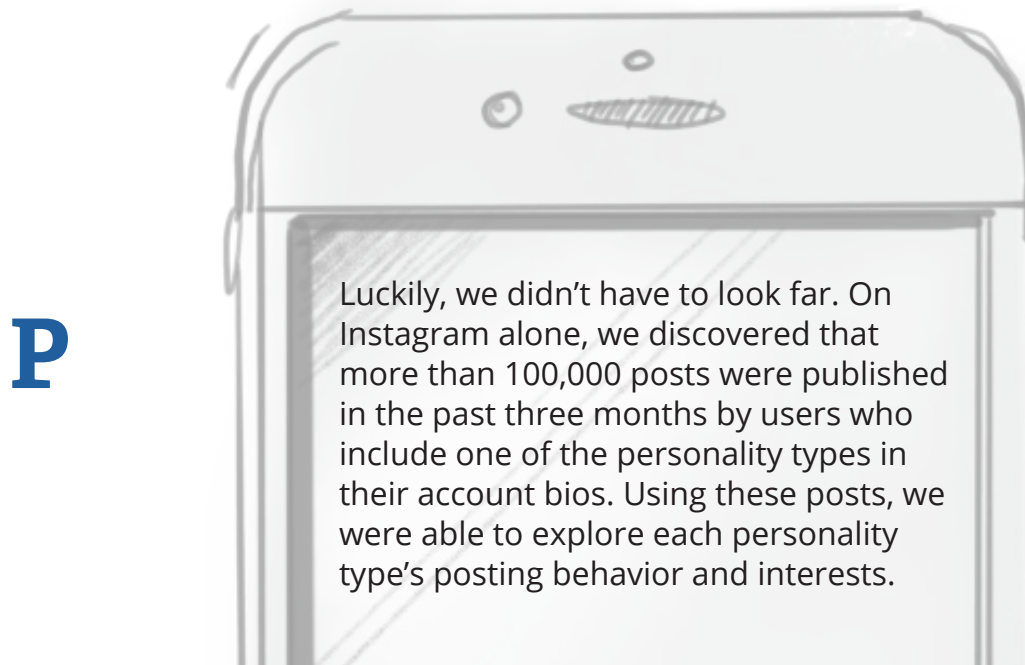




The Psychology of Social: Can Personality Types Predict Interests and Behavior?

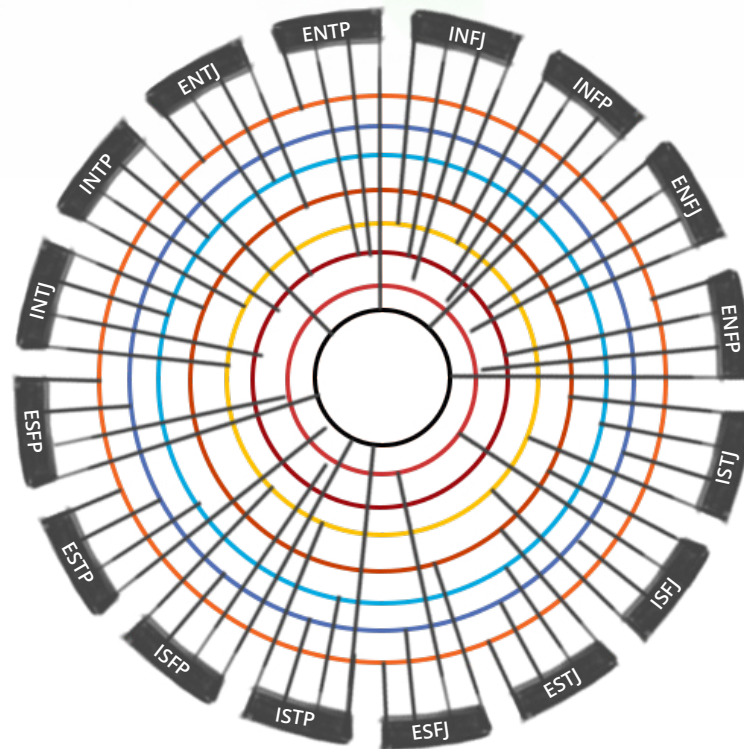
E F How your Personality Type Impacts your Instagram Posts

J I f you are one of the two million people worldwide who have taken the Myers Briggs® assessment each year, you already know how much information four letters can convey about your personality.¹ Through your answers to 93 questions, the assessment tells you whether you prefer working alone or in groups, whether you are more emotional or logical, organized or impulsive—even what career paths suit your personality best.² Realizing the depth of information the test can predict about our offline selves, we were interested in looking at how well the test could predict how we interact online.



