created for compensation

"The power shift away from brands and towards creators and influencers has never been more apparent. Consumers are smarter than ever, and brands need to align themselves with voices that naturally share their values.

The line between what is and isn't an ad is blurred, and leveraging authentic brand ambassadors for any type of marketing campaign is a key cornerstone for success. Whether building brand awareness or product sales, balancing how you use content from creators and influencers can be effective in galvanising brand metrics and sales goals across digital channels."

– Elise Yu
Global Marketing Manager
Klear

There is a place for all types of content

In general, understanding the differences between influencers and creators can help marketers tailor their marketing efforts to reach the right audience and drive business outcomes. By working with the right individuals, marketers can create content that resonates with their target audience and helps to promote their brand or product.

"To see real people, real faces – people who are just like you and me – championing the brand, that's so much more powerful than hearing it come directly from that brand."

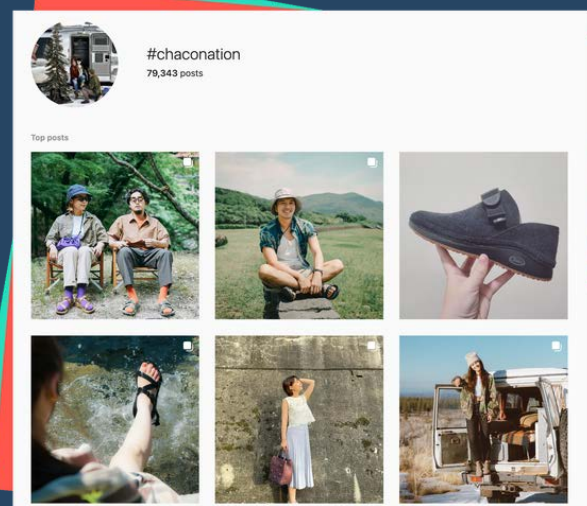Brianne Fleming, Marketing Professor, University of Florida

60%
of users who took an action off-platform as a result of TikTok agree that TikTok Creators are more influential than celebrities[1]

58%
of consumers say brand advocacy is important to them

Learn from Chaco

Chaco, the ultimate footwear brand for outdoor adventures, is doing a beautiful job at engaging their audience. From tan lines to shoes, Chaco encourages customers to share adventurous content to #ChacoNation, which the brand repurposes across their social media profiles and their website.

#chaconation
79,343 posts

Top posts

Source 1: TikTok Marketing Science US TikTok Made Me "Blank" It Research 2022, conducted by Marketcast

Stock photography is out. UGC is in.

Consumers and marketers alike cringe when they see it. The exact same smiling person, staring into the mid-distance, as the stock photo for everything from mortgages to pharmaceuticals to vacation rentals. People want to see real customers showing their experiences with your brand – not the same stock photos plastered across every other brand's homepage.

This leaves two easy options. First, you can spend the time and energy to repurpose stock elements into something amazing. Retro-style collages have continued to grow as a visual trend. However, this requires graphic design resources in addition to the creative vision. This makes the second option more appealing. Incorporate authentic content, sources from your real customers, to show the actual faces of your brand throughout marketing channels. UGC can also provide great stock elements to incorporate into collages while ensuring that you're not using the same staged image as everyone else.

Need UGC?

Start by asking customers to submit photos and reviews about your brand or its products and services. You can also collaborate with team members who aspire to be creators!

80%
of consumers prefer seeing photos of real customers over stock photos.

57%
of consumers feel stock photos should be replaced with the diversity of real customers and teams

23%
of marketers always request rights to other people's content (which means the remaining 77% could do a better job at doing this).

Tsk, tsk.

ALWAYS request permission to reuse content!

"

Using someone else's content (photos, videos, audio) without the appropriate permissions is extremely unprofessional. As an artist, it's not cool to have your work used without credit. Even if you were to get away with using content, there are several cases where the creator will eventually see their content in use and call out the brand publicly for using without permission or even so much as a mention.

The best case is that you are called out publicly for not giving recognition for content and being generally shady; the worst case is that this also results in a lawsuit. Both cases – and everything in between – are damaging to the brand reputation and to the individuals and teams involved in using the content.

ALWAYS request permission!

"

Ivonne Aldaz,
Lead Marketing Researcher, TINT

Benefits of UGC

Spoiler: People don't want to feel like they're being sold to

User-generated content is a more effective alternative than stock photography.
Not only does it highlight customers and fans advocating for your brand, but it's:

01
More authentic
UGC is more authentic than stock photography because it is created by real people who have first-hand experience with a brand – rather than professional photographers trying to achieve a specific look.

02
More diverse
UGC is more diverse than stock photography, which can often be overly-staged and lack diversity in terms of age, race, and gender.

03
Often less expensive
UGC is often less expensive than stock photography when licensing high-quality images. Authentic UGC, on the other hand, is free to use (with the creator's permission).

People want to see real customers sharing real experiences with your brand. UGC can be a valuable resource for marketers who are looking to create authentic, diverse, and cost-effective content that feels relatable.

Prediction: We'll see less stock photography and more UGC across marketing channels in 2023 and beyond.

More ratings and reviews? Yes, please!

