

HubSpot  mention

# Instagram Engagement Report

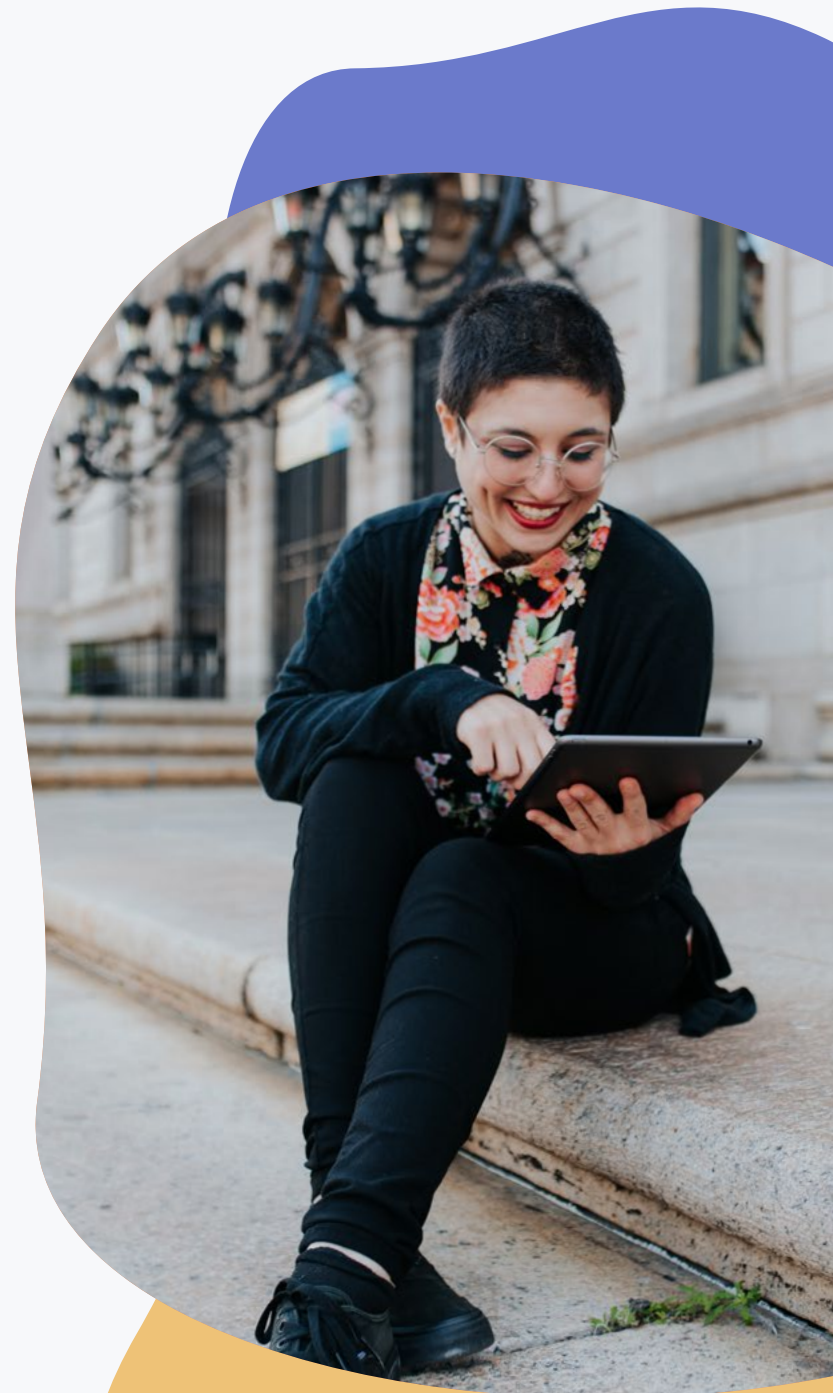
2022 EDITION



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# Introduction

2021 can be summed up in one phrase: 'new normal.' Most of us weren't strangers to social media, remote work, and virtual connection before this year – but they've become a bigger part of our lives than ever before.

In 2020, COVID-19 kept many of us inside our homes and made social media a more important place to connect than ever. In many places last year, the pandemic settled into something approaching normalcy. But we kept hanging out online, both for safety's sake and simply because we liked it there.

As a result, 2021 was a year of massive growth on Instagram. Accounts were booming, followers and engagement were up, and we saw all kinds of exciting activity all over the world. Whether it's Tehran emerging as a geotag hotspot, the rise of travel content, or Indian Instagrammers leading the way, Instagram is now truly a platform to connect the global community.

That makes this space incredibly valuable for marketers. More so than your storefronts or support calls, social media is where users spend the most time interacting with your brand.

But creating a social media strategy can feel complex and overwhelming. From hashtags to captions to post timing, there's a million different things to consider, not to mention that audience preferences (and the platform itself) are changing every day.

That's why we've analyzed millions of Instagram posts from all over the world– to draw out real insights, based on hard data. In this report, we're sharing the high-level trends, across followers, engagement, post content, and more, that you can use to guide your strategy.



# Methodology

We crunched a serious amount of Instagram data to get these numbers together... 110M posts across 1M users, to be exact!

This year, we wanted to uncover some of the regional differences in two major English-speaking regions. To do that, we analyzed about 85M posts from North America, and 1.6M from the United Kingdom and Ireland separately.

We also talk a lot about engagement in this report. But what exactly does that mean?

Here, we've defined engagement as the total number of likes and comments on a single post. To calculate the engagement rate, we divide that number by how many followers a user has. That's a more useful figure which shows us how engaged a user's following is, big or small.

Through all this research, we've painted a picture of the Instagram community this year – average follower counts and engagement rates, hot spots for global activity, and what kind of content users seemed to prefer (or engage with, at least). These metrics provide actionable insights to organizations of all types in order to better reach, interact with, and grow their Instagram audiences.

We hope you find it as valuable as we did.

# Report Highlights

Travel and nature content, from accounts like **@natgeo**, **@nasa**, and **@voyagers**, became hugely popular on Instagram this year

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**65% of Instagram accounts** now have over **1k followers**, with 34.7% between 1k and 10k

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Globally, **users prefer video and carousel posts**, which are far more engaging than single images

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Long captions (over 2,000 characters) perform just as well as short ones

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Something's going on in New York City – posts geotagged here have plummeted, both in terms of volume and engagement

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# Monitoring made easy

Learn more about what is being said about your brand, industry, and competitors on social media and beyond.

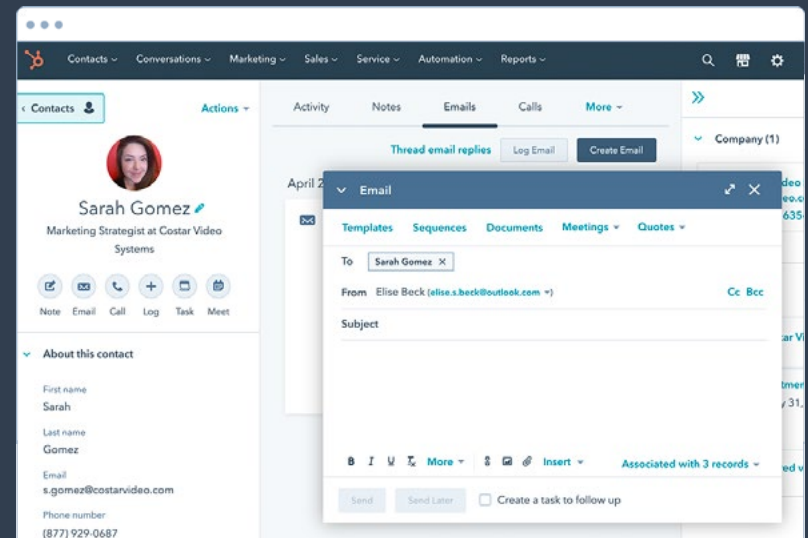
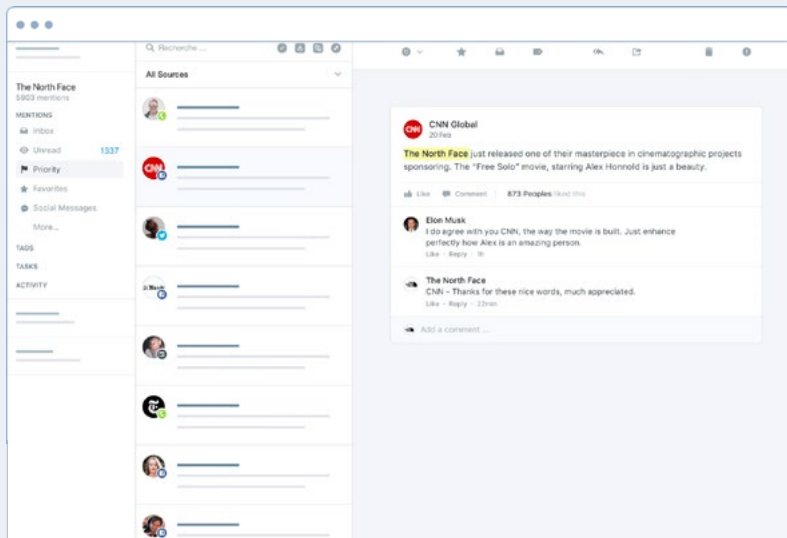
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# The State of Instagram in 2022

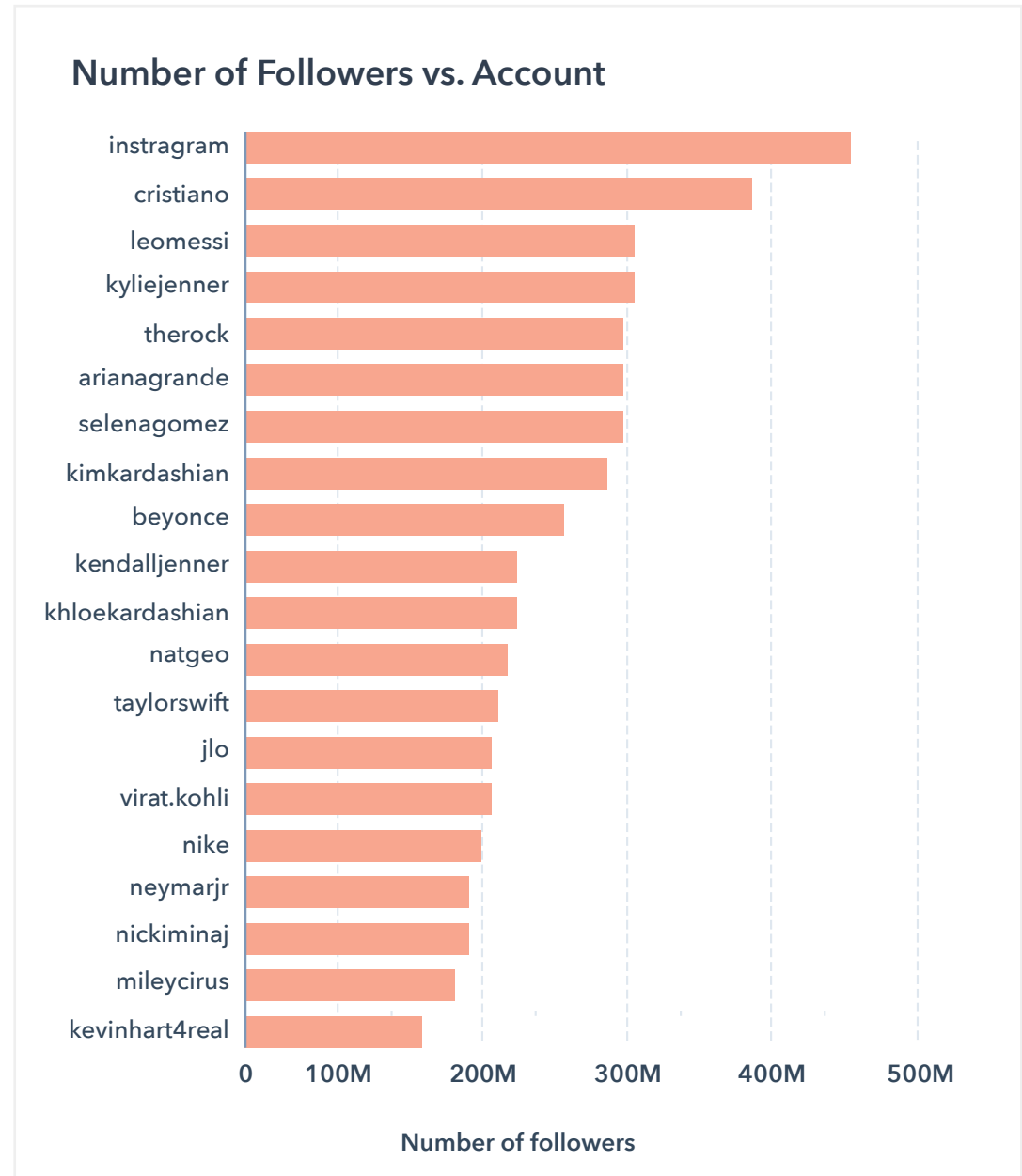
## Who's On Top?

With 1.3 billion active users, Instagram is one of the most popular social networks in the world.

That's a lot of people to go around, and that's why Instagram's most popular users have more followers than ever. Over half have over 100M followers, far more than the population of many countries!

Without further ado, here they are – the accounts at the top of the Instagram ecosystem.

## Globally



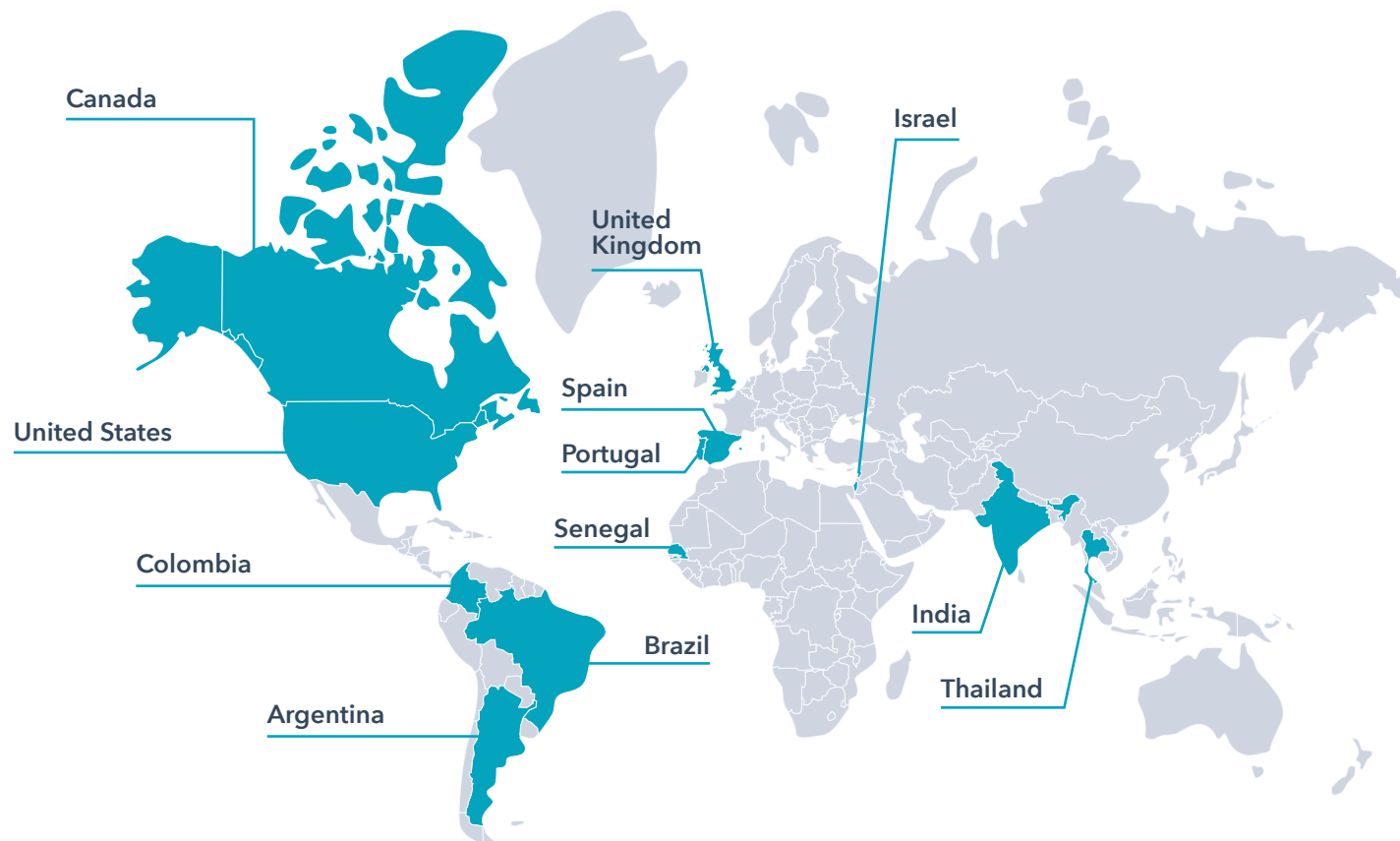


This year's most-followed account should come as no surprise. For the 4th year in a row, it's @instagram itself, with 449,315,043 followers!

Coming in second is Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo (@cristiano). His account grew by over 100M to 376M during 2021, making him the second most-followed person on the platform. For context, the United States population is 329M!

One interesting newcomer is Senegalese TikTok sensation Khaby Lame (@khaby00), who squeezed into the Top 50 at #49, with 62M Instagram followers. Despite Instagram's community-building power, it's not the only cool kid on the social media block any more. This TikToker's star power makes that abundantly clear!

### National breakdown of top 50 Instagram accounts





## Top Brands on Instagram

Globally, the Top 50 is mostly celebrities. From actors to athletes, 24 women and 17 men make up the most-followed Instagrammers, **rounded out by only 9 brands**.

It's not easy to compete with Beyoncé and Kylie Jenner. Who are the brands that cultivated a following strong enough to land them in the global Top 50?