The 16 types are ultimately based on four conflicting personality traits:

- **Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I):** Do you thrive on being around people or are you most comfortable on your own?
- **Sensing (S) or Intuition (N):** Do you pay more attention to the physical reality surrounding you or do you read into meaning between the lines?
- **Thinking (T) or Feeling (F):** Do you make decisions based on the facts or the people affected?
- **Judging (J) or Perceiving (P):** Do you prefer concrete plans or keeping your options open?



Why Do People Love Myers Briggs®?

That CPP, the company that owns the test, brings in \$20 million each year is a testament to the vast popularity of Myers Briggs®.¹ So why is self-identifying by Myers Briggs® personality type so popular on social? To put it simply, people love to talk about themselves. How many Facebook posts have you seen in the past week from friends declaring which Star Wars character is most like them or what career they are meant for?

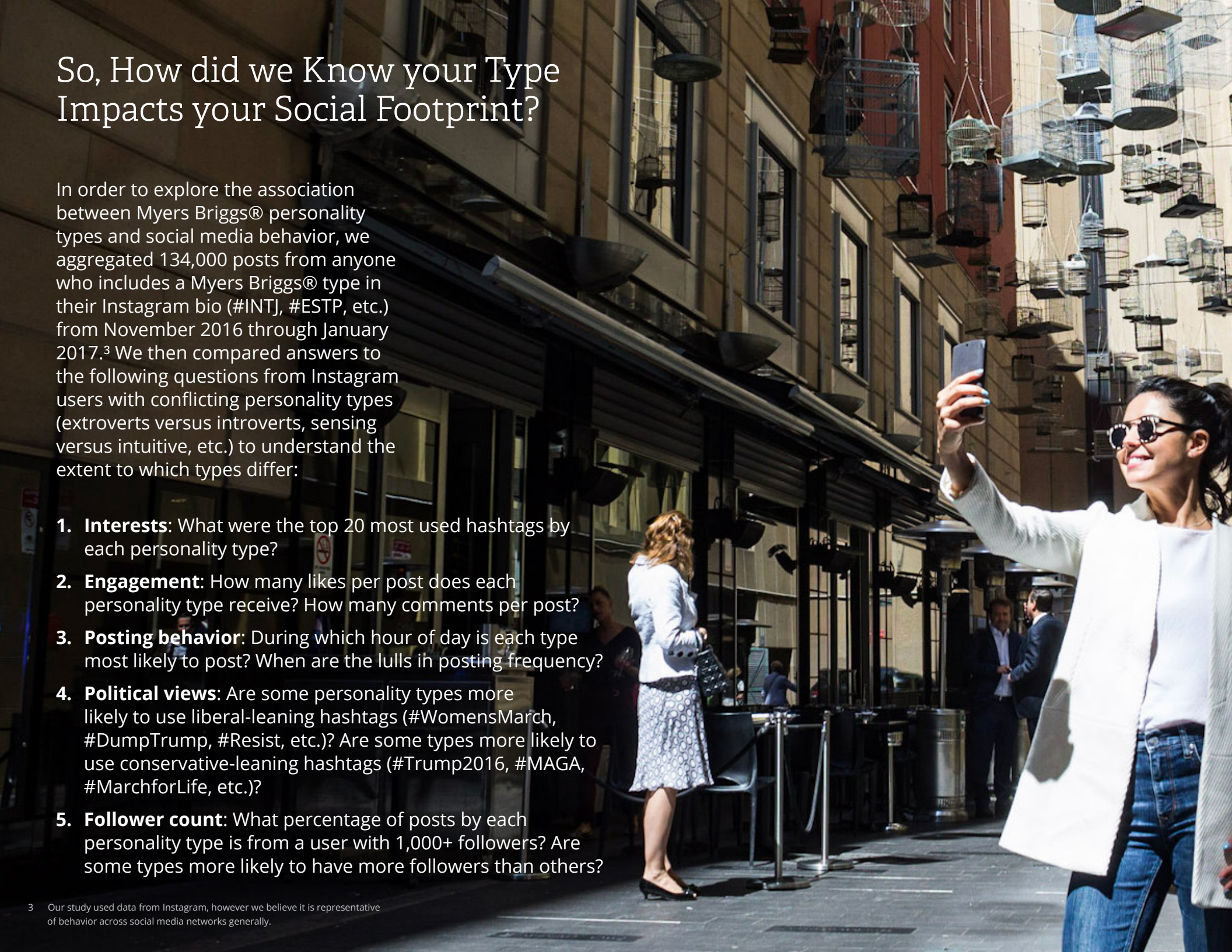
Though many criticize Myers Briggs® for failing to take into account that people may change from one type to another over the course of a lifetime, the test is still able to predict behavior, possibly because those who self-identify on social have recently taken the test. While someone might change from introverted to extroverted over the course of several years, their interests and communication styles will likely change in tandem with their personality. So, if you have an INFP in your Instagram bio today, you're still likely to exhibit key behaviors that differ from someone with an extroverted or judging personality type.²

So, How did we Know your Type Impacts your Social Footprint?

