Talkwalker Khoros

2023 social media trends

how to disrupt

a disruptive consumer

#SocialMediaTrends2023

2023 social media trends

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Content

Intro

How trends are born 05

Top 10 Social Media Trends:

The cookie finally gets dunked 08

Social media will meet a new social standard 15

Decentralized social networks will be the next big thing 24

Multi-sensory social media will provide content for all 32

Social commerce will rise and fall 41

The metaverse rush will pay off 50

Predictive analytics will disrupt marketing 59

The environment will no longer be an afterthought 65

Customer experience will get even more social 74

Personas are over, you will think 'communities' 83

Conclusion 92

Methodology 93

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Introduction

2023 - The year when brands build on consumer trust

The last few years have been disruptive. We've gone through a pandemic, lockdowns, supply chain issues, and a cost of living crisis. Consumers have come out of it changed.

More urgent, more demanding, more fickle, and until now, brands have struggled to keep up.

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2023 will disrupt all that.

Brands won't take back control. But, they will learn to shake up the industry by managing the symbiotic consumer/brand relationship. Simply by being better listeners, and using more immersive consumer insights to get closer to their communities, with a seamless ability to quickly capitalize, and act on them.

In the 8th edition of our report, we look at the 10 biggest trends of 2023, and how they are driven by the needs of consumers. Including:

- Data-backed insights on why the trends will matter in 2023 (and beyond)
- Input from global experts and industry veterans on why these trends matter
- A combination of insights and brand actions to maximize outcomes for consumers and brands

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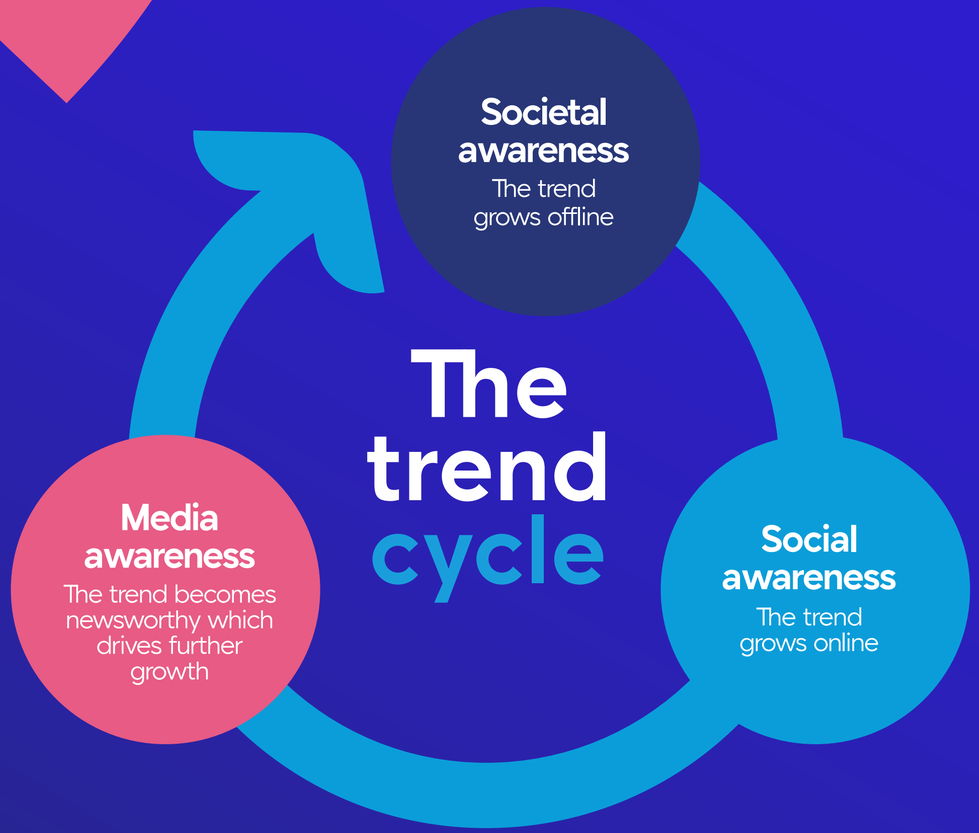

How trends are

born

Trends emerge in one of two ways.

Traditionally, a trend would rise up outside of the internet - a news story, pop culture event, or any topic big enough to spark global interest. Online conversations would then bubble up around the trend, moving from offline to on, widening its reach, and shaping it into a story that grabbed consumer attention.

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However, we're now seeing a boom of trends born from social media. Stories that have no real-world origin, but instead come from a TikTok concept, a Twitter hashtag, a Facebook meme, an influencer pick-up, or something else.

Once born, trends thrive. When they get big enough, they gather news coverage, which inspires more social coverage, and drives more mentions and awareness. And the trend grows. For brands to make trends work for them, they need to engage with the trend as soon as possible.

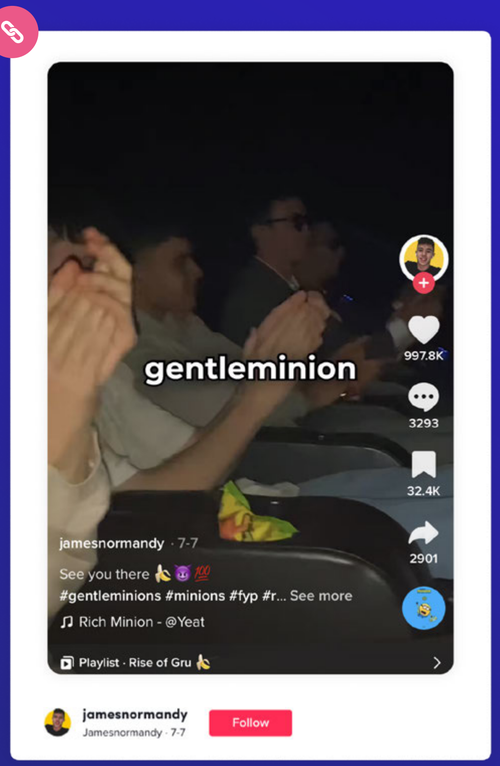
This means listening to their community, finding those trend sparks, and engaging in the conversation in its early stages. Trendsetters reap the benefits.