Excluding Instagram, here are the 8 most-followed brands today:

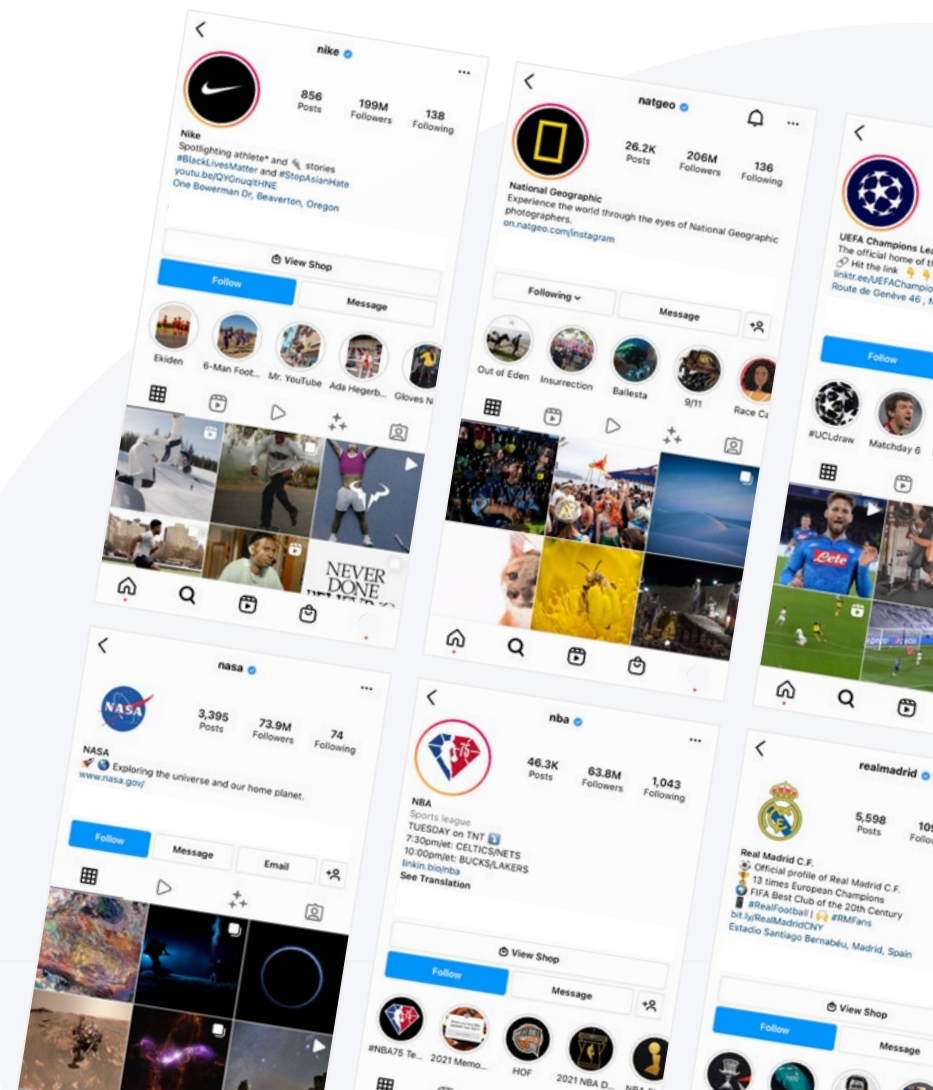
- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| @natgeo (196.2M followers, #12)     | @championsleague (85M followers, #32) |
| @nike (186M followers, #15)         | @nasa (71.8M followers, #35)          |
| @realmadrid (107.3M followers, #26) | @nba (61.8M followers, #590)          |
| @fcbarcelona (103.5 followers, #28) |                                       |

There are two clear themes here – sports and the world around us (on this planet and off of it).

This year, **users were eager for travel and nature content**. Our guess? In the second year of pandemic-related restrictions, people are longing to see the world.

## A year of mega-growth

Instagram accounts are growing. Over half the Top 50 accounts boast over 100M followers, and they all have at least 60M – a huge jump from last year, when accounts made it into the top 50 with as little as 14M followers.



## Regionally



North America's Top 50 is similar to the global Top 50, but with an even stronger focus on celebrities and entertainers.

The Kardashians, perhaps the most powerful influencers of all time, are a dominating presence here. @kyliejenner, with 289,061,989 followers, is the most-followed after Instagram, with her sisters Kim, Kendall, and Khloé holding 3 of the other top 10 spots.

Interestingly, Michelle Obama is the most-followed politician in North America, overtaking her husband Barack.

Khaby Lame drops out of the running here... but he's replaced by fellow TikToker Charli D'amelio.

## Top Brands

When it comes to brands, 10 companies made it into the Top 50.

Things look a little different here than in the global data, which included only one consumer brand (@nike). **In North America, luxury brands, beauty, and comedy all made it into the running.**

Excluding Instagram, the 9 most-followed brands in North America are:

@natgeo	@hudabeauty
@nasa	@chanelofficial
@nba	@louisvuitton
@marvel	@gucci
@9gag	

## United Kingdom and Ireland

The UK and Ireland's most-followed accounts are a lot more diverse, content-wise. **Plenty of brands, news pages, and comedy pages round out the Top 50**, along with sportspeople and actresses.

15 of the UK and Ireland's most popular pages are football-related (unsurprisingly, as we all know the Brits love their football).

### Top brands

The UK and Ireland's most-followed brands include plenty of media outlets as well as football brands (of course).

Of the UK and Ireland's Top 50 accounts, 12 were brand pages:

@adidasfootball	@girlsbuildingempires
@bbcnews	@sportsdirectfootball
@ftbl	@marksandspencer
@theeconomist	@bazaaruk
@voyaged	@bbcradio1
@endclothing	@avfcofficial

## TIPS + TRICKS

# Influencers beyond the follower count

“Do not rely on the number of followers. Target influencers who share your values and your world.”

- [Hivency](#)

More followers should be great news for influencer marketing, right? If accounts are growing, that means more people are hearing your message, learning about your brand, and buying your product.

Or does it?

Actually, it's not so simple. It's not necessarily the size of an influencer's community that matters, but how strongly they connect with them.

That's why micro-influencers (10k to 50k followers), and nano-influencers (under 10k), [are considered by many](#) to be the next wave of influencer marketing.

These users project authenticity to their small, yet dedicated communities – and they've got the engagement to show it. [One study](#) even found that the fewer followers an influencer has, the better their engagement rates tend to be.

## Small, engaged followings

“The objectives sought by an influencer campaign have greatly diversified. For many years, influencer marketing focused on visibility and brand awareness. Now, advertisers are seeking to identify performance and conversions.”

- [Hivency](#) (Philippe Kattou)

It's not just about broadcasting your message as widely as possible. Instead, brands want to see that influencers' audiences are engaged enough to translate their attention into conversions, KPIs, and other measurable results.

So don't get intimidated by these 100M-follower mega-accounts. You can get great results from influencers with well under 100k followers – and as we'll show shortly, that segment of Instagram is growing, giving you thousands of incredible users to choose from!

## Highlights

Top accounts are bigger than ever – over half have 100M+ followers

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The global top 50 is made up of 41 celebrities and only 9 brands, including Instagram itself

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The top 8 brands focused on sports, travel, space, and nature

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North America's top 50 were celeb and luxury-centric, while the UK favored media outlets and football

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## How do you stack up?

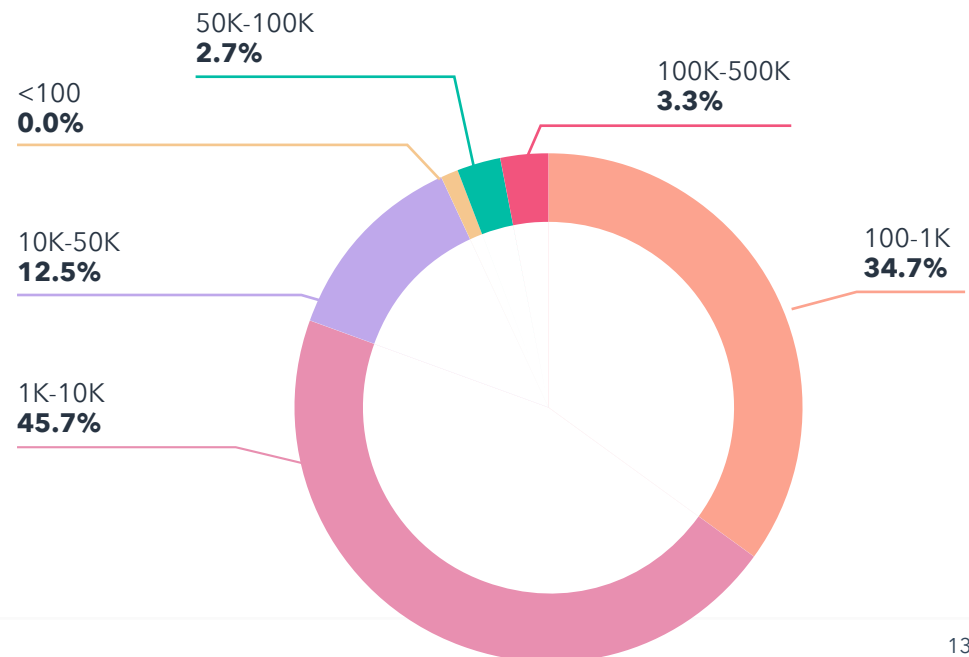
So, the biggest accounts on Instagram are bigger than ever. But what does that mean for the rest of us?

After all, accounts with over 1M users made up just 1.5% of the accounts we surveyed. That's a **10X increase from last year**, when those with over 1M followers made up just 0.15% of Instagram accounts. But it's still a tiny fraction of this enormous platform.

If you're one of the other 98.5% of users (join the club), you're probably wondering where you fit in. Here's a picture of Instagram users' followings and engagement last year, so you can benchmark your own performance.

## Benchmark Your Followers

### Global Followers Size



Good news – overall, Instagram accounts are more followed than ever before!

**The largest share of Instagram accounts, 45.7%, have between 1k and 10k followers**, up from 38% last year.

There are still many smaller accounts (34.7%, to be exact) who have between 100 and 1k followers. But that's a huge drop from last year, when these accounts made up over half (52%) of all users on the platform. Overall, this year, **80% of Instagram accounts had under 10k followers, down 10% from last year.**

The takeaway?

Instagram users are getting smarter, savvier, and more successful at building their followings on this platform. And as we've explained above, those followings can be powerful without being large. It's a nano-influencer party out there – is it time for your brand to join in?

## Most-followed categories

We all know celebrities, entertainers, and beautiful people are popular on Instagram. But for marketers and business owners, Instagram is a way to promote their product or service.

So what kind of businesses bring in the most followers?

“Creators are experts in building and maintaining communities. They also understand social platforms better than most. If you're looking to break into Instagram or TikTok, hire the experts on that platform and let them build your brand for you.”



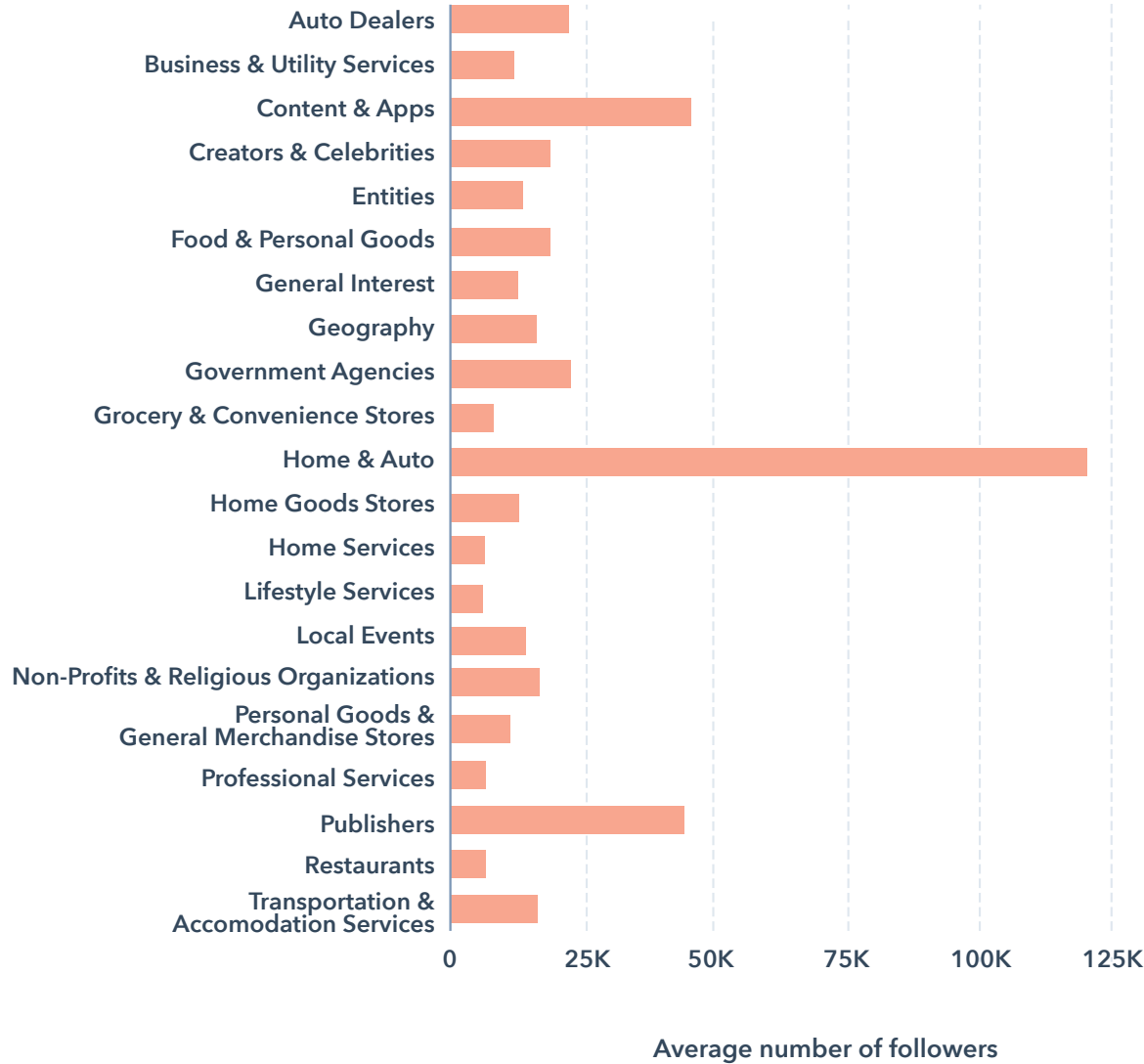
[HANNAH CAMERON](#)

Head of Content at #Paid

[seen in [ReferralCandy](#) blog]



## Average Number of Followers vs. Business Category



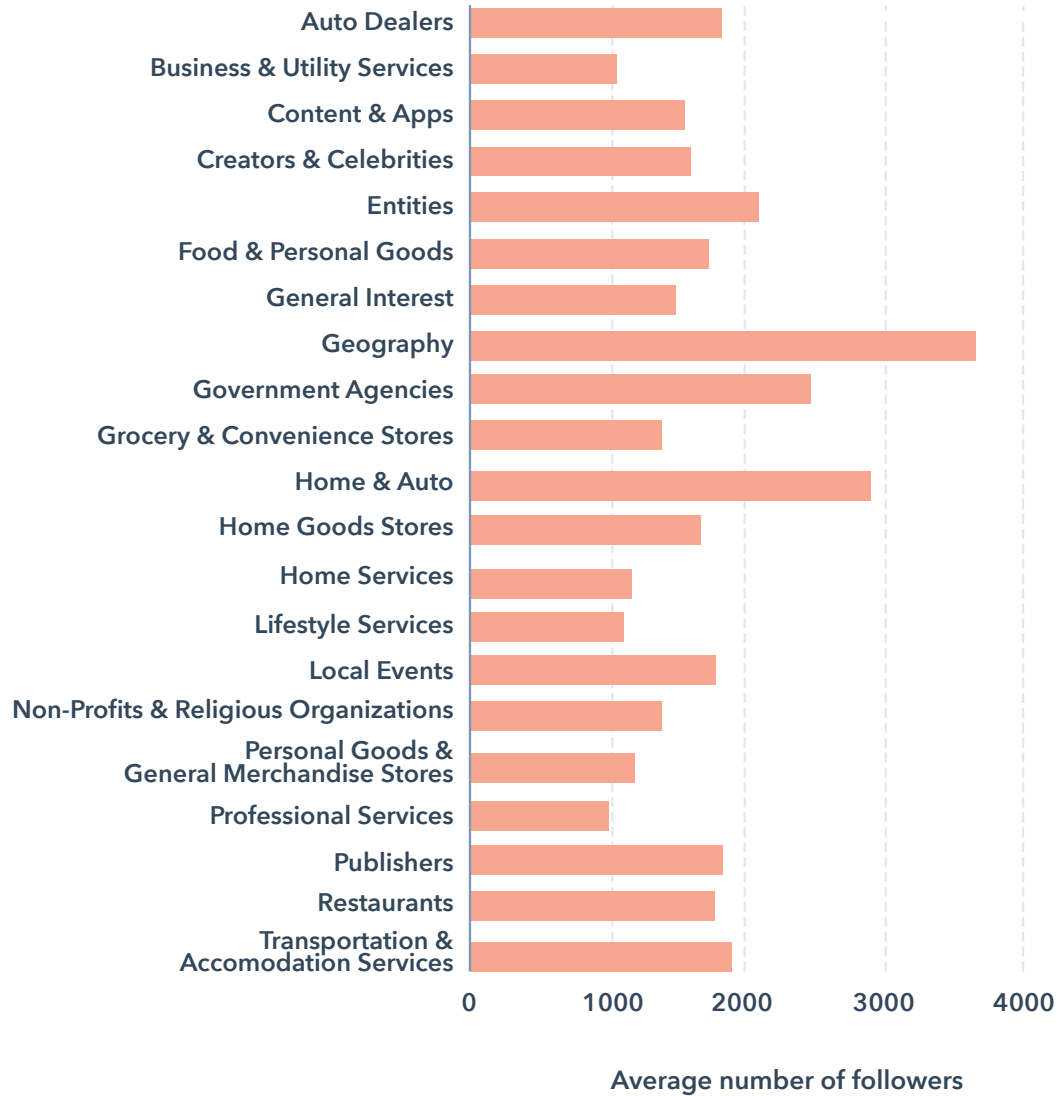
**On average, it's the Home & Automobile sector...** by a landslide!

There's some big fish in this pond, namely luxury auto brands like Bugatti (15.2M followers) and Rolls Royce (7.2M followers), who are skyrocketing the auto average up to the stratosphere.

If we calculate instead by median, we can adjust for these outliers, and get a slightly different, but just as interesting, picture.



## Median Number of Followers vs. Business Category



### By median, Geography is the most-followed category.

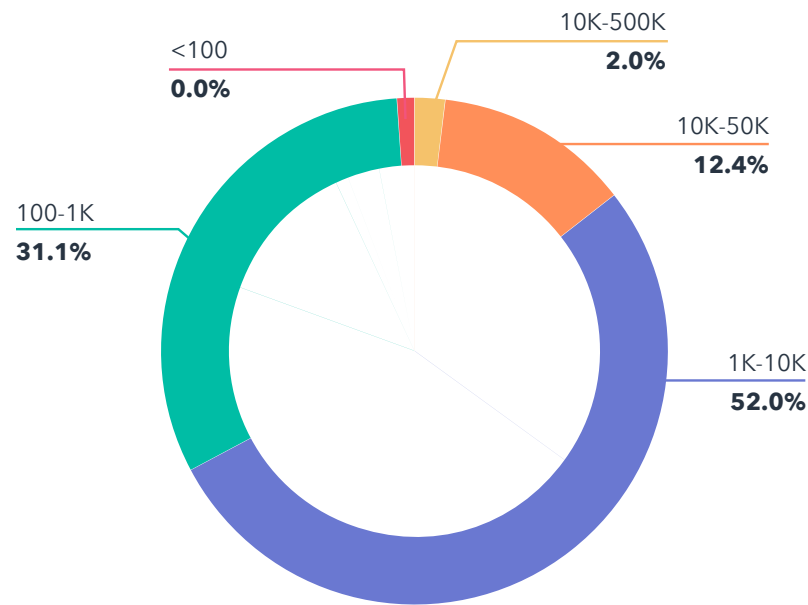
Remember how @natgeo is, after Instagram, the globally most-followed brand, and @nasa's one of just 9 other brands in the Top 50? That wasn't an outlier – **users were loving earth, travel, and nature content in their feeds this year.**

As we all deal with ongoing pandemic-related restrictions and lockdowns, it's clear that people are missing travel, and wanting to see pictures of the world (and universe) around them.