In order to explore the association between Myers Briggs® personality types and social media behavior, we aggregated 134,000 posts from anyone who includes a Myers Briggs® type in their Instagram bio (#INTJ, #ESTP, etc.) from November 2016 through January 2017.³ We then compared answers to the following questions from Instagram users with conflicting personality types (extroverts versus introverts, sensing versus intuitive, etc.) to understand the extent to which types differ:

1. **Interests:** What were the top 20 most used hashtags by each personality type?
2. **Engagement:** How many likes per post does each personality type receive? How many comments per post?
3. **Posting behavior:** During which hour of day is each type most likely to post? When are the lulls in posting frequency?
4. **Political views:** Are some personality types more likely to use liberal-leaning hashtags (#WomensMarch, #DumpTrump, #Resist, etc.)? Are some types more likely to use conservative-leaning hashtags (#Trump2016, #MAGA, #MarchforLife, etc.)?
5. **Follower count:** What percentage of posts by each personality type is from a user with 1,000+ followers? Are some types more likely to have more followers than others?

3 Our study used data from Instagram, however we believe it is representative of behavior across social media networks generally.



What Did We Find?

One of the most significant findings we uncovered is that certain personality types are much more active on social media than others. For example, Myers Briggs® reports that ESFJs comprise 12% of the US population, yet less than 1% of Instagram posts by those who identify as any one of the sixteen personality types are posted by ESFJs. This means that ESFJs are either less likely to post or less likely to self-identify. Meanwhile, INFPs, who make up about 4% of the population, account for 20% of all posts from self-identifying personality types on Instagram.

We also found differences in interests, post engagement, posting behavior, political viewpoints, and follower count when comparing the four conflicting personality traits to one another. For example, extroverts are more likely than introverts to post late at night, between the hours of 10pm and midnight. Though posting late may be an expected behavior from extroverts, we also uncovered some differences that were less expected.

Unique hashtags used by each type

Hashtags that appear among top 20 terms used by each personality type, but not by any other types.

	ESTJ	ESTP	ENTP		
	#Indonesia	#Black	#Doodles		
ISTJ	INTJ	INTP	ISFJ	INFJ	
#Cosplay	#Landscape	#InstaArt	#Japan	#Poetry	
	ESFJ	ESFP	ISFP	INFP	
	#Travelgram	#FanArt	#Tumblr	#Artwork	

In the following section, we'll explore the expected and unexpected nuances in behavior from introverts, extroverts, sensors, intuitives, feelers, thinkers, judges, and perceivers.

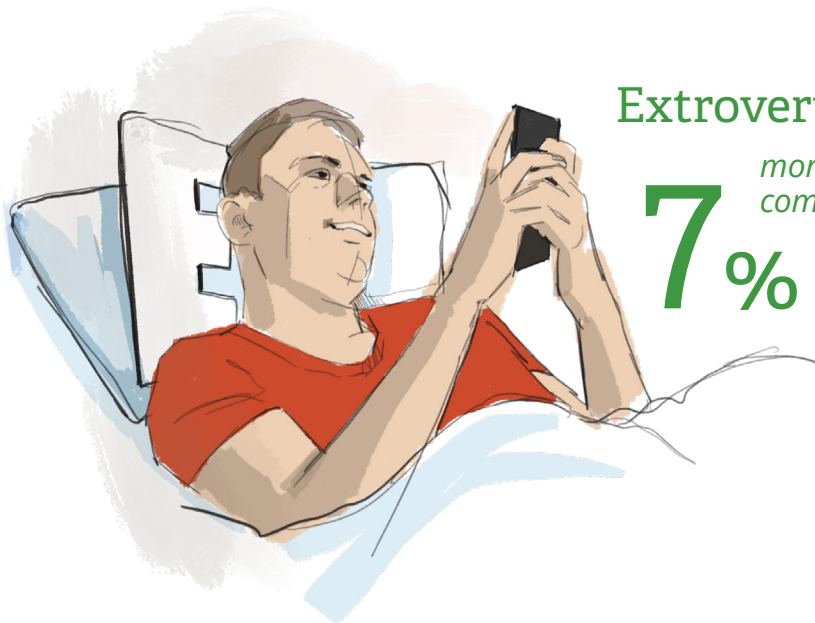
Introverts vs. Extroverts



Introverts are those that get their energy primarily from within, while extroverts prefer to get their energy from the people around them. Introverts tend to prefer working alone, while extroverts prefer working in groups of people.