How trends are

born

997.4K

7.5M



Trend in action - Minions make money

One internet-born trend came about before the release of Universal's Minions 2, a trend called Gentleminions. This saw teenagers donning suits and heading to the cinema en masse to watch the movie.

This TikTok from James Normandy engages the trend and has nearly 1 million likes and 7.4 million views. The term Gentleminions was mentioned over 42.6K times in 2022, with 13.7 million engagements.

Universal listened and actioned the trend, referencing it on the movie's official social media channels, creating even more excitement for the movie. All this energy paid off. The movie has taken over $700 million globally and set the record for the most successful ever July 4th release. By connecting with the trend online, Universal saw genuine real-world results.

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Trend #1

The cookie finally gets dunked

2023 will bring the beginning of the end for third-party cookies, with consumers ready to watch them crumble.

Privacy

What's the trend?

2023 will finally bring the long-delayed end of third-party cookies. Almost. Maybe. Google has once again delayed the end of cookies until 2024 to allow testing and uptake of its Privacy Sandbox APIs.

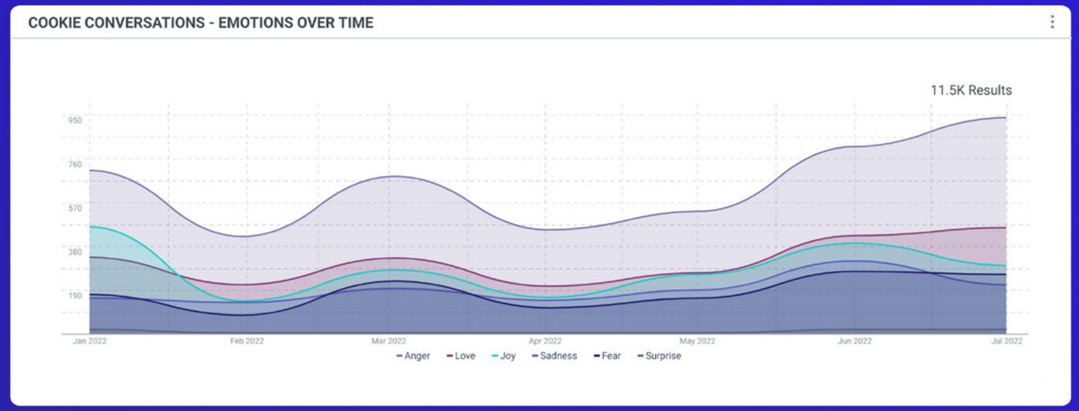
Third-party cookies help provide more personalized experiences across the web, leaving a trail of breadcrumbs that track the sites you visit. While consumers are concerned about the lack of privacy these cookies bring, **70% of advertisers feel that digital advertising overall will take a step backward** because of their removal.

The delay in their cancellation gives little respite for brands. The clock is ticking, and new alternatives must be activated sooner rather than later. The challenge: how will brands track conversions of their customers while creating more personalized experiences without that knowledge?

Why it's important now

Using emotion analysis from Talkwalker's Blue Silk™ AI, we can see that mentions of the end of third-party cookies are on the rise, with anger around the subject growing.

With 46% of all mentions related to privacy, we can see that consumers are increasingly frustrated over the issue and the delay of the inevitable solution. Google may be slow to respond, but consumers are wanting drastic change, and fast.



Emotions detected around mentions of third-party cookies - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to July 2022

Johna Burke

Global Management Director
AMEC

Expert opinion

Web3 is coming for all of us. Loss of the 'crumbs' will be great for individual data privacy and a challenge for organizations that have relied on cookies for engagement versus focusing on the outcome and impact of their efforts.

Brands with a SMART defined 'why' are already measuring the impact of customer behavior and will continue to evolve their tech stack with the tool(s) available. Based on the percentage of people who understand crypto, compared to the total online population, the democratization and monetization of the attention economy is not in immediate jeopardy."

Expert opinion

Transparency is and will be a primary element in the digital world. Regulations with GDPR or similar laws are developing around the world, while on the technology side we see the demise of cookies.

More and more users are refusing to be tracked.”