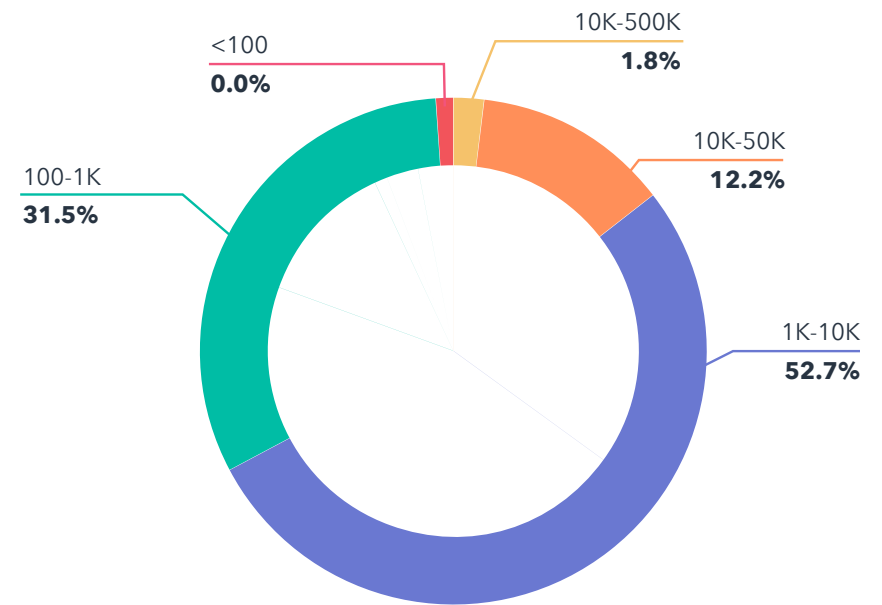
## Regionally

### North America, the United Kingdom, and Ireland

NAM - Accounts per number of followers



UK+I - Accounts per number of followers



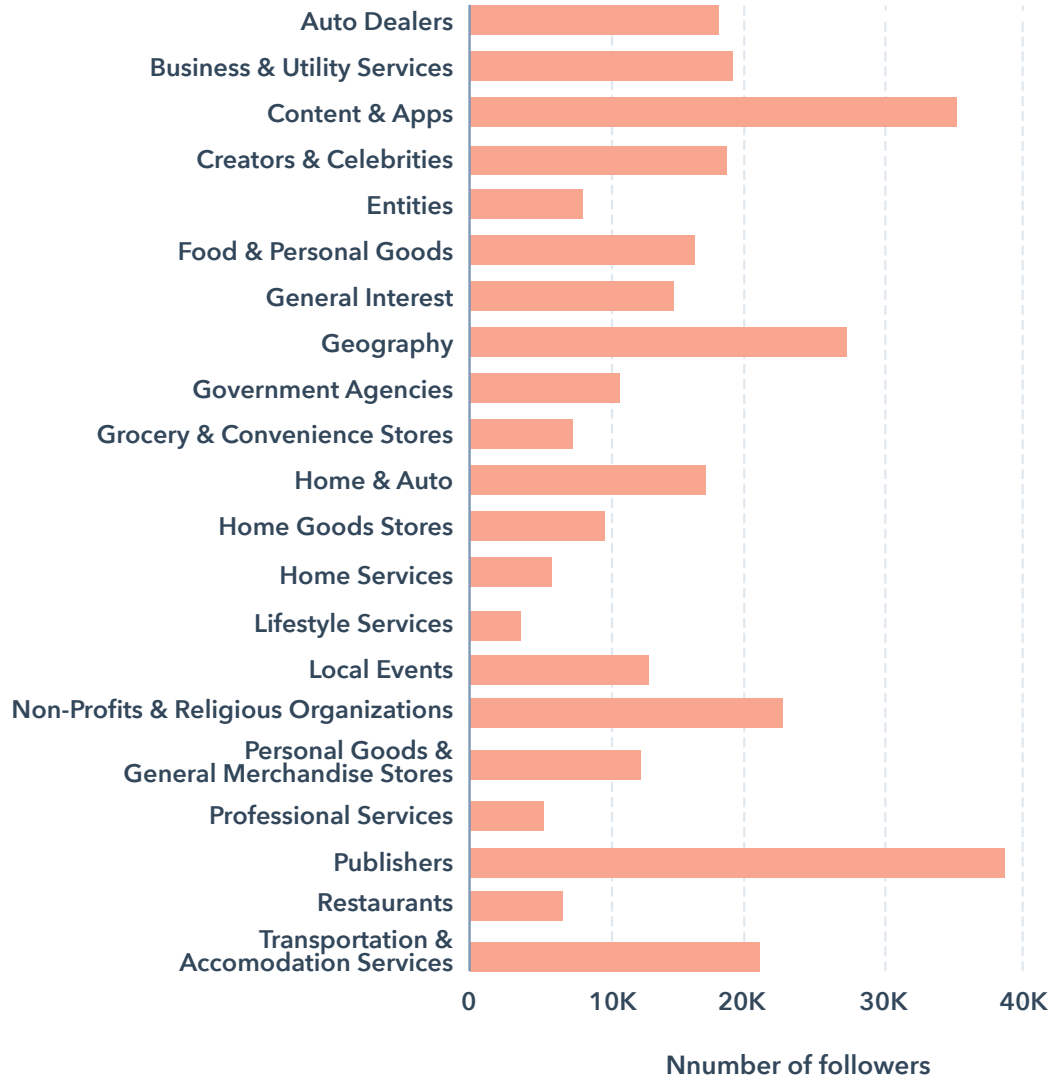
In both of these English-speaking regions, **there were more mid-sized accounts than the global average.**

In North America and the UK/Ireland, there were more accounts with 1k-10k followers (52%) than the global average (45%), and fewer accounts who had less than 1k (31% vs 34% globally).

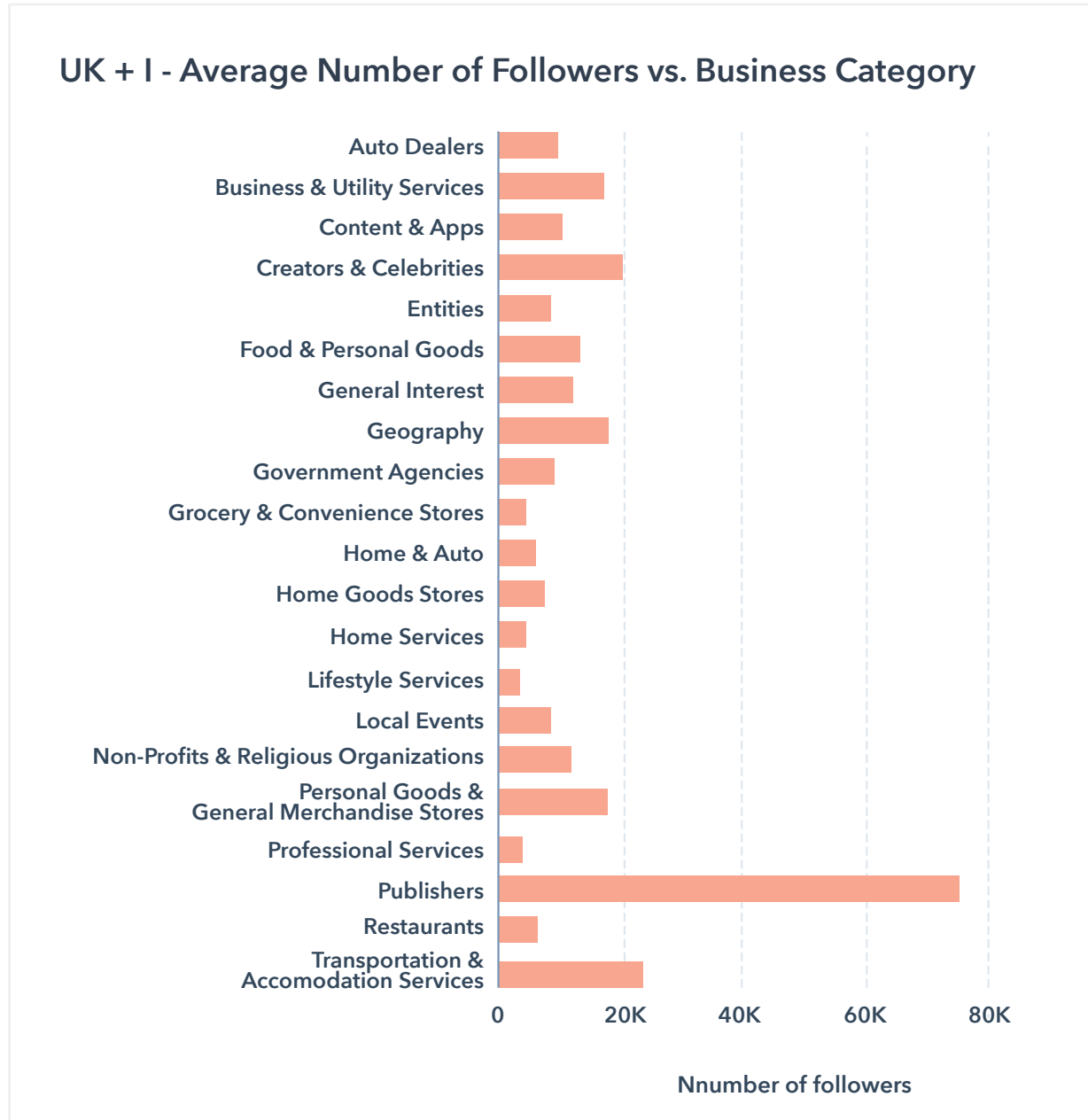
As we'll explore later in this report, North America and the UK are among the two parts of the world with the most Instagram users. Despite indications that the rest of the world is catching up, it seems that accounts are thriving in these two populous regions.

## Most-followed categories

### NAM - Average Number of Followers vs. Business Category



In North America, Publishers are the most-followed category, followed by Content & Apps.



This trend is even more dramatic in the UK and Ireland. While we see lower average follower counts overall here (due to a lower population and fewer geotagged posts in this region), **publishers like BBC News far outstrip any other category.**

In these regions, it appears that people are increasingly turning to Instagram as a source of daily news.

Here, we once again see the popularity of travel content. Transport & Accommodation is the next runner-up behind these categories, ranked 2nd for the UK, and 3rd for North America. It seems like all over the world, we're feeling the wanderlust!

## TIPS + TRICKS

# News + Travel on Instagram

In the English-speaking world at least, people are increasingly coming to Instagram for two reasons – to enjoy pictures of the world around them, and to keep up with current events.

Even if you're not a news- or travel-specific brand, you can still leverage these popular categories to give your followers what they want. For example, a clothing brand could show their clothes in gorgeous locales, or a company catering to women could share stories related to women's rights.

But experimenting with new types of content can be a little bit nerve-wracking. Here's a few tips on how to do it right.



## Travel content and COVID-19

### Be sensitive.

Don't just post exotic beaches for clout. Show your followers that you understand these are real places, inhabited by actual people.

- Include details on how locations you share have been affected by global events
- Tie in corporate social responsibility programs, which feel especially relevant in this time of global upheaval.

### Keep your audience in mind.

Don't just assume that your followers want travel content just because it's popular right now. Instead, tailor it to what they actually enjoy.

- Try more refined, luxury-oriented travel content for an older demographic, or images that convey excitement and adventure for Millennials and Gen Z.

### Read the room.

For many of us, the last couple of years have been stressful, uncertain, and isolating. Connect with your followers by choosing travel images that center relaxation, mindfulness, self-care, and connection.

## Making news content fun (and responsible)

It's official – young people are [turning to Instagram](#) to keep up with current events. But we've all heard about the misinformation and echo chambers that can happen when social media becomes a main source of news.

But brands can embrace news content in a way that's entertaining *and* informative. Here's how:

- Fact-check all news content you share for accuracy. Don't rush to repost an infographic just because it feels on-brand!
- Wherever possible, direct followers to a longer, reputable news story where they can find more nuance and information.
- Accurate news content can still be aesthetically pleasing! Try using Photoshop or Canva to make eye-catching graphics or carousels that share important news in beautiful, on-brand colors.

## Highlights

Overall, Instagram accounts are growing

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The largest proportion of accounts now have 1k-10k followers, compared to 100-1k last year

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Travel and nature content was well-loved worldwide

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Publishers, Content, and Apps are the most-followed categories in North America and the UK/Ireland

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# Benchmark Your Engagement

“In order to engage on social, in order to attract customers, you have to build trust, regardless of what kind of customer you have.”



LINDSAY SCARPELLO  
Strategic Communications  
Director at OBI Creative

It's not just about how many followers anymore – it's about whether they actually like your content. Engagement is how we measure that, by tracking whether users interacted with your content, or simply scrolled on by.

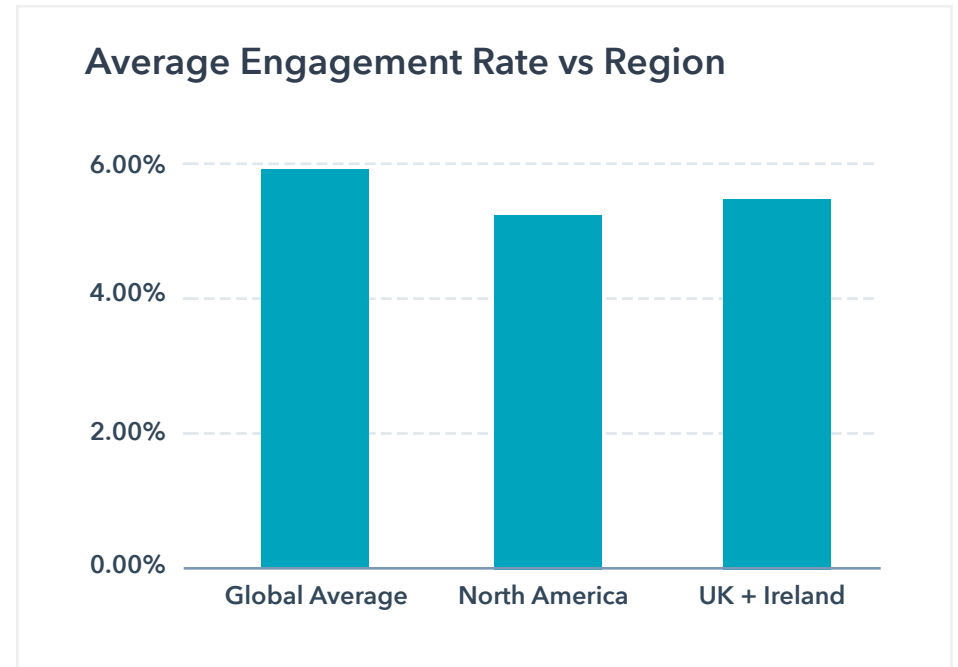
## Refresher: What is engagement?

**Engagement:** the total number of likes and comments on a post

**Engagement rate:** engagement, divided by how many followers a user has

We've collected average Instagram engagement and engagement rates from all over the world, so you can see how your own following compares.

## Globally



It's not just vanity metrics like follower counts that are up. **Globally, the average engagement rate last year was 5.86%**, or 460.06 engagements per post. That's a pretty staggering jump – more than double last year's figure of 2.26%!



But if your posts rarely bring in 400+ engagements, don't fret. That figure is heavily skewed by mega-accounts with thousands to millions of followers.

In practice, reaching average engagement depends on how many followers you have. For an account with 1,000 followers, average would mean 50-51 people engaging with each new post.

That's huge compared to last year's average (20 engagements per 1,000 followers), and it should cause marketers everywhere to breathe a sigh of relief.

If engagement failed to go up along with followers, that could indicate a lot of inactive, or even fake users who don't really care about your brand.

## Regionally

In both North America and the UK, **the average engagement rate was slightly lower.**

- In North America, the average engagement rate was 5.21%, or 403.79 engagements per post
- In the United Kingdom and Ireland, the average engagement rate was 5.43%, or 370.76 engagements per post

## The rise of international mega-accounts

Why would we see less engagement in Instagram's two largest English-speaking user bases?

The most-followed accounts, globally, are becoming more diverse, with India, Brazil, and Korea especially well-represented.

As they rise in prominence, could these international power-users bring with them a newer, more actively engaged follower base?

Importantly, **most of the top-followed accounts are still North America-based** (for now). But it's possible a higher proportion of these followers are old, inactive accounts that no longer engage with their content.

This is yet another reason why follower count is no longer the end-all, be-all metric it once was. North American and UK/Ireland accounts can still build large, engaged followings – but they'll need to be at the top of their game to do so.

**"If you want to be one step ahead of your competitors, you should widen your horizons, experiment with new features, present unique content and do your best to attract more people."**



NEAL SCHAFFER  
Author, *The Age of Influence*

## TIPS + TRICKS

# Getting engaged followers

Whether you're striving for 10k or 500k Instagram followers, everyone on this platform is looking to grow their audience.

But it's not about the numbers – it's about results! Buying fake followers might boost your brand's vanity, but only real people who care about your content will get you the sales and conversions you want.

Here are 5 of our [top tips](#) for growing that follower count *and* your engagement.

### 1 Know your voice

When we build a relationship with someone, it's because we like who they are. Users will only engage with a brand they know and love, so if yours is unclear or confusing, they won't stick around. Get your voice and branding crystal-clear, then use it to guide everything you share on Instagram.

### 2 Fine-tune your bio

Think of your bio as your first – and sometimes only – chance to introduce yourself and make a good impression. When users visit your profile, they'll make a split-second decision whether or not to follow based on what they see. Right away, you want to show them who you are and what you do best.

### 3 Post consistently

Just like a great workout routine, growing your following is all about incremental progress over time. The more you post, the better! But, be careful not to aim so high that you start pumping out low-quality content. For many businesses, 4 posts a week is a sweet spot that seems to work well.

### 4 Collaborate often

Partnering with other users is a genius way to boost your reach and get seen by new people. Don't overlook those micro- and nano-influencers we mentioned, especially if they already care about your brand! Even your employee's personal accounts can be great spaces for collaboration.

5

## Promote outside Instagram

Some of the most powerful places to get Instagram followers aren't on Instagram at all! Reach a wider audience through your brand's other communications, such as other social media channels, your website, and in your email marketing.