Introverts

3% *more likes*



Extroverts

7% *more comments*

INTROVERTS LOVE ART, EXTROVERTS LOVE SELFIES

The data showed that introverts are much more likely than extroverts to post art-related hashtags. #Doodle, #illustration, #anime, and #draw appear in the top twenty most used hashtags by introverts but do not appear in the top 20 used by extroverts.

Extroverts are much more likely than introverts to post selfies and to use the hashtags #photooftheday and #instadaily, focusing on themselves as subjects rather than their work.

INTROVERTS GET LIKES, EXTROVERTS GET CONVERSATION AND FOLLOWERS

While introverts receive slightly more likes per post compared to self-identifying extroverts, extroverts receive an average of 7% more comments per post. Twenty-two percent of extroverts have over 1,000 followers, whereas only 18% of introverts have more than 1,000 followers.

EXTROVERTS: POSTING EARLY AND LATE

Extroverts are more likely to post earlier in the day and later at night, while introverts post mostly between 11 am and 8 pm. This may signal that extroverts are more likely to grab their phone and post immediately when waking up, and late-night posting by extroverts could be attributed to a higher volume of “going out” posts past 10 pm.

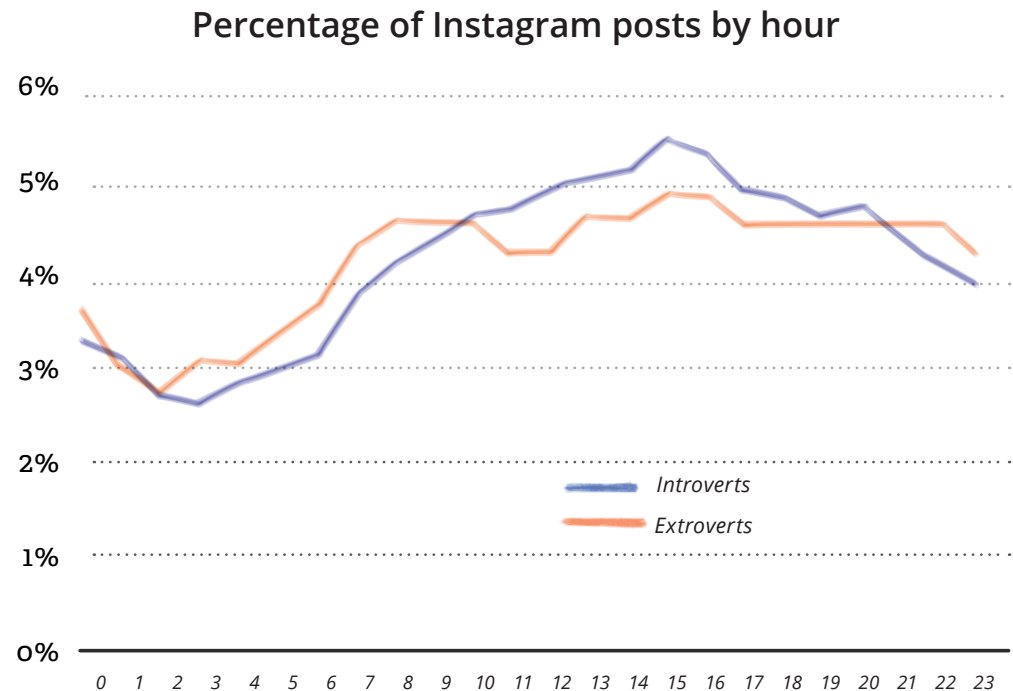
INTROVERTS LEAN LEFT

Introverts are more likely to discuss politics online than extroverts, and are much more likely to use liberal hashtags than conservative hashtags. Liberal hashtags on Instagram are more popular in general—about 3% of Instagram posts include one of the top 25 liberal or top 25 conservative hashtags. However, introverts are more liberal than the average Instagram user.



Introverts are more likely to discuss politics online than extroverts.

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Sensing vs. Intuition

Sensing personality types have more difficulty extrapolating meaning embedded in metaphors or symbolism, while intuitive personality types find it easy to read between the lines. Sensors prefer to see the world as it is rather than look for a deeper meaning.

Intuitives

8% *more comments*

6% *more likes*



Intuitives get engagement,
sensors get followers.