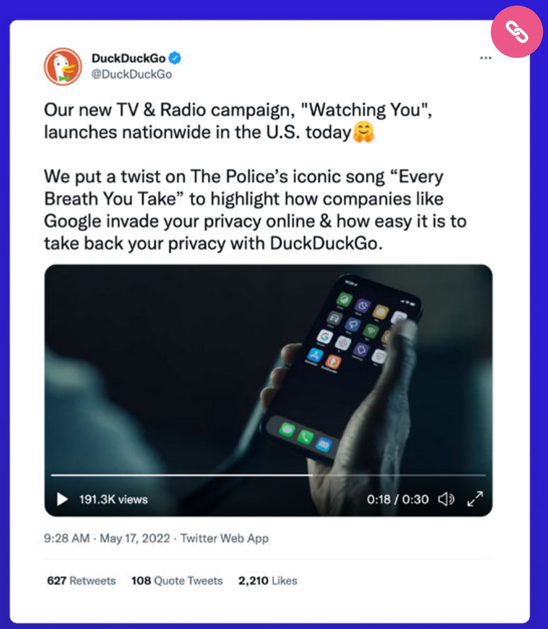
Davide Arduini

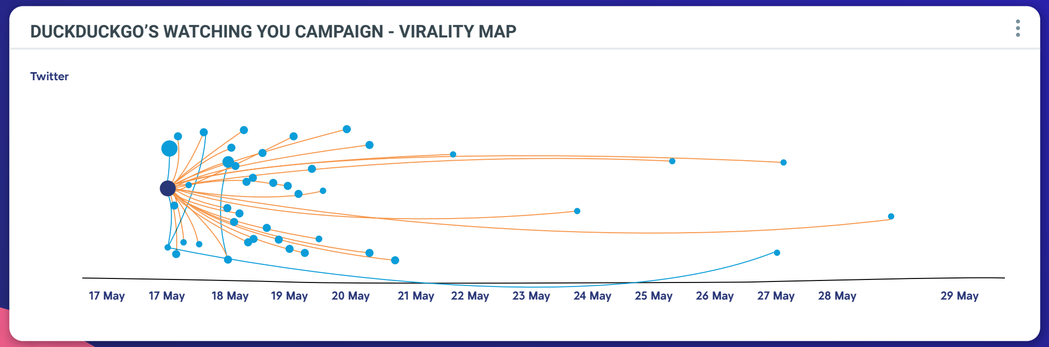
Founder & Chairman

Different

Trend in action - Time for cookies to DuckDuckGo

While we wait to see how Google acts on third-party cookies, browsers that already block their usage are on the rise. In January 2022, the privacy-focused web browser DuckDuckGo hit the 100 billion searches mark.





It continually markets its brand based on privacy, which resonates strongly with consumers; privacy is mentioned in 31% of all its social brand mentions. This tweet, which focuses on the privacy benefits of DuckDuckGo vs Google Chrome, had over 2.8K engagements, with the video watched on Twitter over 190,000 times.

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From insight to action

Without cookies, how do you know where your consumers are connecting with your brand? Social listening.

Social listening enables brands to detect brand mentions on social media, blogs, forums, and across the web, to understand public sentiment around that brand. No cookies are needed, only publicly available data is used to provide actionable intelligence that any business can use.

Building long-term relationships and trust as well as intimately knowing your audience will be crucial in a cookie-less future.

- Start by prioritizing **transparency and privacy education** within your brand messaging.
- Revisit how you can leverage any first-party data that you're currently collecting and prioritize content strategies that will help you continue to collect relevant audience data.
- Use social listening to dive into consumers interests, lifestyle, and trends that can help close the gaps that third-party cookies will leave in their wake.

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Trend #2

Social media will meet a new social standard

Fake news may be getting cleverer, but consumers are wising up too.

Privacy

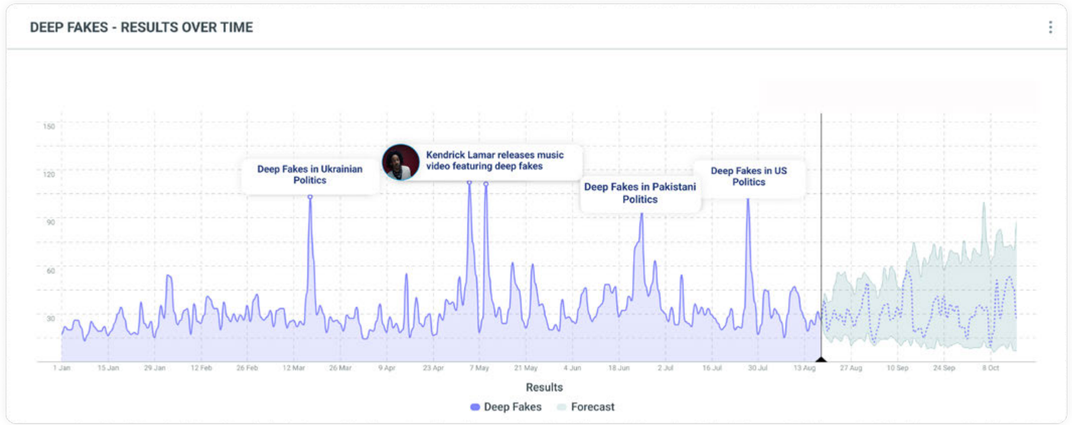
Talkwalker Khoros

What's the trend?

Not everything on the internet is real.

And now, we're finally seeing the repercussions of that. Brands, personalities, and even governments are having to deal with the consequences of fake news. Meanwhile, deepfake, AI-generated video content used to trick people into thinking certain people engaged in activities that never actually happened - is on the rise.

With commercially available software capable of creating incredibly believable celebrity videos, **Europol is now highlighting how the technology could be used for organized crime.** Consumers need to be able to trust the content they engage with, so expect 2023 to show an increased demand for integrity and authenticity that brands and social media channels will have to adapt to.



Mentions of deepfake and the reasons for conversation peaks - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022, Forecast until October 2022

While mentions of fake news are on a slight decline, deepfake mentions are on the rise, more than doubling from January 2022 to August 2022. Talkwalker's **AI-powered Forecasting** predicts a continuation of this growth in the coming months.

Consumers believe that they're getting savvier with internet falsehoods, but the technology that creates them is developing fast. 2023 will be a breaking point. Brands and platforms will need to take action quickly or risk facing a breaking point in the near future.

Privacy

Expert opinion

Gabriele Carrieri

Digital Manager

Servier Italia

Digital security is becoming a value for everyone: for consumers, who personally risk more than anyone else, for the public administration that has to chase technology with regulations faster and faster, and for big tech that needs to keep business risks related to these issues low.

The role of brands in this is to play their part in keeping awareness high and covering security issues related mostly to their own domain (e.g., health or security for financial instruments). Producing content and information that is usable by users and appropriate for this purpose is no longer optional."