## Highlights

Average engagement, and average engagement rates are up, doubling since last year

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Engagement rates were slightly lower in North America and the United Kingdom/Ireland

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# What should I post on Instagram?

We've explored how Instagram accounts performed this year. But what types of content work best?

From carousels to tagging to captions, there are so many moving parts that go into creating a great Instagram post.

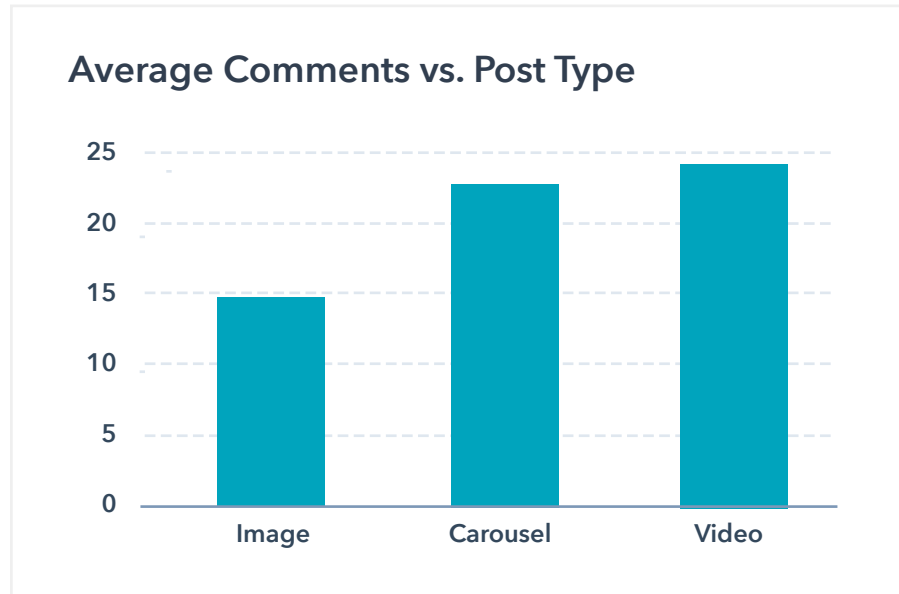
Here's what our data showed us about the Instagram posts that bring in the most engagement.

## What format do users prefer?

Long gone are the days when Instagram was all about heavily-filtered photos. In addition to new categories like Stories and Reels, the main feed itself can support video and carousel content as well as images (in portrait, landscape, or the classic square).

But what kind of content do audiences prefer – and what happens when we bring captions, emoji, and tagging into the picture? Let's break down what kind of content performs best on Instagram, both globally and in its top 2 English-speaking regions.

## Globally



Globally, **video is the most engaging type of content**, bringing in an average of 24.25 comments and 1097.9 likes per post.

Carousel posts come in second, but the race is tight. They're only just behind video, with 23.2 average comments and 933.7 likes!

If we calculate, instead, by median, the script flips entirely – **carousel posts have a median of 70 comments compared to video's 46**, and 4 median comments, nearly doubling video posts' performance.

By both average and median, image posts trail far behind. In 2022, it seems like this kind of content simply doesn't stack up anymore.

This trend is even more dramatic in North America and the United Kingdom/Ireland.

Here, **carousels bring in by far the most likes and comments**, and video trails far beyond, even with or barely above single images. Carousels can now contain video as well as images, which may be a contributing factor.



# Carousels make important information engaging

“Your average consumer is overloaded with information. They do not want to see words on words all the time on their feeds. Bite-sized pieces of info, broken down into a caption and an image with a brief text, are likely to do better.”



GAURAV BELANI

Growfusely [seen on Quintly]

This might sound surprising, but **we aren't predicting the death of video just yet**. Instagram now offers multiple video-specific content types that aren't included in this metric – namely IGTV, Stories, and Reels.

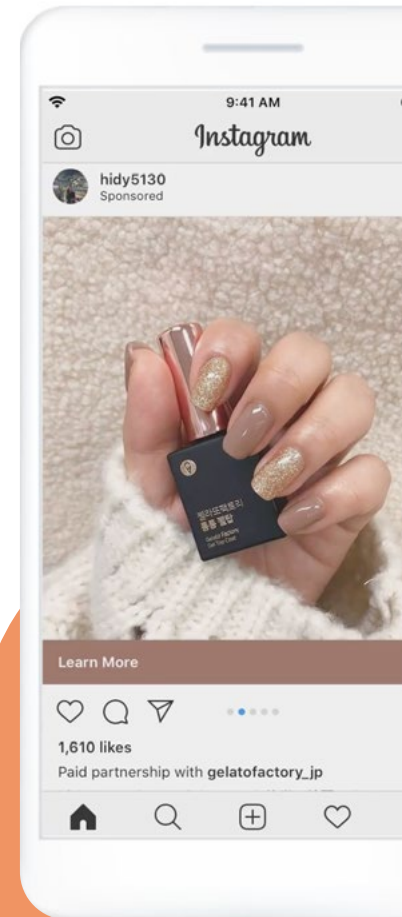
Since viewers love these types of content, marketers should experiment with these channels this year, rather than just posting it to the feed.

What could be the reasoning for the rise of the carousel? First of all, it's not a new trend – carousels held the top spot by median in [last year's research](#), as well.

Notably, in 2020 carousel posts became incredibly popular, accounting for **19%** of all posts compared to just 3% in 2017. Many users chose carousels as a way to share information about [Black Lives Matter](#) and [global inequality](#), and it seems they've stuck around as people continued using Instagram as a source of news.

But whatever they contain, it's possible that **carousels are an inherently engaging medium**.

After all, the act of swiping through carousels is much more interactive than passively watching a video or looking at an image.



## TIPS + TRICKS

# Mastering carousel and video content

“Brands that don’t give consumers the option to consume content in different ways will be missing out on a big fraction of their audience.”



CHRIS SAVAGE  
CEO Wistia

In 2022, great Instagram marketing means moving beyond photos. Here’s our top tips for creating stunning video and carousel posts your followers will love, like, and share.

## Keep carousels clear and cohesive

**It doesn’t matter how important your message is – don’t jam-pack your carousel with information!**

Make these posts just as beautiful as any other type of content. That means legible text, beautiful images, and colors that are appealing and on-brand.

**Carousels aren’t a bunch of random pictures stuck together – they’re one message, told over several slides.**

Design all the images in your carousel together, with a unified story and visual look.

**Your carousel is a story – structure it carefully, to pull the reader through your entire post.**

Start with an attention-getting title slide that hooks the reader, then, move into your main content. Finish off with a clear call to action that offers next steps.



## Make the most of Stories with video

Instagram users love video, and they especially love watching it in Stories. Stories are one of Instagram's most popular features, watched by 500M people a day.

Here's how to make your Stories great:

### **Keep your text concise.**

You only have a few seconds to grab your viewer's attention before they swipe on to the next Story.

### **Make your messaging timely and urgent.**

Give viewers a reason to act now, before your Story disappears. Phrasing like 'limited offer' tends to work well.

### **Vertical-first, always.**

Stories aren't like feed posts, which give you a few different options for size and shape. Over 80% of smartphone users watch video with their phone held vertically, so always design your content with this orientation in mind!

## Highlights

By median, carousels became the top performing content, both globally and regionally

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Globally, carousels are nearly equal with video, but in North America and the UK, they outperformed it drastically

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# How should I caption my posts?

“The best way to build a meaningful community is to be authentic and serve the community’s needs. These are the main ingredients to building trust within your community and compounds over time.”

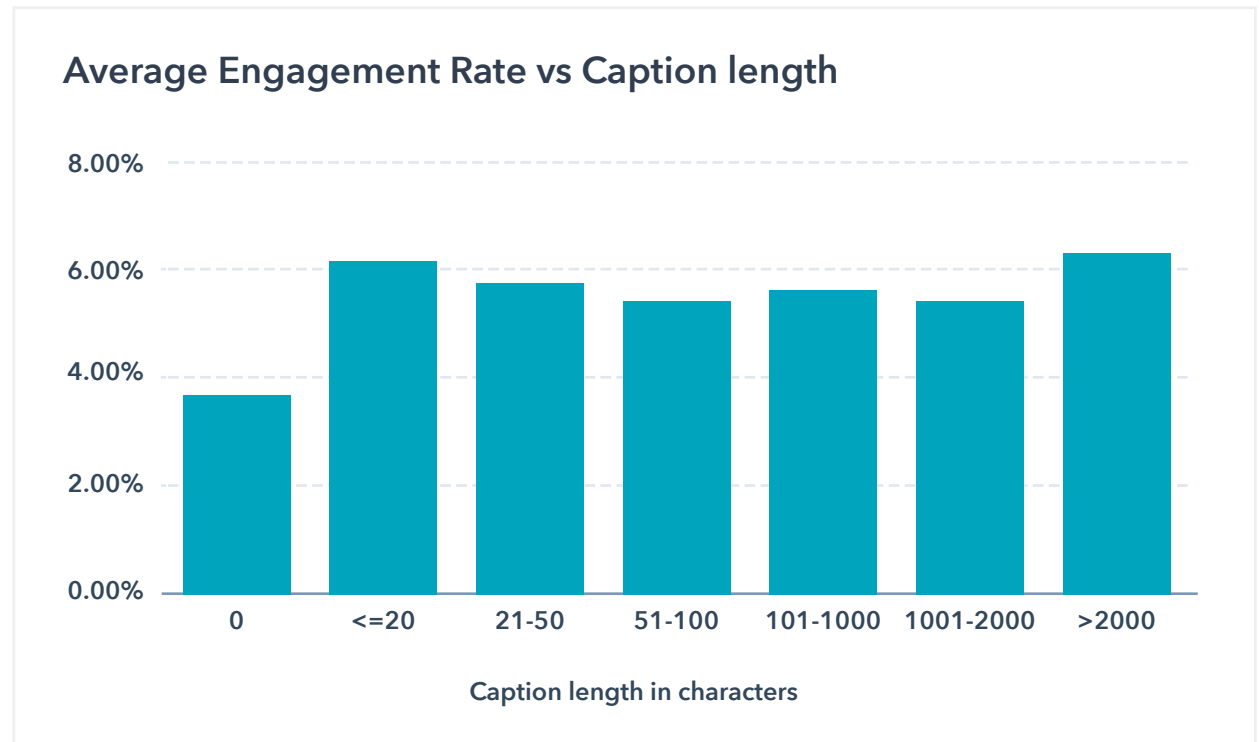


MEGAN KOPALASINGAM  
ReferralCandy

Instagram is all about the visual, but people come here for storytelling and connection, too.

That means your caption is super important – and we’ve got the numbers to prove it! Here’s what you need to know about captioning your posts on Instagram.

## Globally



Don’t let your carousel, image, or video get lonely! **Always include a caption – doing so gives you a significant boost in engagement**, from just under 4% to over 6%.

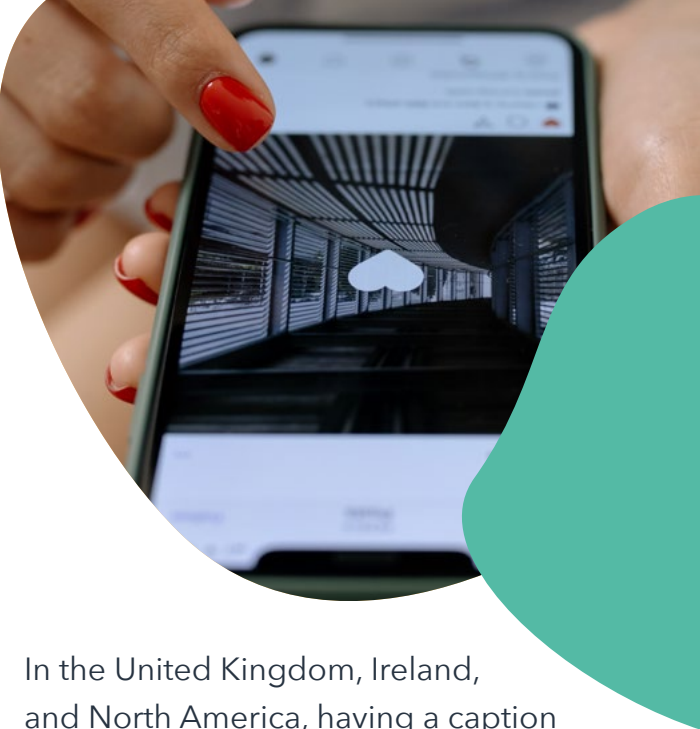
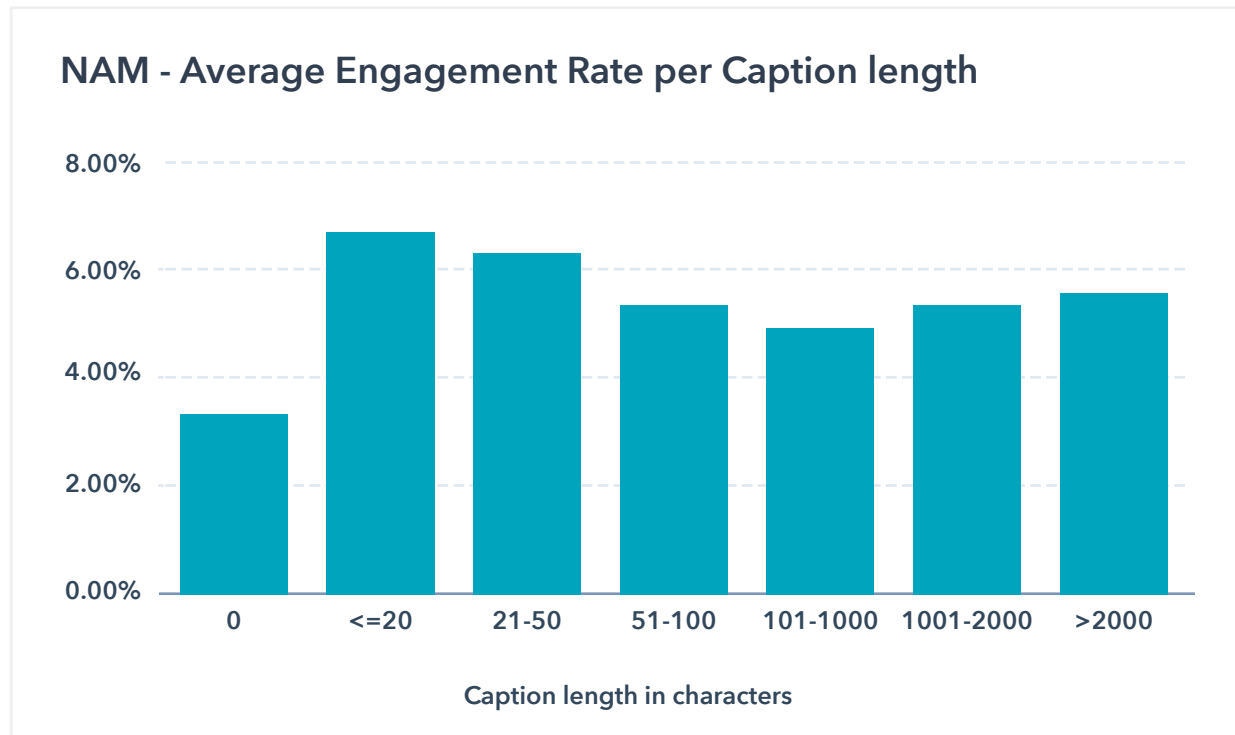
Making that caption longer gives you another, smaller boost, with variable results depending on length.

Quick captions still perform well. But short and sweet isn't the obvious choice anymore Engagement-wise, **the two sweet spots seem to be keeping it brief, at 1-20 characters, or going long, at over 2000** – but it's a minor boost either way.

The most important thing is including a caption in the first place, so write one that feels authentic and make sure it comes from the heart!

Especially with in-person interactions still restricted in many locations, people are coming to social media for storytelling and connection. Don't be afraid to share!

## Regionally



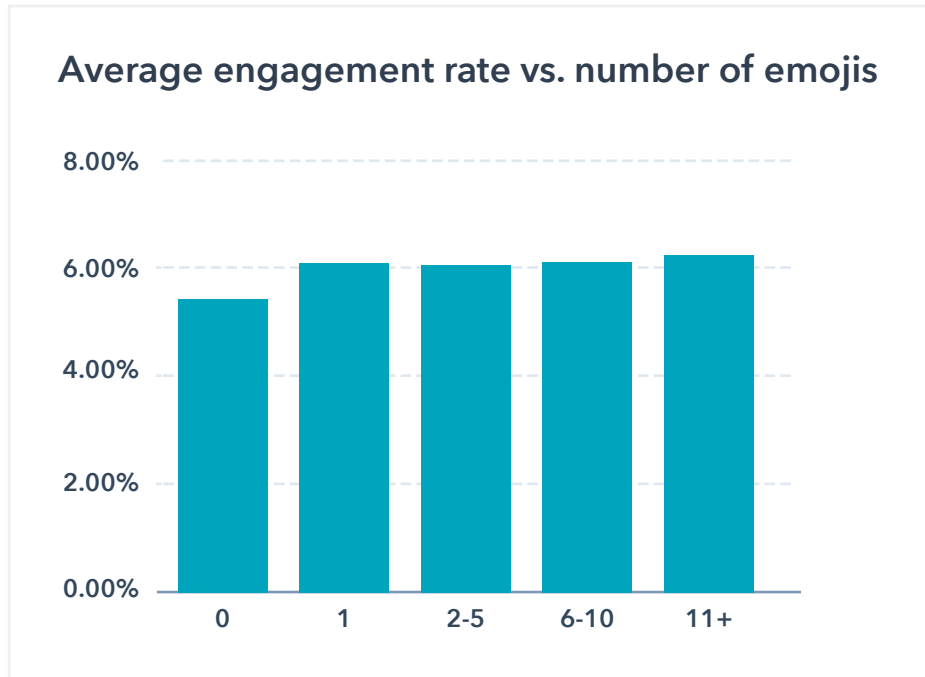
In the United Kingdom, Ireland, and North America, having a caption still gives you a huge boost.

But **here, people seem to prefer shorter text**. After 20 characters, you'll start to see some diminishing returns.

But again, a long caption is way better than none at all – so don't hold back if you have something to say!

## What about Emojis?

Your caption isn't just about text! These fun little pictures have become a big part of communicating in the digital age, and they have an impact on how your content performs, too.



**Globally**, including at least 1 emoji will get you higher engagement, but after that, it doesn't really seem to matter. That's a trend that holds true in the UK and Ireland, too – although here, the positive impact of a little 🌸🍰🎂💙 isn't quite as powerful.

**In North America**, including some emojis does help, but you definitely can go overboard.

**Including 11 or more emojis can have a significant, negative impact on engagement**, while including 6-10 doesn't really help your engagement. So rein it in on the 😂❤️👍🙏, and keep it to less than 5!



## TIPS + TRICKS

# 5 Steps to an A+ Caption

As we've seen, captions are the secret ingredient to take your Instagram performance to the next level. It doesn't matter how great your photo or carousel is – including a caption will give your post a boost of engagement that it would never bring in alone!