INTUITIVES ARE CREATIVES

#Artist, #doodle, and #inspiration appeared in the top twenty most used hashtags by people with intuitive personality types, but not in the top twenty terms used by sensing personality types. Intuitive personality types are drawn to metaphor, which may explain why they are more interested in art than sensing personality types, who in general are more drawn to hard facts than information that can be interpreted in multiple ways.

INTUITIVES GET ENGAGEMENT, SENSORS GET FOLLOWERS

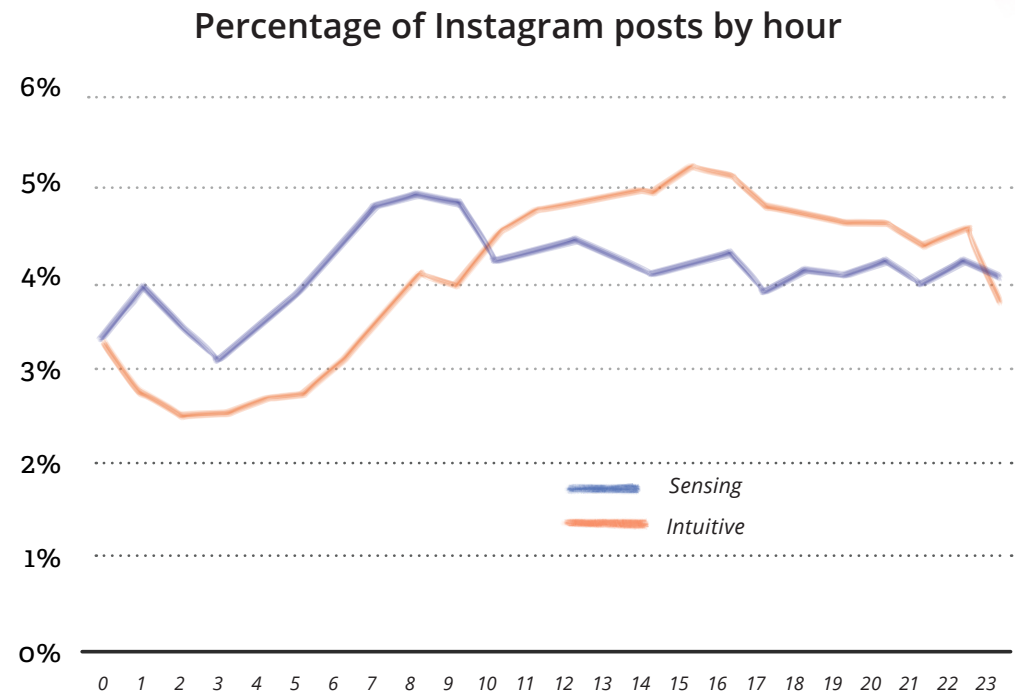
Those with intuitive personality types receive 6% more likes and 8% more comments per post, on average, than those with sensing personality types. Sensing personality types, on the other hand, are most likely to have 1,000+ followers.

INTUITIVES POST EARLY, THEN LET SENSING TAKE OVER

People with sensing personality types are much more likely to post earlier in the day compared to people with intuitive personality types. Peak posting hours for sensing personality types is 6-10 am, while peak posting hours for intuitive personality types is 2-4 pm.