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Expert opinion

Our top priority is to protect YouTube's community from harmful content while preserving the positive power of an open platform. This includes misinformation, hate-speech and deepfakes. Transparency, which is a core value at Google & YouTube, is integral to our content moderation efforts.

Our community demands it and we see it as an important part of being trustworthy and accountable to them, which is why we release a quarterly Community Guidelines Enforcement Report that gives insights into the volume of flags and actions we take on content that violates our policies, and the impact that technology has in aiding that enforcement."

Tarek Amin

Director of YouTube Middle East & North Africa

YouTube

Talkwalker

Khoros

Expert opinion

Rand Fishkin

Co-Founder & CEO

SparkToro

Most social networks have incentives to invest in fake news, deepfakes, and cybersecurity. I also believe many social network participants in rich countries are familiar with these kinds of abuse (after so many years of bombardment), and will take their own steps to protect themselves, falling for less and less of the obvious mis/disinformation.

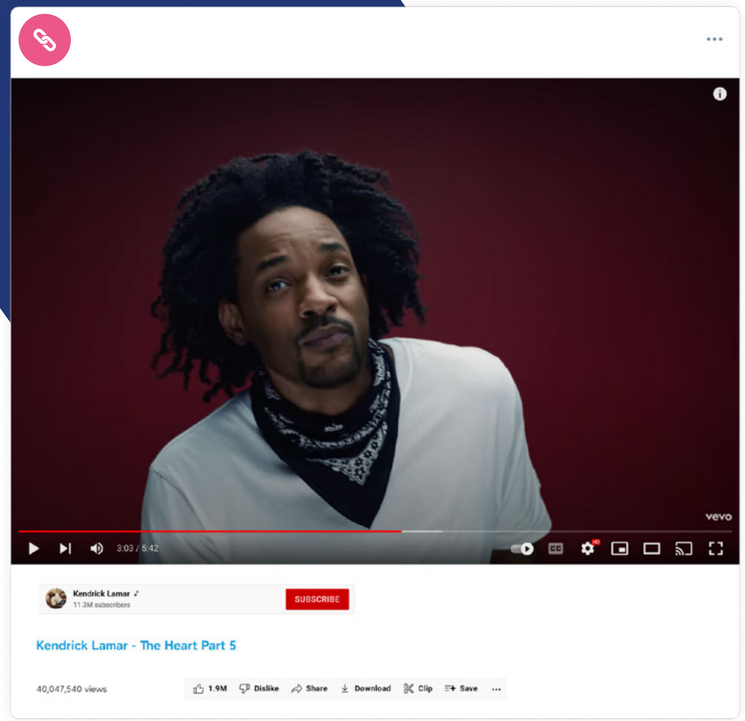
However, some networks, most notably TikTok, have the opposite incentives: to destabilize governments and make other countries less economically and politically stable.
I also don't see strong incentives for networks like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, and others to improve their behavior in many countries that receive less Western media coverage and have weaker penalties and enforcement capabilities. What happened/is happening in Myanmar or Russia or China is still a long-term risk."

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

Social media companies routinely capture so much data they have been pressured to act as sentinels, examining what passes through their servers to detect and prevent criminal behaviour. They must walk the narrow line between “freedom of speech” and banning clearly false, antagonistic, and dangerous commentary.”

Jonny Bentwood
Global Head of
Data & Analytics
Golin



Trend in action - Kendrick Lamar faces the music

You know a trend has hit the big time when it edges its way into pop culture. Kendrick Lamar used deepfakes throughout the music video for 'The Heart Part 5'.

The video has garnered over 38 million views so far while also showing the technology to the general public. The most engaging social post about the video (75.2K engagements) highlighted the deepfake tech used, demonstrating that consumers have an increased awareness of the trend. The song went on to chart across the globe.

Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

On social media, it's important to figure out what information is reliable. Talkwalker helps keep your data as clean as possible through data refinements.

Noise control cuts out spam mentions, the automated accounts filter cuts down on bots, and the credibility filter ensures that data from sources that generate misinformation are kept out. There's even a porn filter to stop anything from popping up unexpectedly.

Depending on your product, brand mission, and past credibility, utilize a content strategy that includes educating your audience on how your brand protects personal information.

- Use social listening to understand how concerned your audience is about privacy. If your audience aligns with platform privacy concerns, consider leaving platforms that don't resonate.
- Vet collaborative sources (influencers, partnerships, etc.) in the context of consumer security.
- Leverage automated social listening alerts to flag crises and false information related to your brand in real time.

Talkwalker Khoros

Trend #3

Decentralized social networks will be the next big thing

The future of social could be run by consumers, not big businesses.

Privacy

What's the trend?

Another growing concern around social networks is the lack of control the individual has. Decisions on what can be published, how data is stored, what type of censorship is put in place, etc., are determined by those that run the network. Consumers rarely have any say.

Now we're seeing the rise of decentralized social networks enabling more user control.