Here are [5 quick tips](#) for a caption that gets you the results you want.

1

### Stay true to your voice

Remember that brand voice we talked about? Your caption is the perfect place to let it speak loud and clear! This is your chance to speak directly to your followers with the personality they know and love.

2

### Start strong

Always lead your caption with the most important, compelling information. Instagram will clip your caption when it appears in users' feeds, and unless it's short, they'll need to click 'see more' to read the whole thing. So give them a reason to keep reading!



3

### Tell a story

Stories are what makes captions interesting. Think about it – would you rather read a dry list of facts, or a story about what they actually mean? Wherever you can, use captions to share the stories behind your brand and products.

4

### Offer value

As they check out your brand's Instagram content, your audience is asking themselves one thing – 'what's in it for me?' Offer exclusive deals, special offers, or even just useful information to make following worth their while.

5

### Don't forget the CTA

Never end your caption without providing a next step, such as signing up for your newsletter, leaving a comment, or even making a purchase. If someone reads your entire caption, that means you've done a great job of holding their interest – so don't let it go to waste!

## Highlights

Including a caption of any length significantly boosts engagement

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Globally, long captions (over 2,000 characters) perform just as well as short ones (with under 20)

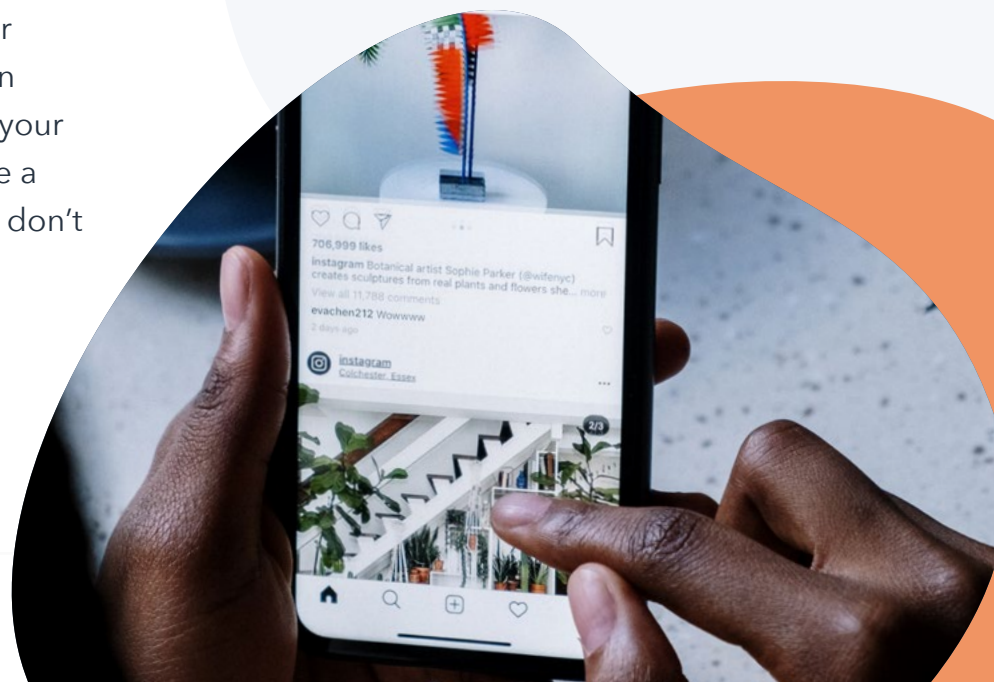
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In North America and the UK, short captions still perform best, but any length is better than none

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Globally, including as many emojis as you want boosts engagement. In North America, it's best to keep it to 5 or less

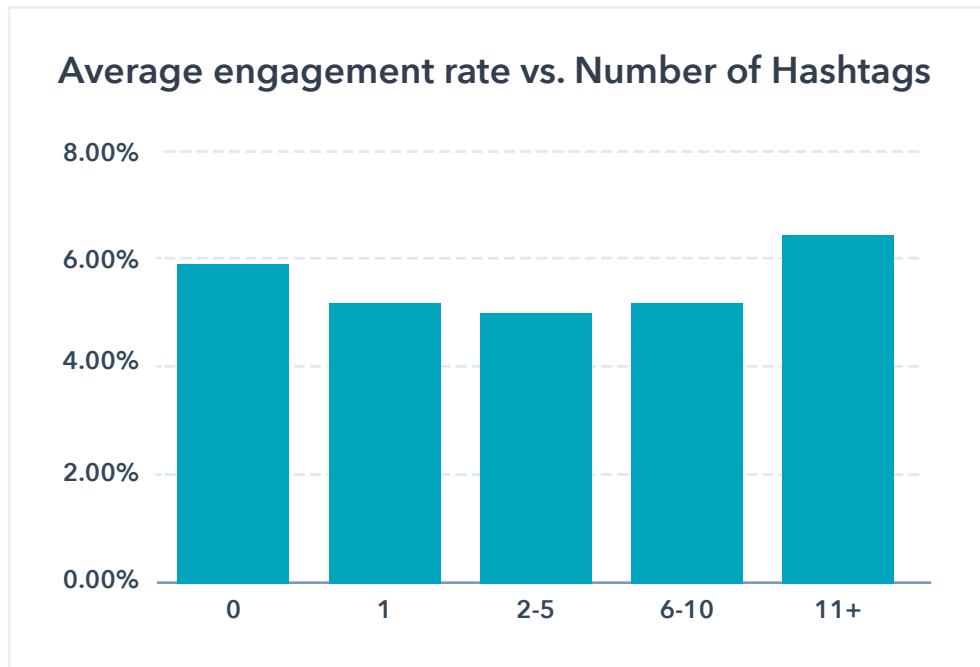
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# How Should I Use Hashtags?

It wouldn't be Instagram without hashtags! It's safe to say they aren't going anywhere – after all, this is the platform that brought you #ThrowbackThursday and #InstaGood. But how can we use them to boost performance and reach our goals?

## Globally



Globally, **the more hashtags the better!** Using as many as possible doesn't seem to harm post performance, so feel free to go wild – as long as you keep hashtags relevant to your audience and niche!

For example, slapping #photooftheday on your new skincare product probably won't do you any favors.

## Most Popular

Unsurprisingly, super-general hashtags like #love (678,611 occurrences) and #photography (635,149 occurrences) are still the most widely-used.

That sounds exciting – but with millions of posts a day going out under these tags, it really just puts you at risk of getting lost in the noise.

So choose carefully, and only use these top hashtags if you've got a really good reason.



## Most engaging

“The most active hashtags are community hashtags. Even though these hashtags do not have so many posts, they have already been searched and circulated by groups that want to get in touch with others who want to pick up relevant content.”



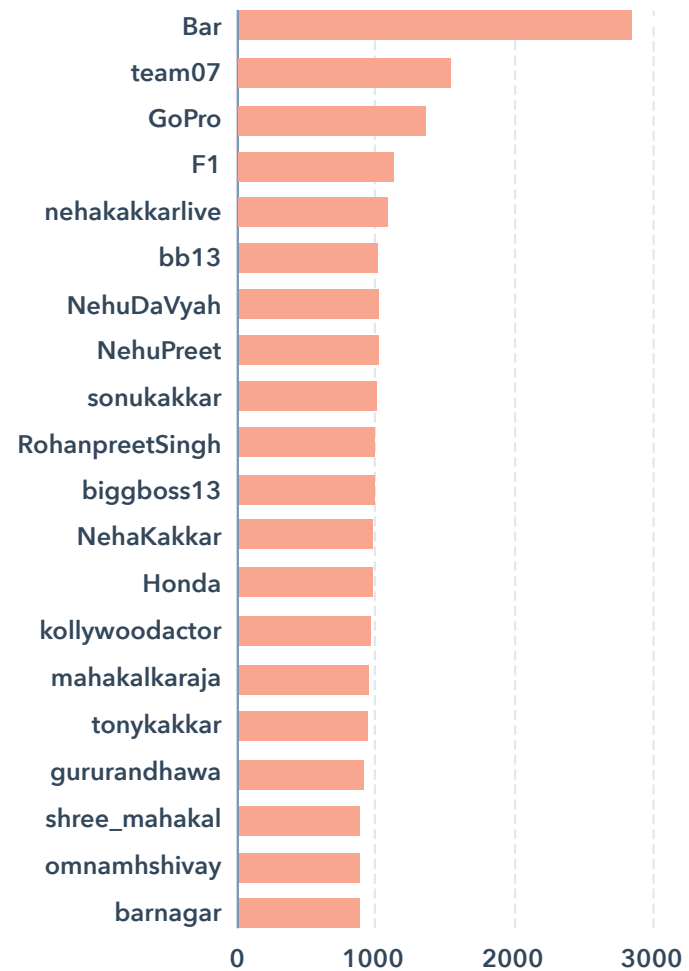
NEAL SCHAFFER

Author, *The Age of Influence*

Hashtags that garnered the most engagement tended to be the polar opposite of the super-general, popular picks.

Instead, **the most engaging hashtags were highly niche**, targeting specific interests and communities. A few popular categories? Geographic locations, TV Shows, and Indian and Korean celebrities.

Average engagement vs. Hashtag





## High-engagement niches

Niche communities and fandoms dominated the most-engaging hashtags – with a strong Indian media presence!

Who's behind these super-engaging tags? Some, such as Formula 1 (#F1), #Honda, and #GoPro, are familiar to English-speaking users.

But we can also see a large number of trending Indian topics on this list. Here are some engaging hashtags you may not have heard of:

### **Bigg Boss Season 13 (#bb13, #biggboss13)**

An Indian reality TV series. Strangers live in a house together, dealing with challenges and serious drama to win a big prize. Sidharth Shukla was the champion of S13.

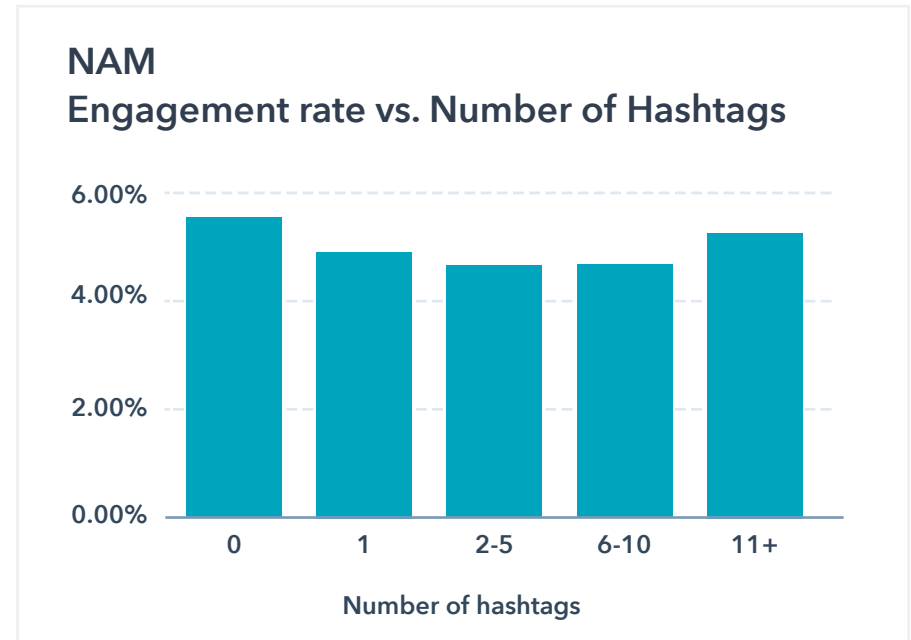
### **Neha Kakkar, Tony Kakkar, and Sonu Kakkar (#nehakakkarlive, #sonukakkar, #nehakakkar, #tonykakkar)**

These talented siblings are taking the Indian music scene by storm! Neha and Sonu are both playback singers, who produce music for use in movies.

### **Team 07**

A famous Indian TikTok collective, made up of Mr. Faisu (Faisal Shaikh), Hasnain Khan, Adnaan Shaikh, Faiz Baloch, and Shadan Farooqui.

## Regionally



Interestingly, **posts with zero hashtags performed best**, although not by a huge margin.

However, this figure doesn't tell the whole story. With so many of the most-followed accounts hailing from North America, it's highly likely that a small number of mega-accounts are skewing this metric. Think about it – when Ariana Grande posts, she doesn't need to use hashtags to get millions of comments and likes.

**The second-best category, hashtag-wise, was to use over 10.** So if you want your content to get seen by as many people as possible, don't be afraid to throw some tags on it, especially when you're first starting out.

## Most popular

In North America, many accounts used hashtags to share content related to fitness and travel (noticing a pattern here?).

Instagram was also a popular channel for users to promote their small businesses, using hashtags like #ShopLocal, #SmallBusiness, and #ShopSmall.

## Most engaging

Basketball, nature, and home decor dominated the most engaging hashtags in North America. Tags including #NBAPlayoffs, #livelovecanada, and #vintagedecortour were among the top-ranking.

Specifically, some niche interests like bird photography and tiny homes boasted very high engagement.

## United Kingdom and Ireland

This region echoes the global trend of 'the more, the merrier.' Here, including over 11 hashtags is still your best bet.

## Most popular

#London was – fittingly – the UK and Ireland's most popular hashtag.

In the UK and Ireland, we also saw **small business-related hashtags dominate**, along with arts and crafts related content. Instagram continues to be one of the most accessible channels for people to share about – and monetize – their passions and hobbies.

## Most engaging

As in North America, sports hashtags offered strong engagement – though here, it's football tags like #Euro2020 and #PremierLeague that captured national interest.

Interestingly, #ad comes in as the second most-used hashtag. This year, new regulations were introduced requiring influencers (or any users, really) to disclose to their followers when they made a sponsored post. With nearly 2000 average engagements, it looks like UK Instagram users aren't scared away by sponsored content.

Nail art and manicure-related tags also performed well, and scenic images of Britain, both urban and rural, were another presence.

## TIPS + TRICKS

# #LevelUp your Hashtag Strategy

Hashtags are powerful – they’re one of the few ways to get your content seen by users who don’t follow you.

Users can browse by, and follow, the hashtags they care about, seeing the best content under those tags right in their own feed. Smart hashtag use can also help your posts appear in the Explore page, a discoverability gold mine that’s visited by 200M people a day. Here are a few tips for crafting your Instagram hashtag strategy, from our friends at Later.

## Go for variety

There are 5 main categories of hashtags:

**Location** (#London, #exploreBC)

**Branded** (#AbsolutVodka, #GotMilk, #NikeByYou)

**Industry** (#MakeupLovers, #cars)

**Community** (#arianators, #lakersnation)

**Descriptive** (#eyeshadow, #homedecor)

When you’re just starting out, choose tags from all five categories for a well-rounded strategy that reaches many different groups of people.

## Get some #inspo

To see what hashtags are popular in your niche, check out what other accounts are doing.

Once you’ve picked one or two relevant hashtags, look up the top posts that are already using them. Have they chosen any other hashtags that might be a good fit for your content?

## Find the sweet spot

Search each hashtag you’re considering on Instagram, and check out how many other people are already using it. Too few, and your post will barely get seen; too many, and you’ll get lost in the noise.

Select hashtags that are somewhere in the middle, with between 10k and 200k posts.



## Highlights

Globally, the more hashtags, the better engagement

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The most engaging hashtags related to niche communities, like TV shows

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Posts with zero hashtags did best in North America, followed by those with 10+

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Small business and crafts-related hashtags did well in North America and the UK

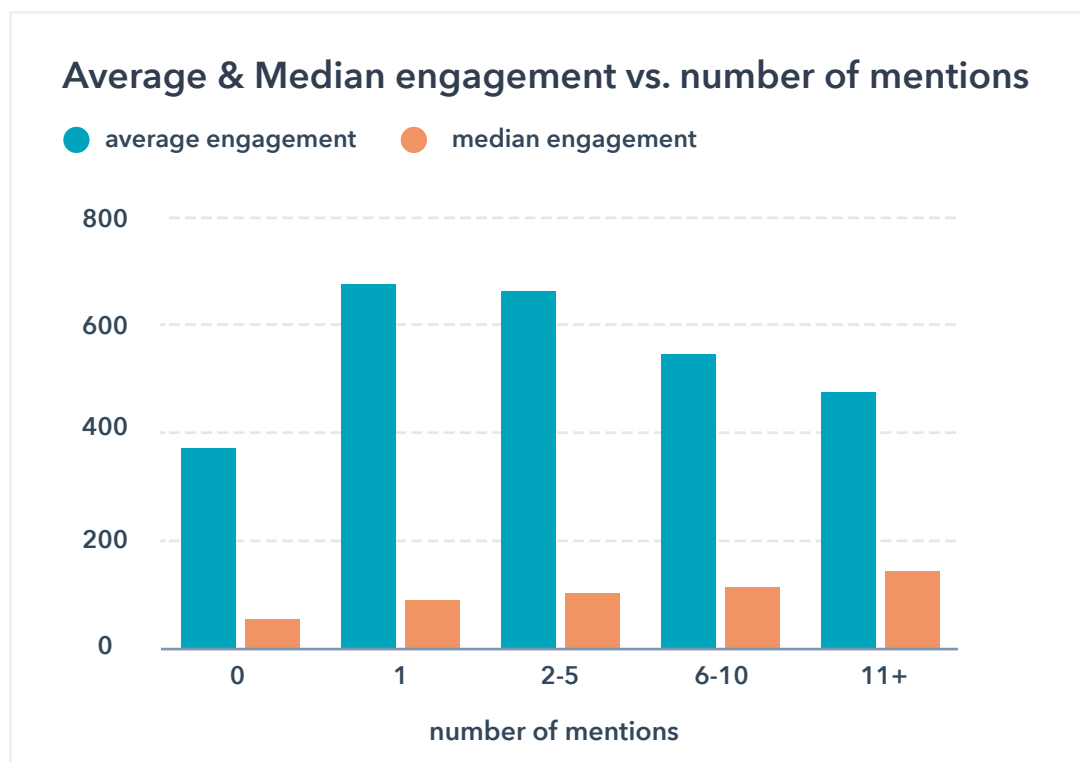
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## Should I tag other accounts?

Instagram tags help us get our content in front of more people. But there's more to it than hashtags – tagging other accounts and users is a great way to boost reach and cross-promote to people with other relevant interests.

### Globally and Regionally



**Tagging other accounts is good for engagement.** Whether you mention another account in the caption, or tag directly onto your post, you're increasing how many people see your content.

On average, tagging one other account will give you the most engagement.

But calculated by median (which, again, allows us to adjust for outliers), **the more accounts you tag the better – and that’s the best strategy for boosting your engagement rate**, too.

## Regionally

Here, there aren’t dramatic differences between the global and regional data – **tagging is a good strategy worldwide**, in North America, and in the UK/Ireland.

The takeaway?

Unless you already have a large, established following (and even if you do, it can’t hurt), tagging multiple accounts is the best way to get people seeing and engaging with your content. Just make sure not to be spammy and keep things relevant!