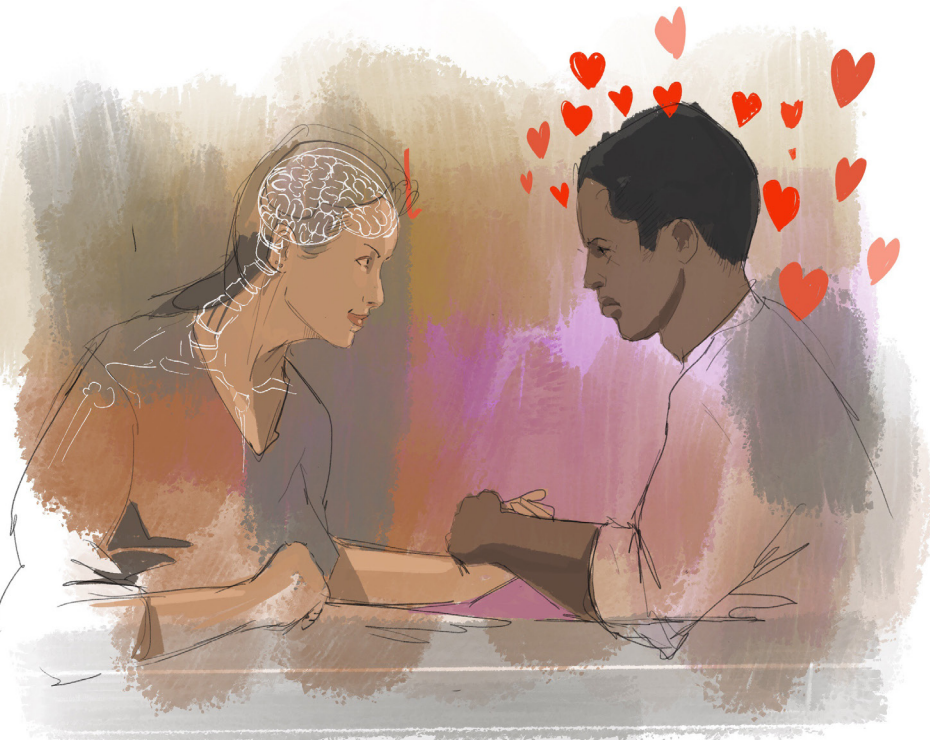
SENSING TYPES ARE MORE CONSERVATIVE

People with sensing personality types are the least likely to discuss politics on Instagram, but when they do, they are the most likely to use conservative hashtags rather than liberal hashtags.



Thinking vs. Feeling

When making decisions, thinking types tend to rely on hard logic, while feeling types tend to think more about the impact of the decision on the people affected. While thinkers are prone to decide what is fair, feelers prefer to decide what is most compassionate.²



Feelers

16% more comments
10% more likes

FEELERS LOVE TO LOVE

The hashtag #love is far more commonly used by feeling personality types compared to thinkers. #Love appeared in three times more posts by feeling personality types compared to thinking types.

THINKERS LACK ENGAGEMENT

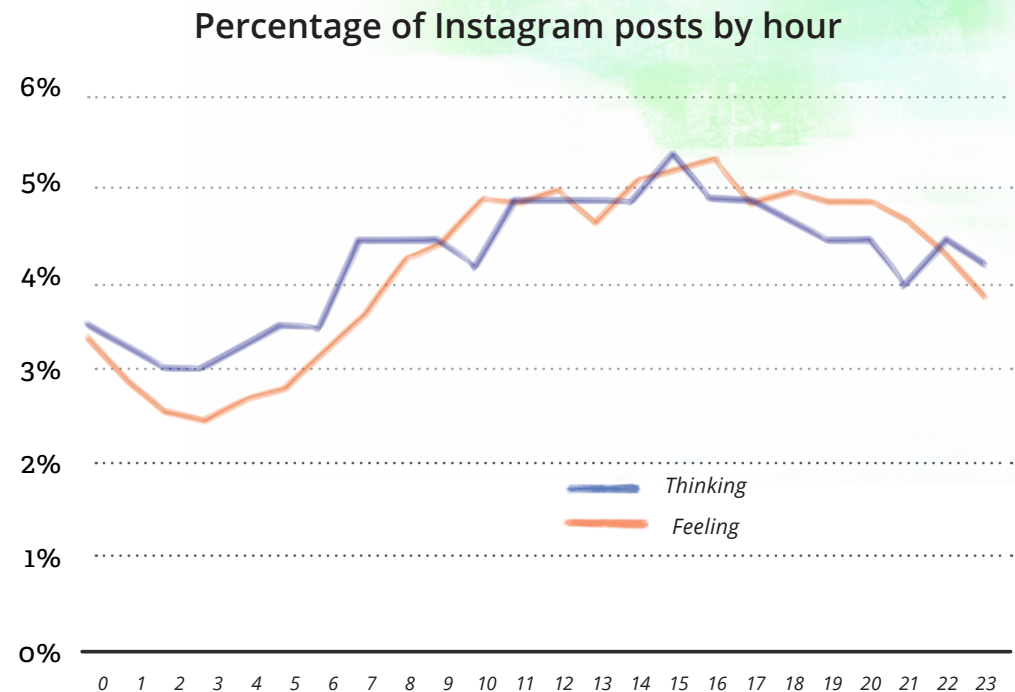
Of all four conflicting personality types, the largest difference in engagement is seen in those with thinking personality types versus those with feeling personality types. Thinkers receive the least likes per post and the least comments per post, while feelers receive the most engagements per post. No difference was seen in follower counts for those with thinking versus feeling personality types.

THINKERS ARE EARLY RISERS

Whether someone is a thinking or feeling personality type has less significant impact on what time of day they are most likely to tweet compared to other personality traits. However, those with thinking personality types are slightly more likely to tweet very early in the morning, between the hours of 2 and 7 am, compared to feeling personality types.

FEELING LEAN EVEN FURTHER LEFT

People with feeling personality types are much more likely to use liberal-leaning hashtags compared to those with thinking personality types. Being a feeling personality type rather than thinking is the biggest indicator of liberalism.