The verdict is in and it may not come as a surprise: ratings and reviews help consumers make informed decisions and convert into buyers. However, over 93% of marketers aren't fully maximizing the power of user-generated content.
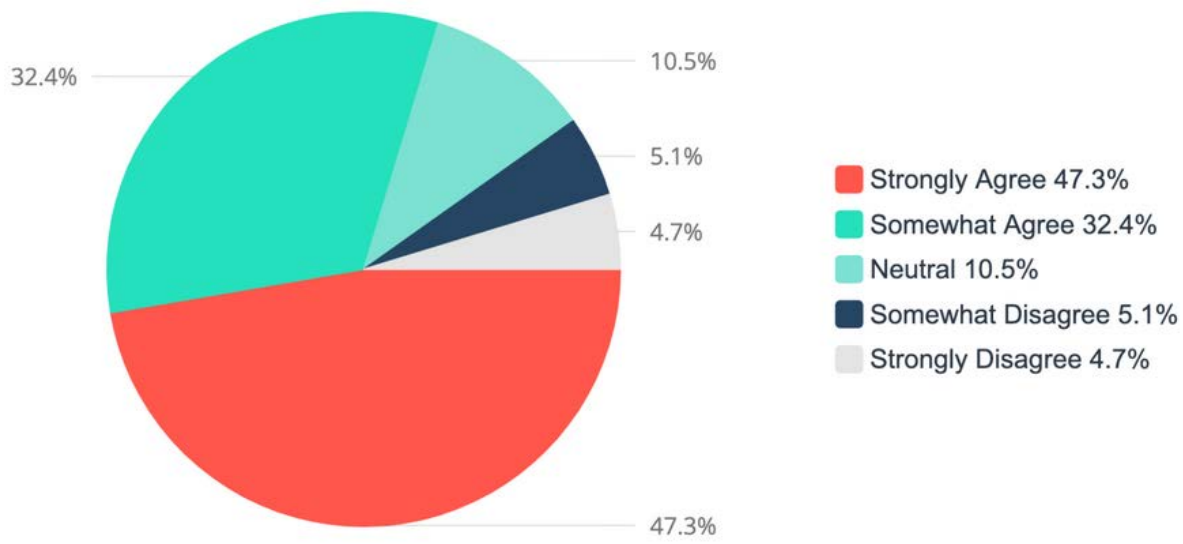
Sounds like we have some work to do.

Over
69%
of marketers feel ratings and reviews are important to their conversion rates,

but...

Only
35%
of marketers often or always use UGC in their strategies

80% **of consumers look at ratings and reviews before making a purchase**

I look at ratings and reviews before making a purchase

32.4%

10.5%

5.1%

4.7%

47.3%

Strongly Agree 47.3%
Somewhat Agree 32.4%
Neutral 10.5%
Somewhat Disagree 5.1%
Strongly Disagree 4.7%

The Future of Ratings & Reviews

People want recommendations from REAL customers.

Sharing ratings and reviews across your marketing channels is a great way to add social proof (and build trust) along the buyer's journey. Testimonials, or other UGC, tells potential buyers about the quality and performance of a product or service – including features, how it compares to similar brands or products, and the overall satisfaction level of other real customers.

Additionally, highlighting happy customers across marketing channels saves marketers time required to create trustworthy content; it's genuine feedback brands can not only re-share to strengthen the connection with their audience but also allows brands to understand market sentiment and iterate faster.

As consumers increasingly rely on the internet to search for products and services, the availability of ratings and reviews will become increasingly important for business. This will lead to more shoppable UGC along the customer journey – website, product pages, social media, paid ads – to capture sales wherever possible.

To collect high-quality testimonials from satisfied customers, we'll see more brands implementing strategies to encourage customers to leave ratings and reviews. Additionally, businesses may need to invest in technology and tools (like TINT) to manage and analyze the ratings and reviews they receive.

Resources:
- **How different brands provide guidance**

93%
of marketers aren't maximizing the power of UGC (yet)

How to capture ratings & reviews

01
Make it easy to share testimonials
Provide clear instructions across your marketing channels. In SOUGC 2022, we revealed that 60% of consumers wish more brands shared what type of content they want fans to create.

02
Offer incentives
Incentivize your audience by offering discounts or rewards to those who leave a review – who doesn't like incentives?

03
Re-share ratings and reviews
Re-share testimonials across social media, website, and email marketing channels to promote their availability and encourage customers to leave feedback.

04
Celebrate all types of feedback
Reviews are more than written testimonials. Seek out and share video, audio, photo, and written reviews.

Overall, the key to getting more ratings and reviews from customers is to make the process easy, convenient, and rewarding for them. By providing a positive experience and highlighting the benefits of leaving feedback, brands can increase the likelihood that customers will take the time to share their experiences.

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Build Trust, Grow Engagement, & Increase Sales

Discover the best authentic content created by your fans and customers – and scale it across your marketing channels to maximize reach, engagement, and sales – better and faster with AI.

Learn More

We would like to thank all respondents and collaborators for their time and invaluable input. This research would not be possible without your attention to detail and thoughtful contributions.

Thank you for your continued support!

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