## TIPS + TRICKS

# Mentioning vs. tagging – what’s the difference?

Mentioning and tagging both connect your content to other people’s accounts. The difference is that mentions happen in your caption, while tags are attached to your visual.

To mention someone in your caption (or in a comment), you’ll type @, followed by their username. They’ll get a notification, and if they see it, they might just head over to check out your post!

When you tag someone in a post, you’ll set tags over your image or video. This can be done when you first post it, or later, as an edit.

When you tag someone in the image, they’ll be notified, too. But importantly, that image they’re tagged in will appear on their profile too, in a different tab! So unless they remove it, you’re potentially reaching their entire audience, as well.

Mentioning and tagging other accounts can both help you get more exposure. But as a rule of thumb, mention other accounts in captions or comments when you’re trying to get their attention. Tag them in your posts when you want the attention of their followers!

## Highlights

Tagging one other account gives the greatest boost to average engagement

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Tagging more accounts has the best effect on engagement rate, and on median engagement

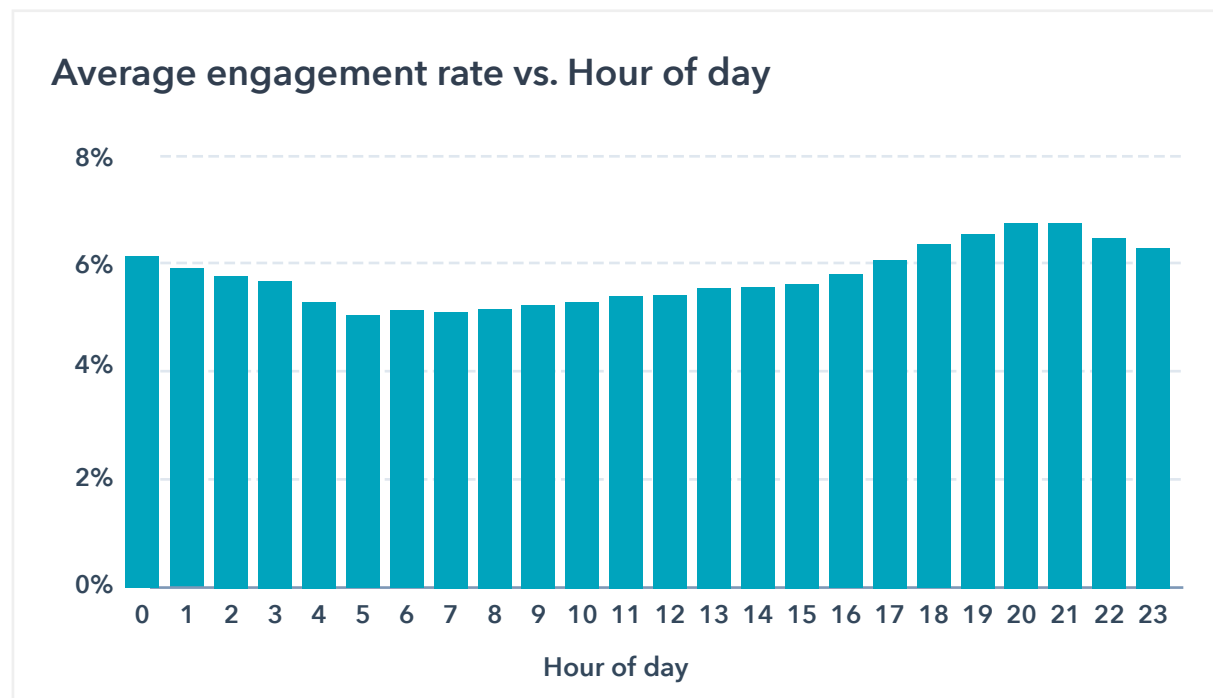
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# When should I post on Instagram?

On Instagram, it's not just about what you say, it's about when you say it. The time your content is shared has a dramatic impact on how many users see and engage with it. Here, we've broken down when Instagram posts tend to get the best engagement, both by time of day and week. These aren't exactly set-in-stone rules, but they should still help guide you on your way.

Before we dive into the recommendations, bear in mind that this engagement data is based on your audience being in the same time-zone as the account you're posting from. Therefore, you may need to adjust these if your audience members are mostly based in different time-zones. For example, if the best time for engagement is 12:00, aim to post at 12:00 in the time-zone your audience is based, even if this actually means posting at a different time for you.

## Globally - Time of Day



What time of day should you post on Instagram? The answer isn't exactly the same for every account – but the data does show some clear trends that can help guide your strategy.

**Content posted between 6pm and 9pm got the highest engagement rate**, but in general, evenings are a pretty safe bet, as engagement remains on the high side right through to midnight.

Mornings are a bit of a dead zone – 5am to 12pm offer the lowest engagement rate, with things gradually rising after that.

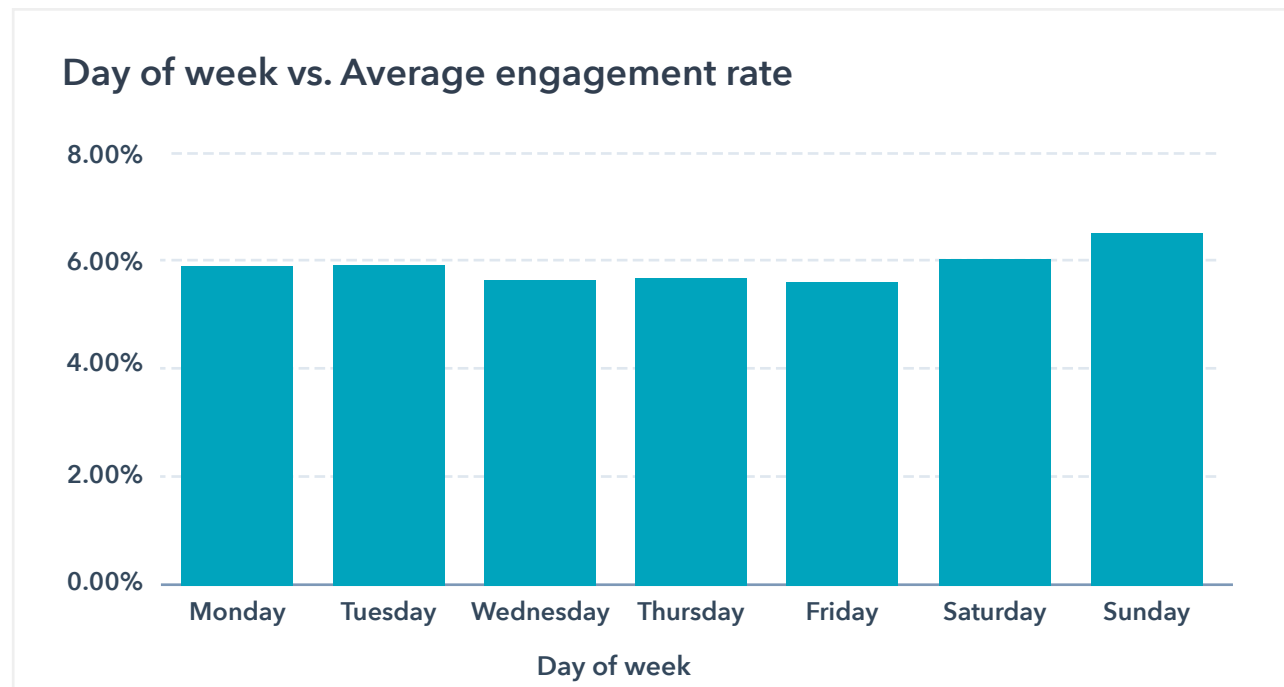
If we look at the average *number* of engagements, rather than engagement rate, we see a similar picture, just with a little more variation.

While **evenings are still king**, here the 6pm - 9pm sweet spot is even more pronounced. We also see a dramatic **drop in engagement between 5am and 8am, followed by a steady rise from 10am - 4pm.**

The takeaway?

People love Instagram in the evenings, when they're unwinding after work or getting ready for bed. Since most of us work during the day, these findings are pretty intuitive.

## Day of week



There's no day of the week that's outright *bad* to post on Instagram, but the weekends do have a slight edge.

Sunday is the clear outlier here, with an average engagement rate of 6.47%. Saturday and Monday are close behind, with 6.05% and 5.95%, respectively.

From Tuesday to Friday, the average engagement rate hovers around 5.6%.



Again, looking at volume of engagement rather than rate gives us a little more variation in the same overall picture. Specifically, when calculating this way, Wednesday emerges as the mid-week winner, with 461 average engagements.

But Saturday and Sunday still come out on top – so don't forget to schedule those weekend posts! This is where a social media scheduling tool can really make the difference - we're sure that you don't want to work on a Sunday evening either.

## What time is best to post on specific days?

### Global engagement rate: time of day vs day of week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
12:00	6.43%	6.14%	5.97%	6.03%	6.04%	6.17%	6.39%
1:00	6.14%	5.80%	5.78%	5.76%	5.94%	5.87%	6.17%
2:00	5.75%	5.59%	5.60%	5.63%	6.01%	5.86%	5.99%
3:00	5.62%	5.83%	6.08%	5.36%	5.45%	5.79%	5.80%
4:00	5.42%	5.07%	5.68%	4.98%	5.22%	5.38%	5.39%
5:00	5.06%	5.08%	4.95%	4.92%	4.93%	5.29%	5.41%
6:00	5.29%	5.13%	5.18%	5.05%	5.08%	5.05%	5.35%
7:00	5.24%	5.05%	5.11%	4.99%	5.04%	5.08%	5.44%
8:00	5.28%	5.09%	5.07%	5.02%	5.07%	5.24%	5.68%
9:00	5.30%	5.14%	5.14%	5.04%	5.12%	5.29%	5.77%
10:00	5.40%	5.18%	5.18%	5.10%	5.18%	5.37%	5.87%
11:00	5.51%	5.23%	5.24%	5.15%	5.18%	5.50%	6.01%
12:00	5.56%	5.32%	5.26%	5.20%	5.25%	5.59%	6.05%
1:00	5.64%	5.43%	5.35%	5.31%	5.32%	5.70%	6.28%
2:00	5.61%	5.46%	5.37%	5.31%	5.39%	5.83%	6.30%
3:00	5.68%	5.47%	5.37%	5.33%	5.43%	5.92%	6.34%
4:00	5.84%	5.62%	5.51%	5.49%	5.61%	6.10%	6.57%
5:00	6.10%	5.91%	5.86%	5.81%	5.82%	6.37%	6.79%
6:00	6.42%	6.21%	6.15%	6.11%	6.15%	6.62%	7.07%
7:00	6.60%	6.38%	6.41%	6.25%	6.31%	6.78%	7.19%
8:00	6.83%	6.58%	6.60%	6.37%	6.44%	7.20%	7.33%
9:00	6.78%	6.58%	6.60%	6.48%	6.48%	7.12%	7.30%
10:00	6.45%	6.33%	6.32%	6.32%	6.39%	6.80%	6.93%
11:00	6.29%	6.12%	6.13%	6.18%	6.33%	6.53%	6.69%

No matter the day of the week, evening remains the most engaging time to post on Instagram.

On most days, we also see a late-night spike of engagement around 2-3am. But it's not reflected in the average engagement rate, so it's probably still best not to schedule your posts after midnight.

The takeaway?

**"Consistency is key. Whenever you start, give your audience something to look forward to."**



**JULIA MCCOY**  
CEO at Express Writers

Again, while the weekends do come out ahead, average variations in engagement throughout the week are small.

Don't let these figures stop you from posting – the best strategy is still to share content your audience likes, and share it often.

## Regionally

### North America - Time of day

In North America, evening and night posts once again bring in the best engagement.

Interestingly, while **posting between 5pm and 12am offers the best engagement rate**, the data shows a lower average *number* of engagements during this time.

This could be an indicator of smaller accounts posting more frequently at night, bringing in fewer total engagements, but a higher percentage of their total followers.

### Day of week

There's not much variation by day of the week for North American Instagram users.

**Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday brought in over 400 average engagements**, with a clear mid-week slump reaching **a low of 379.5 on Thursday**.

By engagement rate, the pattern of higher engagement on the weekends, again, is visible here.

## Time and day

### North America engagement rates: Time of day vs Day of week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
12:00	5.31%	5.17%	5.01%	5.14%	5.17%	5.38%	5.54%
1:00	5.17%	4.84%	4.67%	4.82%	4.87%	5.13%	5.23%
2:00	4.95%	4.82%	4.82%	4.74%	5.92%	4.96%	5.27%
3:00	4.86%	4.52%	5.97%	4.50%	4.78%	5.35%	5.26%
4:00	4.72%	4.59%	5.70%	4.46%	4.67%	4.81%	5.10%
5:00	4.55%	4.77%	4.61%	4.57%	4.52%	5.00%	5.13%
6:00	4.75%	4.61%	4.64%	4.51%	4.50%	4.65%	4.89%
7:00	4.77%	4.54%	4.59%	4.52%	4.57%	4.58%	4.94%
8:00	4.99%	4.78%	4.71%	4.61%	4.70%	4.76%	5.12%
9:00	5.03%	4.81%	4.74%	4.70%	4.79%	4.84%	5.22%
10:00	5.12%	4.82%	4.81%	4.72%	4.80%	4.94%	5.40%
11:00	5.25%	4.91%	4.92%	4.81%	4.82%	5.10%	5.58%
12:00	5.35%	4.98%	4.85%	4.78%	4.86%	5.15%	5.66%
1:00	5.24%	4.86%	4.82%	4.77%	4.88%	5.21%	5.89%
2:00	5.24%	4.93%	4.85%	4.82%	4.95%	5.41%	5.88%
3:00	5.28%	5.02%	4.89%	4.83%	4.96%	5.49%	5.99%
4:00	5.45%	5.12%	4.97%	4.95%	5.11%	5.63%	6.13%
5:00	5.60%	5.36%	5.24%	5.20%	5.25%	5.82%	6.29%
6:00	5.84%	5.42%	5.41%	5.35%	5.47%	5.91%	6.41%
7:00	5.83%	5.55%	5.47%	5.46%	5.51%	6.00%	6.42%
8:00	5.75%	5.61%	5.47%	5.48%	5.68%	6.00%	6.40%
9:00	5.67%	5.56%	5.47%	5.48%	5.60%	5.98%	6.24%
10:00	5.56%	5.31%	5.38%	5.49%	5.56%	5.93%	6.04%
11:00	5.41%	5.23%	5.24%	5.39%	5.67%	5.70%	5.82%

Throughout the week, **evening remains the most engaging time to post in North America.**

But strangely, Friday and Wednesday are exceptions to this rule. On these days, the 2-3am spike makes another appearance in both total number of engagements and engagement rate.

## By location

These trends apply to North America as a whole – but what happens when we break the data down by location? Here are the trends we found for engagement in North America's 5 top cities.

### Los Angeles

Evening is king for Angeleno Instagrammers. Average engagement was high around from 5-8pm, peaking again at 3am. By engagement rate, posts did well from 6pm right through until midnight, and 12pm was another mid-day sweet spot.

Through the week, Monday, Saturday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were high-performing days, both by average engagements and by rate.

### Atlanta

Midnight is a good time on Instagram in Atlanta – content shared around 11pm and 12am got good average engagement, and engagement rate.

By day of the week, Saturday and Sunday performed well. Wednesday and Friday also got high average engagement, while Mondays showed a high engagement rate.

### Kensington-Chinatown, Toronto, Canada

Mornings around 9-11 were highly engaging here, while 4pm and 10pm showed the best engagement rate.

Fridays, weekends, and Tuesdays showed highest average engagement. By engagement rate, the weeks were fairly even, although content shared on Sunday and Monday did get a slight boost.

### Miami

Instagram in Miami is pretty unusual! There was a huge spike in engagement in the morning here – 9am by average engagement, and 8am by engagement rate – that completely dwarfed all other activity.

Sunday was the best day for both average engagement and engagement rate, followed by Friday, Saturday, and Wednesday.

### Houston

In Houston, both average engagement and engagement rate peaked at 10am. Engagement spiked again around 1-2am, depending on how we calculated it. But in general, evenings do well here. Engagement rates stayed pretty decent from 9pm to 12am.

Again, weekends were busy on Instagram in Texas's most populated city – by both average engagement and engagement rate.

## United Kingdom and Ireland - Time of day

In terms of engagement rate, **5pm is the sweet spot for UK Instagram posts**, although engagement rates remain high until midnight.

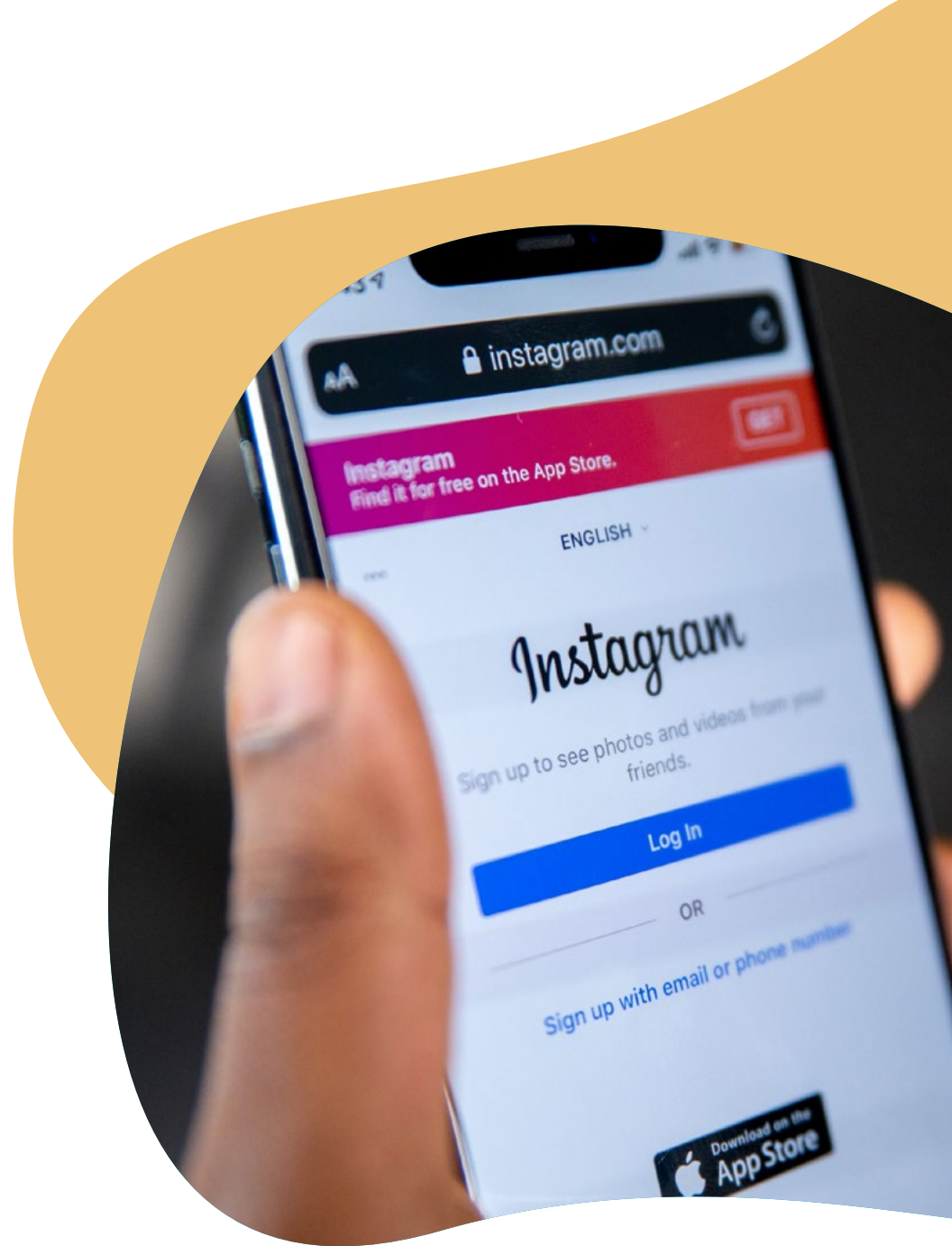
However, content shared at 2am, followed by 1pm, brought in the highest volume of engagements on average.