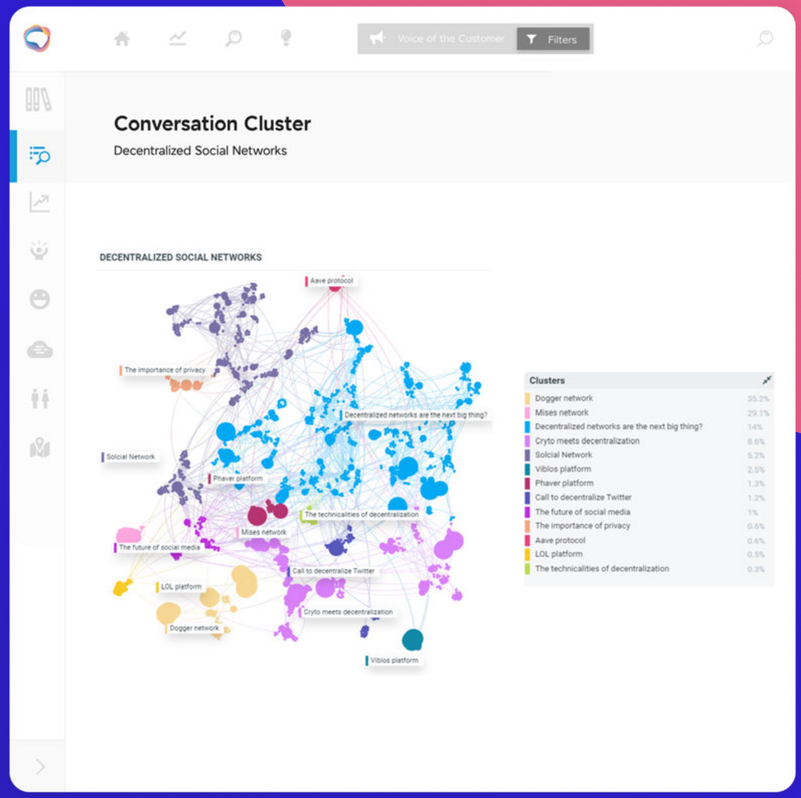
But they're not an easy answer. Consumers expect different levels of censorship and free speech. Without a central force, there's an increased risk of toxicity and radicalization.

These startup decentralized networks may not take over in 2023, but they will cause big players to take notice. Expect to see major social platforms tackling more of the issues consumers raise and possibly even putting more power back into the hands of their users.

Why it's important now

By looking at the **Conversation Clusters** around decentralized networks, we can see the tech is in a regulation stage. A large chunk of the conversation is how decentralized networks are the next big thing, but there's no dominant player in the field outside of that. Networks like LOL, Phaver, Solcial, etc., are taking a slice of the conversation, but no one is taking over.

In 2023, expect one or two major players to take the lead as consumers decide who will be the future decentralized leader.



Conversation Clusters showing how conversations around decentralized networks interconnect - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022

Marin Majica
Chief Digital Creative Director
ressourcenmangel

Expert opinion

BeReal is the ‘Anti-Instagram’ - realness instead of Insta-filter. This is the promise of the app that more and more people are talking about. According to Google Trends, the number of searches for BeReal is growing steadily!

The idea of the app is quite simple: once a day, at an unspecified time, the app asks for a photo. This must actually be taken with the cell phone, front and rear camera trigger simultaneously, there and then. This is how authentic impressions are supposed to be created, a network in keyhole mode. Nice for circles of friends. But could this also be interesting for teams that show potential applicants their everyday work? We are currently testing this.”

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

In 2022, leading payment infrastructure providers like Stripe and PayPal introduced crypto options into their APIs.

We'll now see 'pay with crypto' options surface in many eShopping and social media sites. We expect crypto-savvy consumers to use these new options and pay with stable coins like USDC or DAI."

Stefan Grasmann

Managing Director Technology,
Member of the Executive Board,
Partner
Zühlke Technology Group

Expert opinion

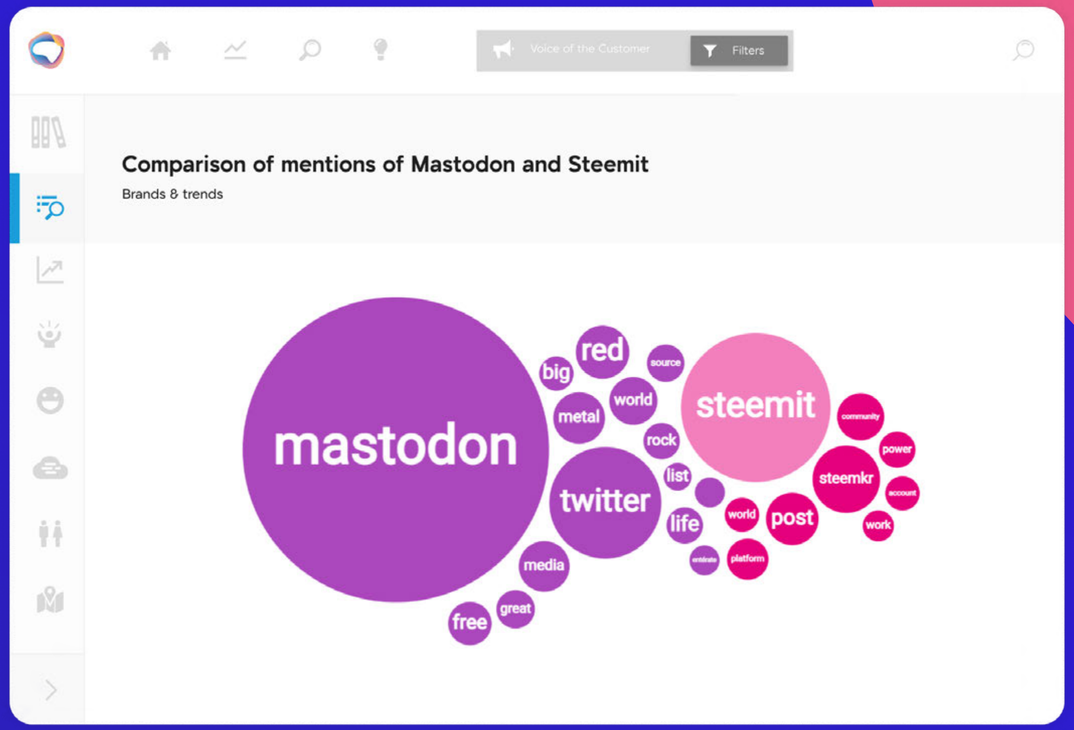
Susanna Gebauer
Writer, Marketer,
Co-Founder
Susannagebauer.com

"With the increasing importance of privacy and data security, decentralized networks seem to be gaining in importance. So far, however, networks have won through innovative functionality rather than 'common sense' aspects. Whether decentralized networks win in the end will therefore also depend on the 'fun factor' and not exclusively on common sense reasons."