Judging vs. Perceiving

People who fall into the judging categories tend to be organized and detail-oriented, while perceiving types stray away from strict planning.²

Perceivers

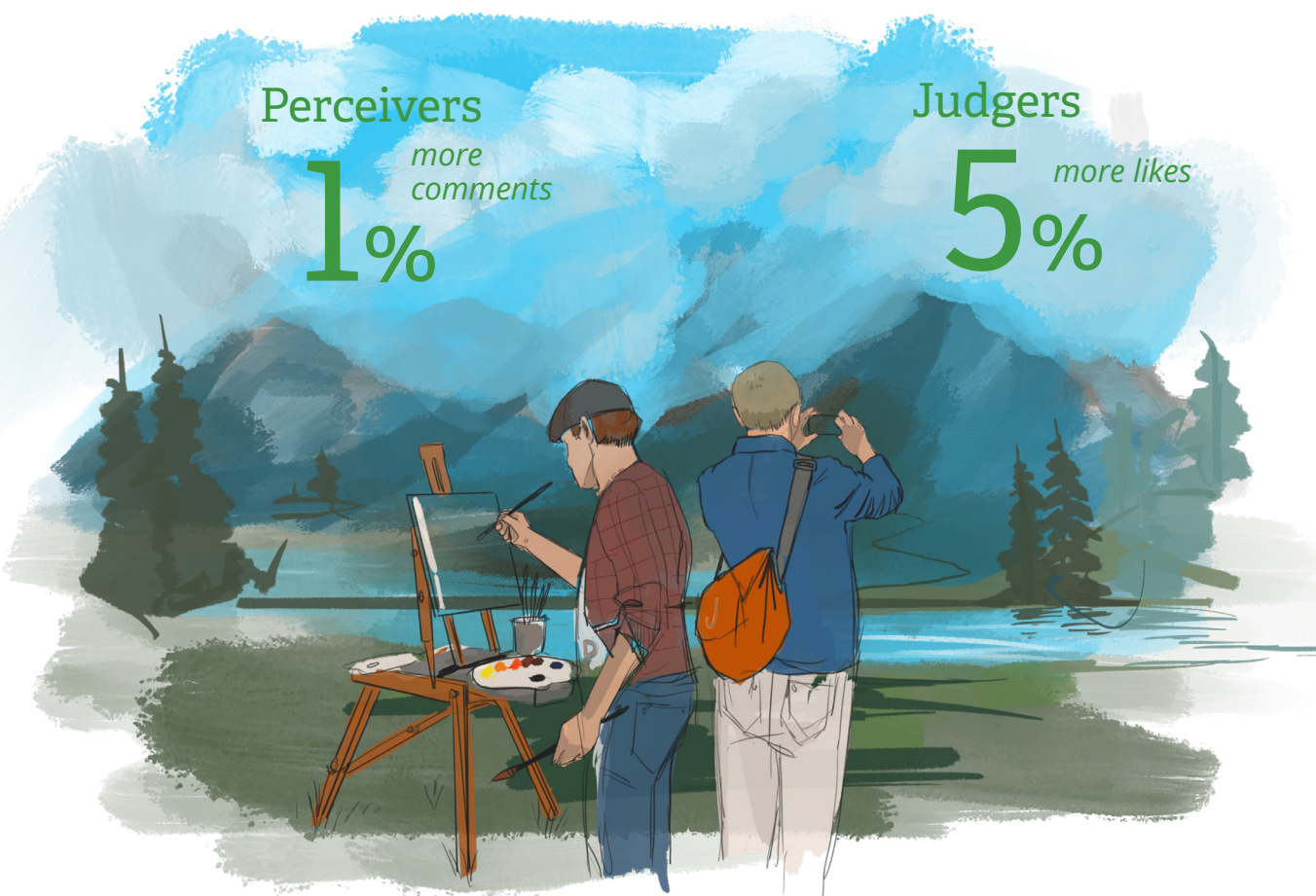
1%

more
comments

Judgers

5%

more likes



PERCEIVERS ARE ARTISTS, JUDGERS PREFER FOOD & TRAVEL

Hashtags related to art are much more commonly used by people who fall under perceiving personality types. #Art, #drawing, #sketch, #illustration, #anime, #draw, and #sketchbook are all much more commonly used by perceiving personalities than judging personalities. Judgers commonly use #picoftheday, #travel, and #food, whereas none of those hashtags appear in the most common hashtags used by perceivers.