Despite these variations, the engagement rate shows that just like in the rest of the world, evening is the best time for Instagram engagement in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

## Day of week

Similarly to in North America, the UK/Ireland engagement rate rises on the weekend.

However, the most average engagements were found on Wednesday and Sunday.



## Time and day

### UK+I average engagement rates: Time of day vs Day of week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
12:00	5.72%	5.77%	6.37%	5.56%	5.43%	6.21%	5.65%
1:00	5.27%	5.34%	5.65%	5.44%	5.66%	5.82%	6.14%
2:00	5.66%	5.21%	5.17%	5.26%	5.73%	5.54%	5.70%
3:00	4.62%	5.98%	4.74%	4.80%	5.56%	5.54%	5.39%
4:00	4.87%	5.72%	4.62%	6.53%	5.83%	4.72%	4.64%
5:00	5.61%	5.37%	4.84%	4.77%	5.51%	5.74%	5.45%
6:00	5.40%	5.39%	5.24%	5.22%	5.10%	5.23%	5.85%
7:00	5.05%	4.81%	4.92%	4.76%	4.76%	4.83%	5.18%
8:00	4.80%	4.72%	4.60%	4.69%	4.72%	4.86%	5.13%
9:00	4.95%	4.74%	5.12%	4.70%	4.86%	4.95%	5.08%
10:00	5.11%	4.94%	4.79%	4.74%	5.22%	5.06%	5.25%
11:00	5.41%	4.99%	4.97%	4.94%	4.95%	5.26%	5.52%
12:00	5.21%	5.12%	5.15%	4.94%	4.99%	5.24%	5.56%
1:00	5.30%	5.15%	5.01%	5.07%	4.93%	5.34%	5.68%
2:00	5.15%	5.15%	5.23%	5.08%	5.02%	5.57%	5.90%
3:00	5.32%	5.08%	5.13%	5.20%	5.09%	5.57%	5.75%
4:00	5.49%	5.37%	5.29%	5.18%	5.32%	5.72%	6.22%
5:00	5.79%	5.60%	5.51%	5.59%	5.40%	5.86%	6.35%
6:00	5.96%	5.81%	5.73%	5.69%	5.88%	6.22%	6.36%
7:00	5.94%	5.76%	5.79%	5.65%	5.61%	6.01%	6.33%
8:00	5.79%	5.52%	5.54%	5.61%	5.70%	6.01%	6.41%
9:00	5.74%	5.76%	5.51%	5.63%	5.76%	5.94%	6.28%
10:00	5.74%	5.64%	5.49%	5.55%	5.77%	6.16%	6.11%
11:00	5.69%	5.74%	5.42%	5.74%	5.75%	5.69%	5.93%

Through the week, we see upticks in UK/Ireland engagement around mid-afternoon and late at night.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, average engagements jump around 1pm. We also tend to see another peak between 10pm and 2am.

However, the engagement rate tends to follow a steady pattern. Much like the global and North American data, **the UK/Ireland engagement rate sinks through mid-day, then rises in the evening, with an occasional spike late at night.**

## By location

Here are the most engaging times to post daily and weekly, for each of the UK and Ireland's top 5 locations.

### London

In the UK's largest city, content posted at 12pm, 9pm, and 1am saw the most average engagements. By engagement rate, 9pm remained a good choice, with a noticeable dip at 2pm.

Wednesday, Saturday and Monday were the most engaging days to post here. However, Saturday and Sunday offered the best engagement rate.

### Manchester

Mancunians also love their nighttime Instagramming. Posts shared at 9pm, 11pm, and 3am saw the highest engagement.

They also seem to be staying up late – the highest engagement rate was found at 3am, although 6-11pm also performed well.

Wednesday and Tuesday are the top days here, both by average engagement and engagement rate.

### Keighley

By average engagement, 4am was the standout here, followed by 5pm. Those times also showed the best engagement rate, followed by 7pm.

Engagement was pretty even throughout the week in Keighley, although Friday-Monday did have a slight edge.

### Peckham

Highly engaging times in Peckham were late at night, or towards late afternoon. By engagement rate, 4pm and 9pm were two standouts, but all evening is a pretty safe bet.

Wednesday, Sunday, and Monday offered the highest average engagement, but Sunday and Tuesday showed the best engagement rate.

### Dublin

Late-night or early-evening posts got engagement in Dublin. 1am and 6pm were the average engagement sweet spots, while 5pm and 11pm saw the highest engagement rate.

This is another city where engagement held pretty steady throughout the week. However, Saturday did come out on top, both by average engagement and engagement rate.



## TIPS + TRICKS

# The best time to post (for you)

“Quality is always a priority over quantity. Never cut corners in terms of quality just to get something out daily.”



MARK QUADROS

**Mention**

This data was collected from millions of Instagram posts across the world. It gives us a general picture of when Instagram posts bring in the most engagement – but that doesn’t mean these times are best for your audience or brand.

Trying to figure out what’s the best day and time for your account? Here are a few questions to ask yourself.

### **When are your followers most active?**

This may be very different from the global and regional average. Use Instagram’s native analytics to check it out.

### **Where is your community located?**

If many of your followers are in a different time zone than you, that will influence when you post. This is another task for Instagram’s in-app analytics.

### **Is your content especially relevant to a particular time of day?**

For example, a beverage company might prefer to post about coffee in the morning, and herbal tea at night.

### **Test, test, test!**

These questions are a great way to get started, but to get real answers, examine your best-performing posts. Are there any patterns to when they were published?

## Highlights

Posts shared in the evening and at night get the most engagement

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Instagram engagement rates tend to be highest on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday

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Engagement stays pretty stable across the week in North America, with a slight peak in engagement rates on Sundays - and especially so on Sunday evenings

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In the United Kingdom and Ireland, there’s often an early afternoon peak in engagement

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Engagement also tends to spike late at night, between 12am and 2am

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# Where in the world are Instagram users?

Instagram is more global than ever before. It's not the top social network everywhere just yet, but in many parts of the world, it's growing fast!

We analyzed millions of geotags to get the scoop on which cities and countries are Instagram hot spots, with sometimes surprising results!

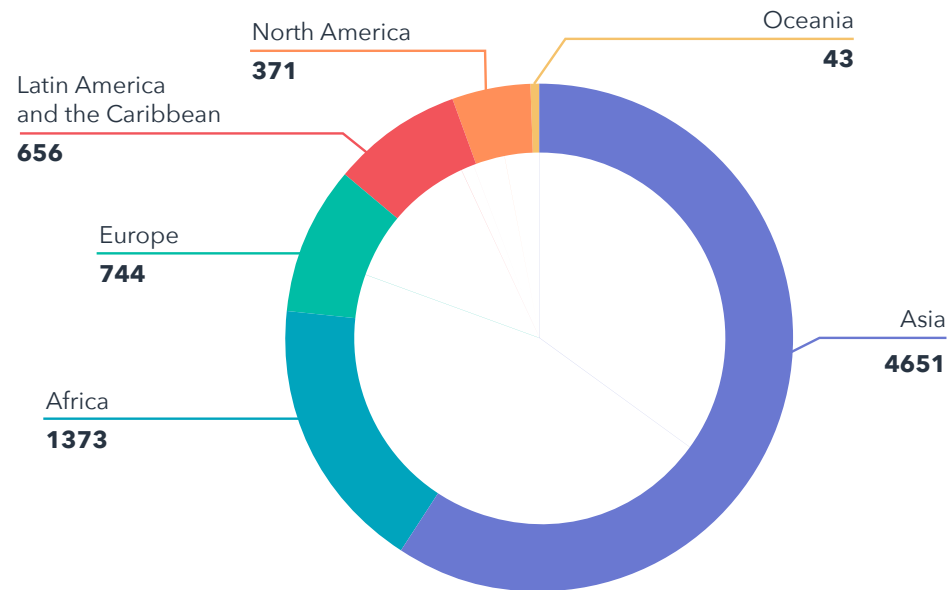
“Create a location tag for your business. Once people start to check into it, you can see all posts tagged with it and learn how your local community is talking about your business.”



MARK QUADROS  
Mention

## Globally

Global population by continent as of mid-2021 (in millions)



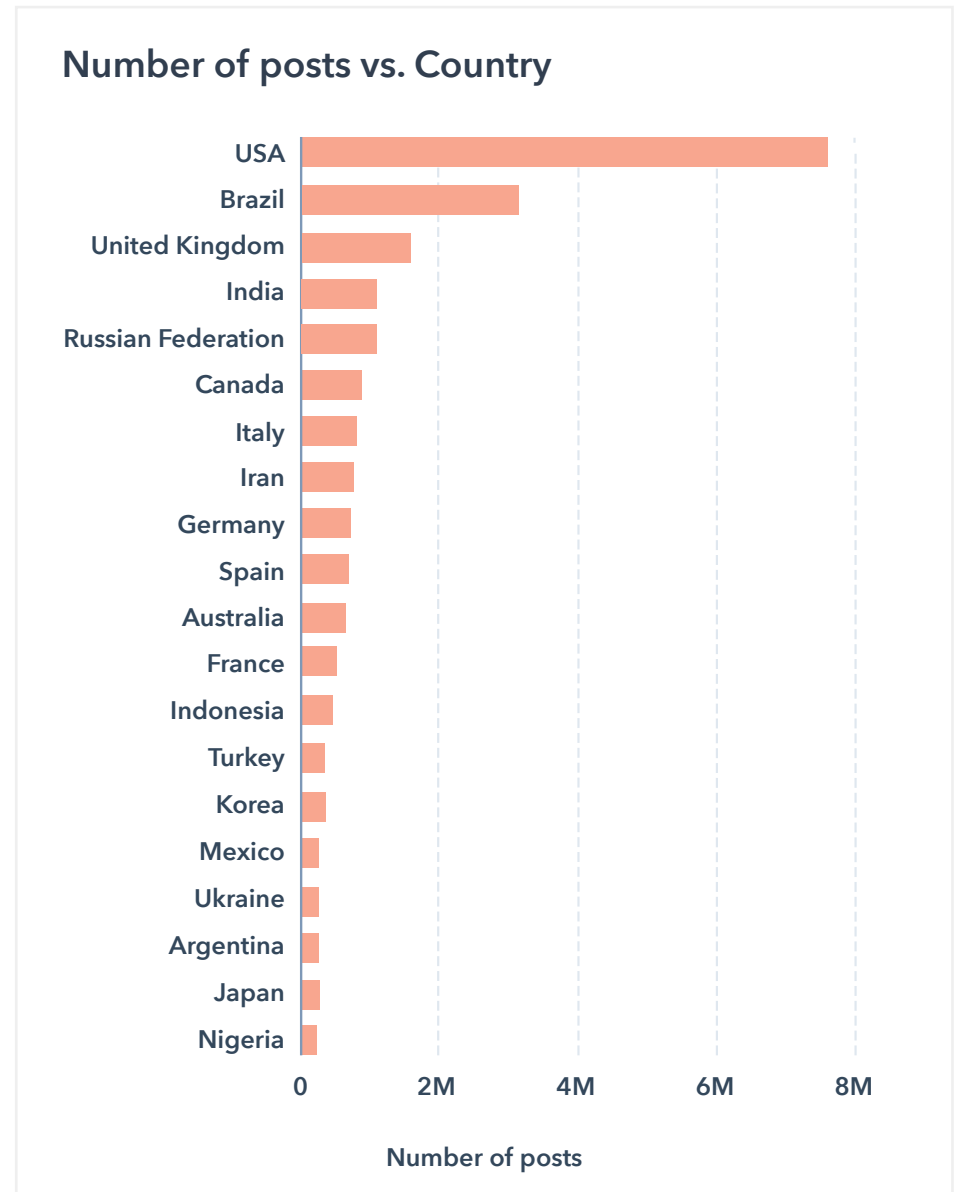
Instagram is used all over the world – but it’s not equally popular in every region. **The majority of Instagram users are in the Americas (49.4%) and Europe (28.7%).**

By contrast, Instagram is less popular in Asia, where platforms like WeChat, Line, TikTok, and Weitao provide stiff competition. However, there could be some users in these seemingly less-popular locations who are choosing not to add a location tag to their posts.

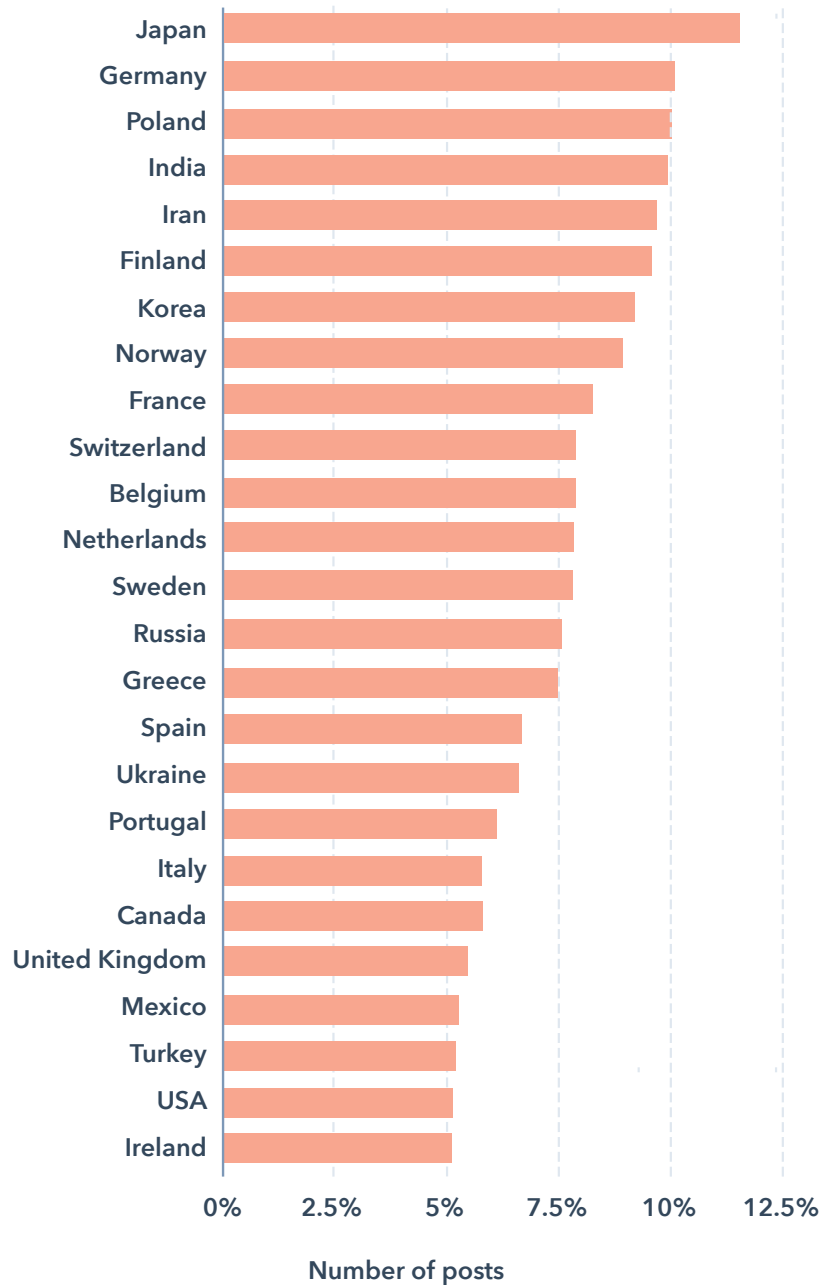
There were even 498 posts from Antarctica – now that’s global reach!

**The most Instagram posts come from the United States, followed by Brazil.** That makes sense, because they’re [the most populous countries](#) in the Americas. The UK, Europe’s [most-populous](#) English-speaking country, holds third place.

## What Countries do Instagram posts come from?

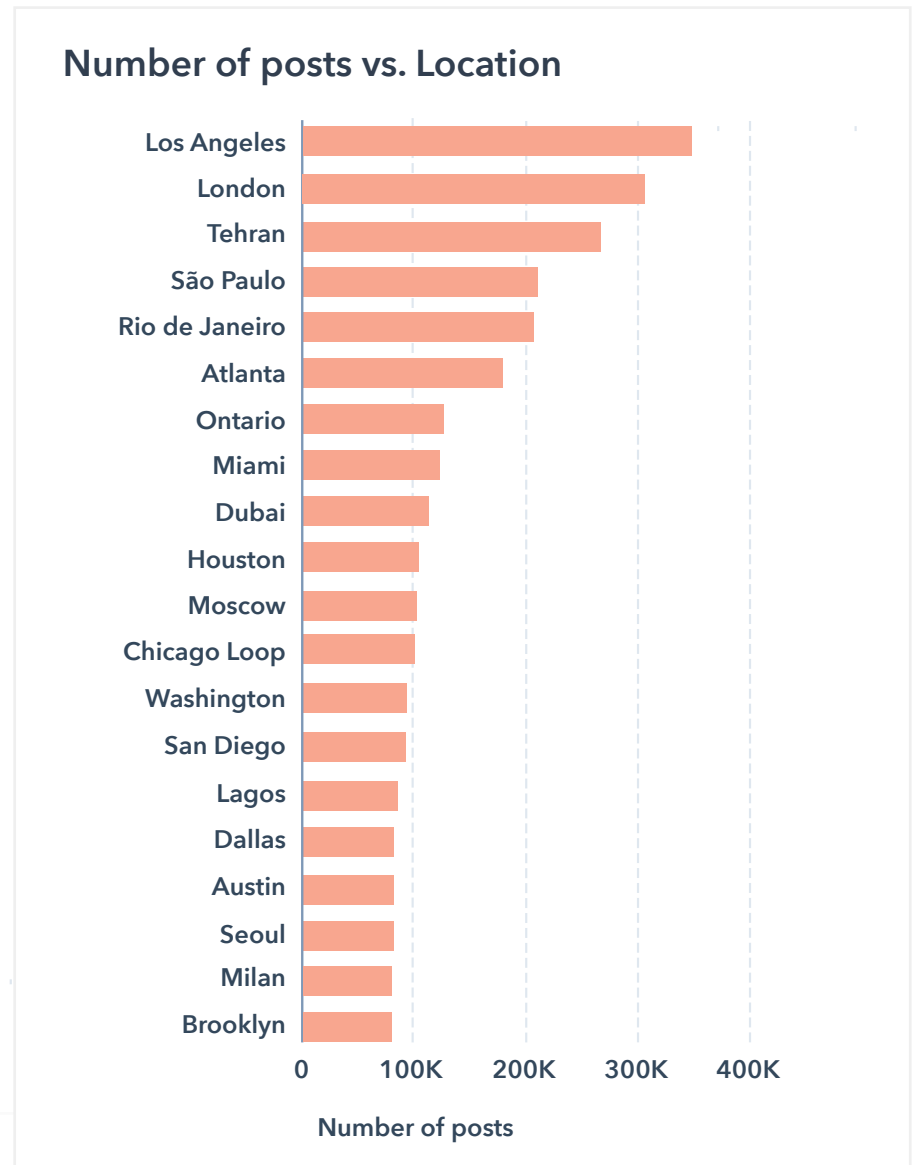


### Average engagement rate vs. Country



However, **the highest engagement is found in Japan, Germany, and Poland.** Uniquely, Indian Instagrammers share both a high volume of posts, and a high rate of engagement.