Trend in action - Will blockchain & NFTs disrupt social media?

There's no lack of conversation around the world's biggest decentralized social networks. Players such as Mastodon and Steemit have millions of registered users and generated a combined 385K mentions between January and August 2022 – a 43% increase compared to the previous six months.

Steemit is a particularly interesting example, as it combines its decentralized model and the decision to reward content creation and curation through its very own cryptocurrency (STEEM), which can be traded on crypto exchange platforms such as Binance.



Comparison of mentions of Mastodon and Steemit - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022

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From insight to action

When it comes to knowing what's upsetting your consumers, **alerts** are key. Alerts can be set up to highlight any new issue being discussed around your brand and delivered directly to the person who will resolve it. Often, brand crises aren't helped by a delayed response. Alerts can help you become aware of a problem in real time, allowing you to react fast.

As audiences migrate to test new platforms, there is **opportunity for brands to do the same**.

Even if the platform isn't a long-term bet, initial exposure may be rewarding. A partnership with a power user or surprise and delight activations are examples of how a brand can join an emerging platform. As people seek private platforms to connect with personal and topic-based communities, understanding how your audience interacts with them is key.

Trend #4

Multi-sensory social media will provide content for all

The coming years will mean making content for all.
And that means formats to suit all the senses.

What's the trend?

Each year, there's a new format trend predicted, such as short-form video or social audio. In truth, no one format will ever reign supreme in the long term.

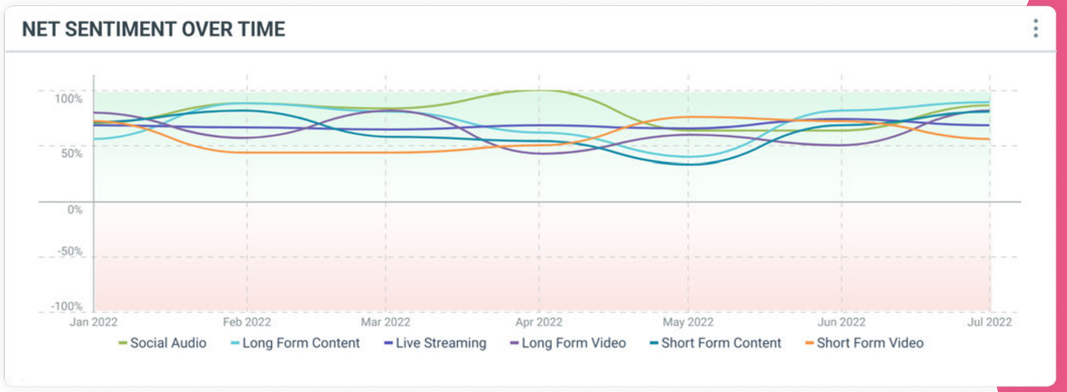
As we move closer to an 'internet of senses' (one that incorporates technology to create digital sensory experiences), the trend will be to have a true multi-channel, multi-format approach. Not just to stimulate consumers in new and interactive ways, but also to create a more accessible experience that provides content formats your audience demands.

Brands will invest further in bringing sensory elements to digital experience, from gamification to fully immersive digital malls, which **45% of consumers expect to be mainstream by 2030.**

Why it's important now

Looking at the sentiment of the discussions around different content types, there's no more love or hate for any particular format or the other. Over time, the net sentiment peaks and troughs, showing that no one format is better than another.

This plateau will lead to brands looking for innovation, trying to find a new and unexpected format to connect with consumers. And with the growth of the metaverse, 2023 will open up these opportunities and accelerate our journey to the internet of senses.



Net sentiment of popular content formats over time - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Jul 2022

Expert opinion

With podcasting and online listening growing at breakneck speeds, the social networks are not missing out on the opportunity to tap into this content format. In 2022, 73% of the U.S. population aged 12+ say they listened to online audio in the last month (Edison Study: The Infinite Dial).

YouTube and Twitter are introducing podcasting pages, while Facebook and LinkedIn have audio rooms, and Twitter has live audio in the form of Spaces.

The growing consumption of online audio using Smart Speakers is another reason social networks are leaning into social audio. Social media marketers should consider repurposing their podcasts for social audio and even teasing episodes on TikTok.

Audio is a very accessible content format and is easy to repurpose. Don't miss the social audio boat in 2023!"

Joanne Sweeney

Founder & CEO

Digital Training Institute

Expert opinion

Samit Malkani
Group Marketing Creative Manager - Brand, India & Southeast Asia
Google

As platforms and formats proliferate, it'll be interesting to see how brand and social teams can find a balance between building platform-first and scaling effectively. We may see, for example, that short-form video can scale across platforms... or that it can't and teams will have to create more assets than ever before. Ultimately, I think brands will narrow down the number of platforms they invest meaningfully in... and I believe the first casualty of this shift will be Facebook."

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

Social media platforms leave clues... And when every social media platform is leaving the same clue, Marketers should really take note. What's the one clue they are all leaving us? Make vertical videos!

Think about it... Instagram has just made every video you post on the platform display as a Reel (vertical video). YouTube is heavily pushing YouTube Shorts (vertical video). TikTok (one of the fastest growing social platforms right now) is a platform solely built for vertical video. LinkedIn is even suggesting advertisers create vertical videos to get better results from their paid ads. The list goes on...

We're now operating a 'vertical video first' approach & the data shows that it's the right one. In the last 30 days, this one change we made to our videos has increased views by 507% & watch time by 319%. We've released a podcast all about vertical video to share how you can implement this approach."