JUDGERS HAVE MORE LIKES & FOLLOWERS

While there is little difference in number of comments per post for photos and videos shared by judging personality types compared to perceiving personality types, judgers receive slightly more likes per post. Those with judging personality types are also more likely than those with perceiving personality types to have more than 1,000 followers.

PERCEIVING VERSUS JUDGING HAS NO IMPACT ON POSTING BEHAVIOR

Whether a person falls under a judging or perceiving personality type appears to have no impact on the time of day that they are likely to post.

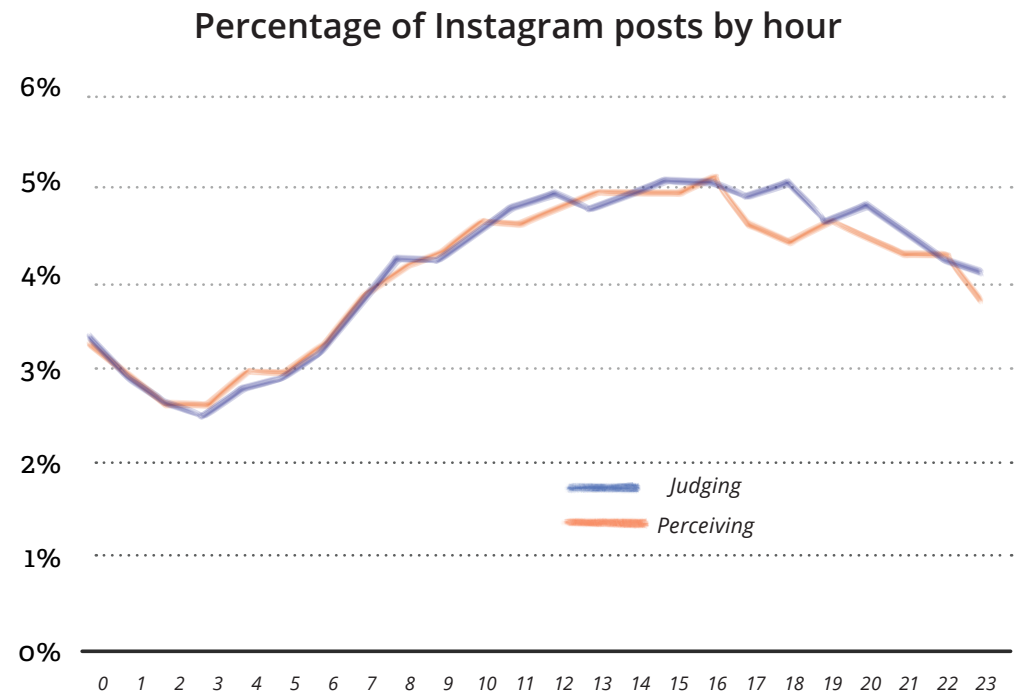
PERCEIVERS ARE POLITICAL

Having a perceiving personality type is the strongest indicator of proclivity toward discussing politics online. Perceiving personality types also use liberal hashtags most often; nearly 4% of all Instagram posts from perceiving personality types include a liberal hashtag. By comparison, 2.7% of posts from judging personality types include a liberal-leaning hashtag.



Judging personality types are also more likely than those with perceiving personality types to have more than 1,000 followers.

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What Does this Mean for Social Marketers?

Though the Myers Briggs® assessment may not be perfect, it can help predict our preferences, from a person's interests to how often they interact on social media. This type of psychographic analysis can be a treasure trove for marketers, and one that is currently underutilized.

Today, most brands rely on surface-level demographic data – most commonly audience location, gender, and age. What many marketers are missing out on is a deeper level of psychographic analysis that enables them to see how that audience thinks and feels about the world around them.



Understanding personality types can make your brand more attractive.

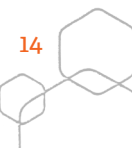


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These insights can be used by marketers to better understand and respond to their audiences. For example:

- **Brands have the power to identify the personality types that are most attracted to their brand.** Are introverts more likely to interact with your brand than extroverts? How about sensing personality types versus intuitive? The answers to these questions can then help inform messaging based on personality type rather than relying only on location, age, and gender.
- If your brand appeals to a diverse range of personality types, **you can use personality types to segment audiences for A/B ad testing.** Marketers can compare the performance of one ad with introverts versus extroverts to help secure the right message for each audience type.
- **Myers Briggs®™ acronyms are not the only useful descriptors in social media bios.** People share plenty of useful information about themselves – their job titles, if they have children, their political views – that can also be used for ad targeting or testing.

So what personality type does your brand attract? If you are not sure whether your brand attracts ESTPs or INFJs, it may be time to look to your followers' social media bios to discover personality traits of those who your brand resonates with most.



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