### Which Cities do Instagram posts come from?



Overall, 20 of the top 50 global cities are in the United States.

For the 2nd year in a row, **the most posted-from city is Los Angeles** – a town that’s pretty much synonymous with influencer culture.

But shockingly, **New York City has dropped from 2nd to just 20th place**. For one of the most important cities in the world, this is a confusing, and surprising, result. Is it possible that people are fleeing this densely populated urban center due to concerns about COVID-19?

Elsewhere in the Top 50, Atlanta has moved up from 8th to 6th.

Tehran, Iran is a new name in this year’s data, and it’s coming in strong at 3rd place!

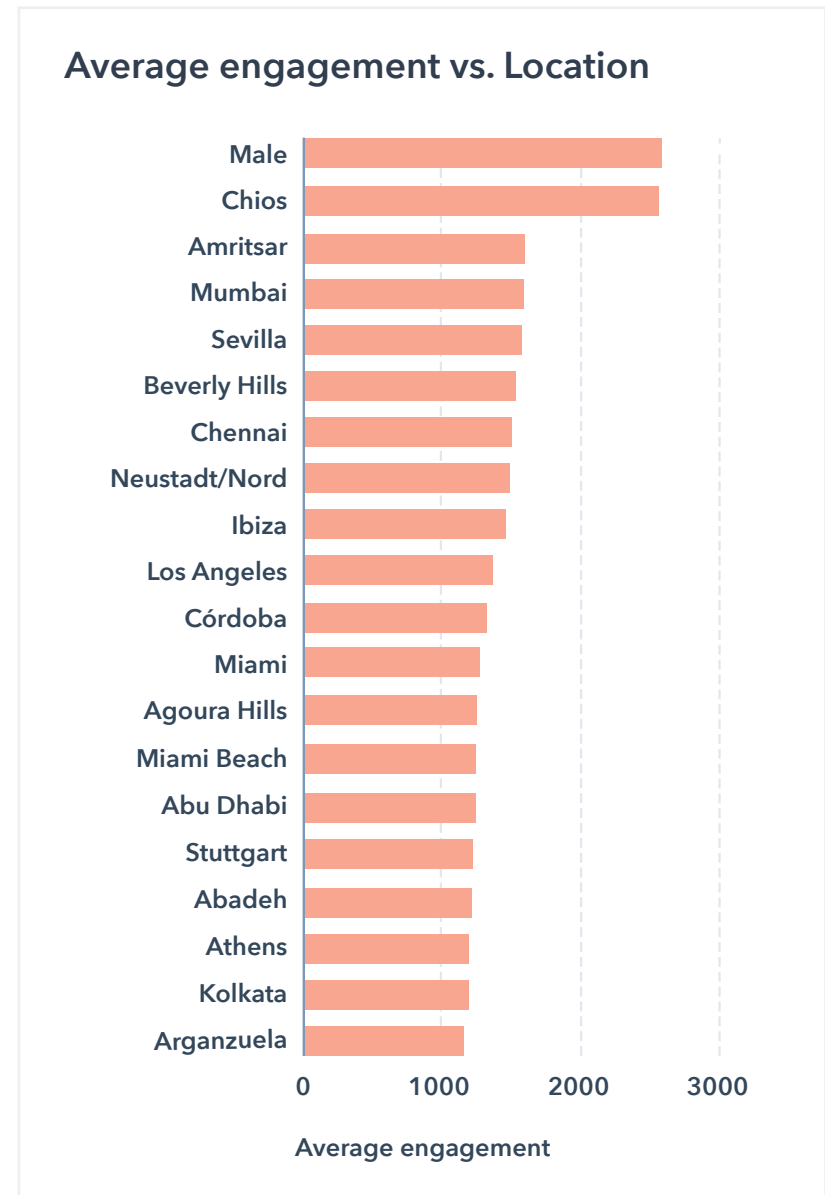
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Malé – the capital of the Maldives – saw the highest engagement rate. As we all know, this is a bikini-shoot fave, featuring those iconic ocean-top huts.

**Lots of Indian cities also made it into the top 50**, reflecting the high engagement of users here.

While LA was top for number of posts, it was just 10th in terms of engagement, reflecting the trends for overall lower engagement in North America.

## Cities by Engagement



## TIPS + TRICKS

# Engaging a global audience

As you can see, Instagram is more international than ever. That means your followers are more likely to come from many different nations, languages, and cultures.

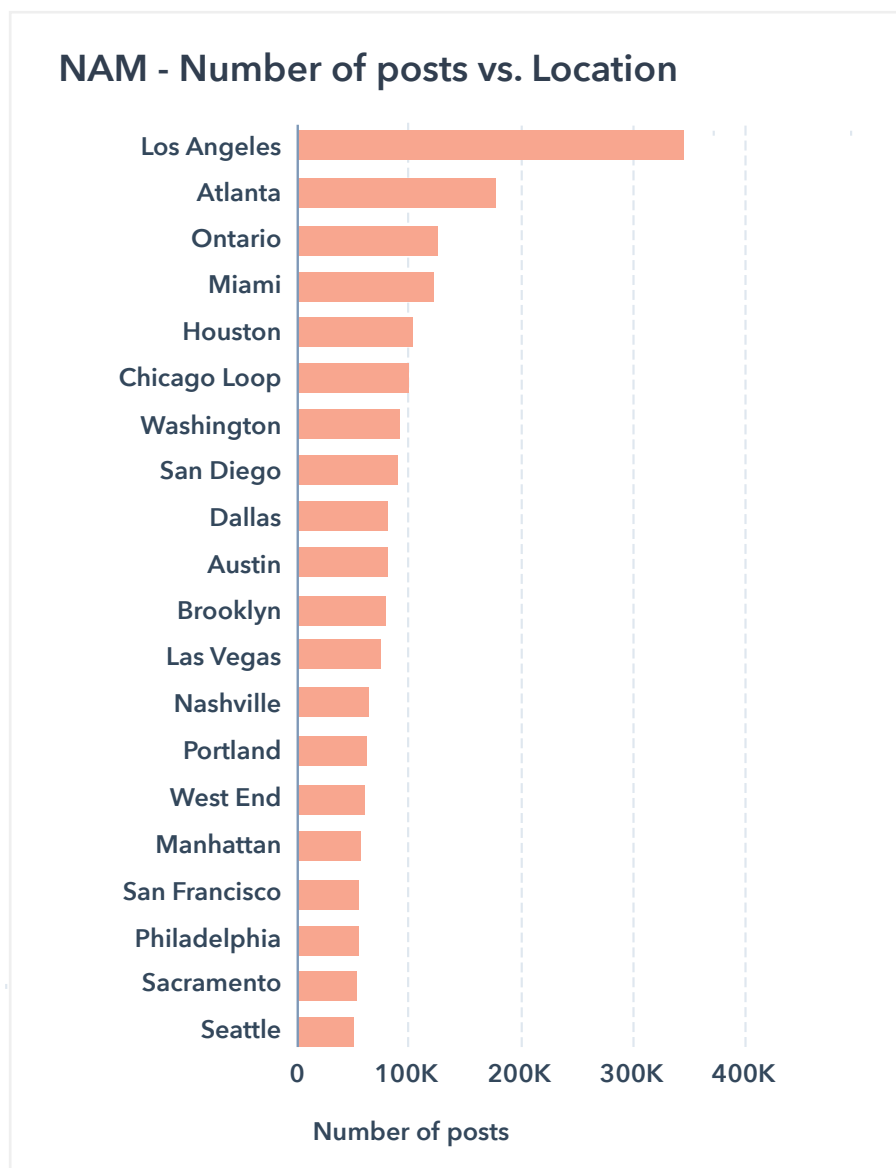
Here are [some tips](#) for gaining – and keeping – a globally diverse audience.

- Use analytics to figure out where your users are, so that you can better cater to them. Investigating your audience in this way will help you understand important traits like the languages these users speak, and their demographic breakdown (for example, maybe your Thai followers are mostly young women).
- Try social listening tools like Mention to understand the unique ways people use social media in these regions. What do they tend to share about? Are there any locally-specific emoji, tags, or slang terms they use?
- Use clear, simple language to minimize any translation errors. Obviously, don't dumb it down, but it's best to be direct, avoid idioms, and write at an accessible reading level – all good ideas in any language!
- If you have a large audience in specific regions (or if you're looking to grow one) you may want to create separate accounts for localized, region-specific content.



# Regionally

## Where are people using Instagram in North America?



**Los Angeles holds on to its #1 spot** here, and Atlanta, Miami, and Houston were among the other most posted-from North American cities. As suggested by the global data, New York and its boroughs have completely dropped out of the top 5 cities since last year – surely one of 2022’s most confusing trends.

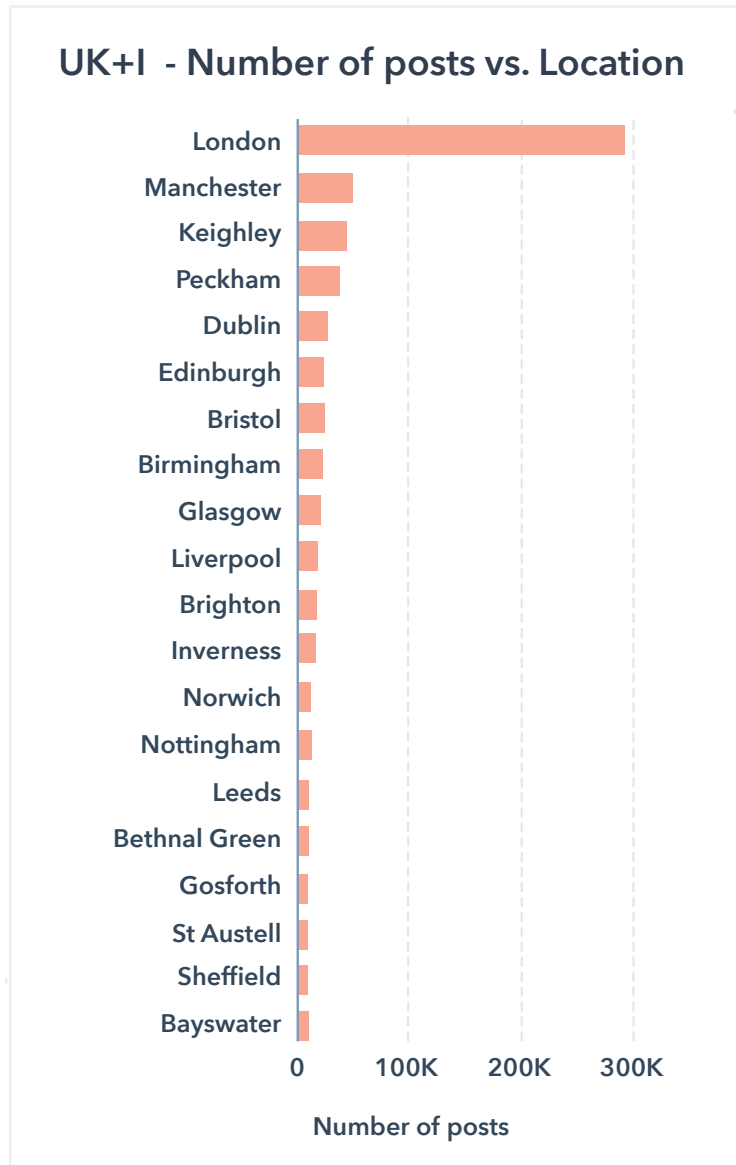
The town of Brookline, Massachusetts is the surprising winner for the highest number of engagements per post. This list holds some of the bigger names, like Los Angeles, but overall plenty of smaller neighborhoods and districts make an appearance.

Here, the trend is even more pronounced – undeniably, the **highest engagement rate is found in smaller, more rural cities**. It’s possible that some of these were related to high-profile news incidents, like a 1976 Chowchilla kidnapping that continues to hold media attention decades later.

Could these small communities be using Instagram differently? Perhaps rural Instagrammers use the platform to stay connected to neighbors, rather than promote brands and business.



## Where are people using Instagram in the United Kingdom and Ireland?



It's not even close – by far **the most Instagram posts come from London**. Trailing behind in second place is Manchester, then Keighley (Bradford). Does this mean we can settle the age-old debate of whether [Birmingham or Manchester is the UK's second city?](#)

Unsurprisingly, London, two of its boroughs, and Manchester also boasted the highest amount of engagements per post.

Calculated by engagement rate, we again see smaller cities and London boroughs leading the charge. Here, Shadwell, one of London's coolest boroughs, brought in the highest average engagement rate per post.

But just like in North America, the highest engagement rate in the United Kingdom and Ireland seems to come from smaller cities and boroughs.

### Highlights

Most Instagram users are in Europe and the Americas, with lower uptake in Asia

Posts from New York City have dropped dramatically, from 2nd to 20th place

United States and Brazil are the most posted-from, but Japan, Germany, and Poland offer highest engagement

Smaller, and rural communities tend to show higher engagement

## Conclusion

Congratulations! If you've made it to the end of this report, you've got a deep understanding of what Instagram looks like in 2022.

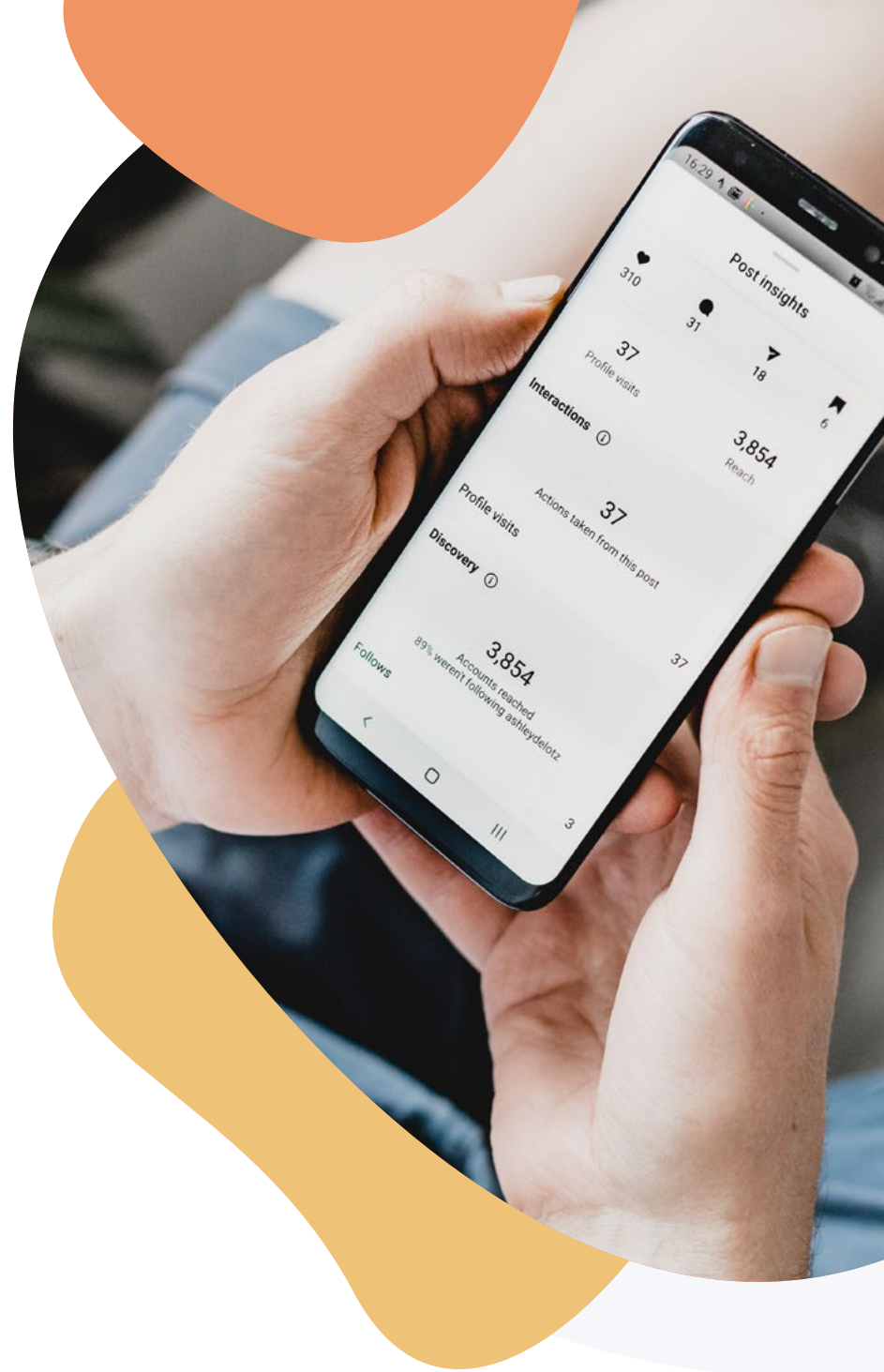
Now, it's time to translate that knowledge into action. We've shared some tips and tricks along the way, but it's always a good time to sharpen your social media skills.

Luckily, there's a wealth of resources out there to help you. Might we suggest some favorites?

Wherever you are in your journey, Hubspot's [Instagram Marketing Guide](#) and Mention's [Starter Guide to Instagram Marketing](#) are packed with information to help you get the results you want.

Instagram is a wild, wonderful, and exciting place. But at the end of the day, it's driven by a simple principle – sharing content that users find interesting, informative, and inspiring.

With this much data on Instagram in 2022, you're ready to do just that.



*cxld*

Report created in collaboration with CXD Studio.  
[www.cxd.studio](http://www.cxd.studio) • [hello@cxd.studio](mailto:hello@cxd.studio)