Dan Knowlton

Co-Founder & CMO

Knowlton

Expert opinion

Smita Murarka

Chief Marketing Officer - Corporate & Brands, Digital

Duroflex

Social media has evolved to become very integral to a person's life. Like with food, consumers expect social media to appeal to multiple senses and almost be umami - useful, entertaining, visual, and experienced in different forms.

A brand needs to cater to multiple needs of a consumer in order to stay relevant today. With attention span reducing to 4 seconds, communicating purposefully in more ways than one is a challenging yet essential task. Whichever stage consumers are at in their journey, brands will need to relate to them specifically in the format of their choice."

Trend in action - The sweet smell of soup

While the internet isn't built for multisensory experiences yet, we're already seeing brands develop online success from real-world sensory campaigns.

In January 2021, Campbell's teamed up with CAMP to create two scented candles; tomato soup & grilled cheese, and chicken noodle soup. These limited edition candles not only played with the senses but also people's nostalgia, as they captured the scents of winter. The campaign was a quick success, selling out online within a day of release, while also delivering significant online mentions. This Instagram post received over 2,200 engagements, while news and blogs picked up the story, with an additional 7,600 engagements for the campaign. Delivering content designed exclusively for the consumer, even while somewhat quirky, drives results.

Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

Until Talkwalker releases scent detection (circa 2027), you can use **image recognition**, **video recognition**, and **podcast monitoring** to understand how your brand is mentioned across multimedia. By understanding these mentions, you get a clearer picture of how consumers interact with your brand day-to-day while identifying visual and audio trends impacting your industry.

As we dream about what's next, focusing on how your brand can apply insights around media consumption along with platform best practices will help you connect in a more tailored way. Think about utilizing lower-production-value TikTok videos that incorporate details like captions or voice overs in a unique way. Or lean into voice/sound-driven content given the rise of audio-only platforms and podcasts.

Taking a test and learn approach we'll help your brand iterate faster and create content that reaches your audience in new, relevant ways.

Trend #5

Social commerce will rise and fall

Social shopping means easy eCommerce.
But not everyone is buying it, yet.

What's the trend?

Much like influencer marketing a few years ago, social commerce is still finding its feet. In some regions, such as China, **49.5% of social media users have made a social purchase, compared to 44% in the US**. Social commerce in China is estimated to be responsible for around 14.3% of all eCommerce in 2023, compared to just 4.9% in the US.

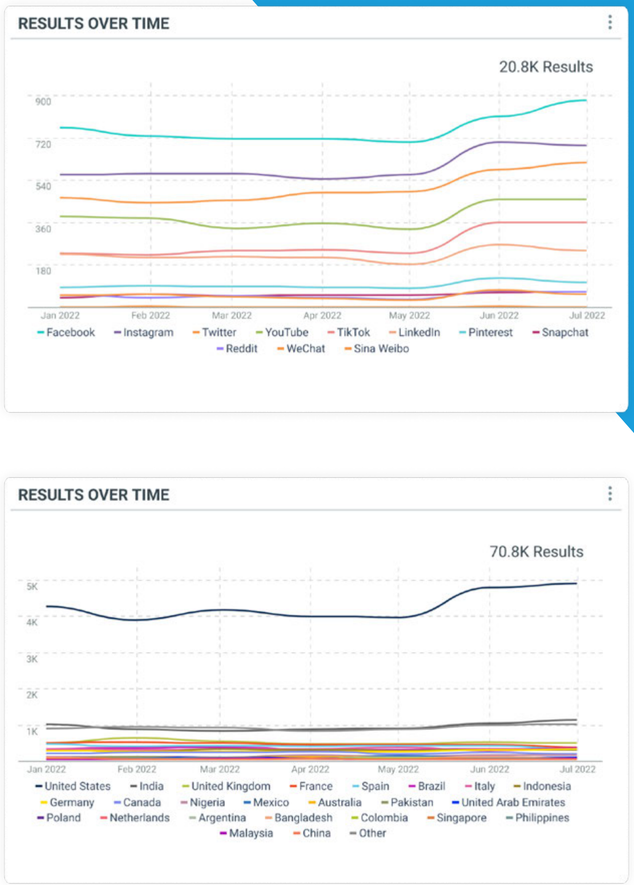
There is huge potential for growth, and with the increase in post-pandemic digital growth, and the rising cost of living driving increased demand for affordability, consumers will be more willing to explore new shopping channels.

Why it's important now

The trend fluctuates by platform and region. TikTok has abandoned plans to roll out live eCommerce in Europe and the US, as it focuses on its UK expansion. Meanwhile, Meta has launched the Meta Avatars Store to encourage digital sales.

Looking at mentions of social commerce, the US is showing the largest room for growth, with a large increase in conversations. While Facebook is the leading platform linked to the social shopping trend.

There's definitely room for brands to expand their social selling capabilities in 2023, but they need to consider their market and platform carefully.



Mentions of social commerce by region (top) and platform (bottom) - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Jul 2022

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

The online shopping experience is poised to exceed the physical shopping experience. By using communications technology through social and messaging platforms, online retailers are breaking through the bricks and mortar and directly connecting with customers (both reactively and proactively) and, in doing so, moving past the one-time transactions to two-way conversations and ongoing engagement for more meaningful relationships."

Betsy Morse Rohtbart

Vice President,
Global Web & Ecommerce
Vonage

Will Hobson
PR Director
Rise at Seven

Expert opinion

"The way consumers are purchasing is constantly developing and has changed massively over the past three years. The pandemic sent shockwaves through most industries but in fashion and eCommerce particularly it changed the way we shop and for a time what we shopped.

The growth of TikTok has led consumers to be influenced by even more micro-influencers and everyday people. We've seen TikTok strategies become crucial to help drive sales for our clients However these perform best when teamed with other strategies such as SEO and PR."

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

Our latest data reveals that consumers in APAC (with consumers in Indonesia and Thailand leading the way) are most likely to say offers via social media led them to direct purchase of a product – more so than any other form of brand communications.

A YouGov study also found that interacting with social media is the second-most popular media activity for people in the region.

Among today's digital natives, social platforms have proven to hold both attention and influence. Brands need to engage on these platforms with messages that resonate, which can be achieved with a proper understanding of target audiences' psyches."

Ervin Ha
Head of Commercial, Asia Pacific
YouGov

Cheryl Guerin

Executive Vice President Global Brand Strategy & Innovation

Mastercard

Expert opinion

Social commerce is a democratizing force for consumers and small businesses and has profound implications for marketers. 2 billion people purchased on social platforms last year and this is growing 3x faster than traditional eCommerce.

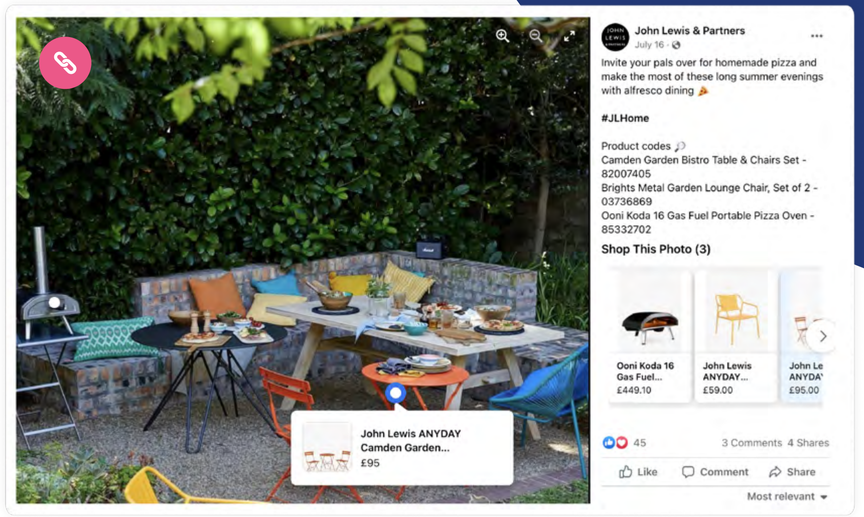
The journey is led by spontaneous discovery and inspiration, not the traditional path. Trusted, seamless payments are critical to the experience."

Trend in action - John Lewis brings shopping to life

UK home retailer John Lewis takes communities one step further. Sharing content inspiration from employees and customers, and then making the content actionable within the Facebook platform.

Not only does this bring products to life, revealing them within the home, and create a more humanistic connection, but it also simplifies the consumer buying process. If you like the look, you can buy it with a few clicks.

The brand has said it will continue investing in digital services in the coming years, so expect more success from this type of campaign in 2023.



Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

Conversation Clusters are the fastest way to obtain deep insights through automated data segmentation. You can quickly discover key conversation drivers within a topic, such as social commerce, to identify what consumers are discussing, and find new opportunities within the market first.

If your audience is on platforms where **social selling** is a priority, like Pinterest, WhatsApp, and YouTube, test the shopping experience for an upcoming campaign or offering.

Evaluate your customers' buying trends alongside product conversation using social listening and content performance. Lead with those products to test and learn. Leverage social listening to identify micro-influencer partnerships to test social commerce in niche communities. For example, **Shopify launched Collabs**, allowing creators to partner with independent businesses within the platform.

Trend #6

The metaverse rush will pay off

The race to the metaverse is on. The coming years will reveal who's going to lead, and who'll drop out.

Technology

What's the trend?

The concept of the metaverse – a mix of digital, augmented, and real-world realities – started making news last year. Now, it's a trend everyone wants to be a part of.

Facebook is doubling down on its Meta rebrand, while tech leaders like **Microsoft** and **Tencent** are starting to reveal their own metaverse concepts.

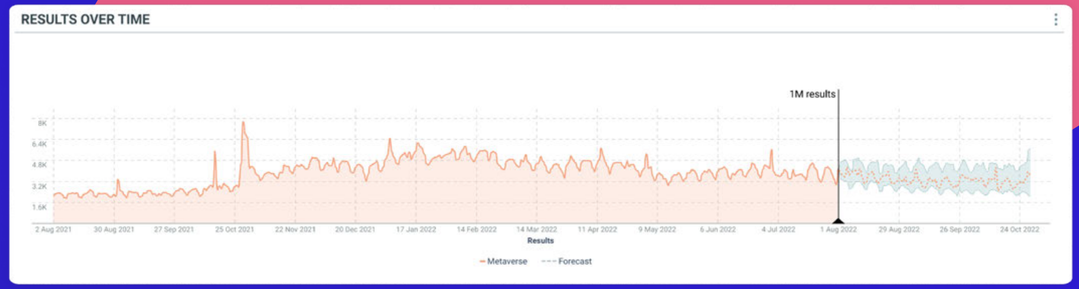
With a **potential market of $800 billion**, expect even more players to join the contest in the coming months. However, the concept is entering a critical time, potentially facing a format war. Much like VHS vs. Betamax, or Blu-Ray vs. HD DVD, some metaverses will start to thrive, while others are quickly abandoned.

The metaverses that win or lose will be decided by consumers, and whether they feel these new realities connect with their real-world needs.

Why it's important now

Monthly conversations around the metaverse peaked in January 2021, with a significant increase year on year. Conversation levels do appear to be forming a new level, which is supported by our 3-month Forecast.

So, for now, things have calmed a little. But any new metaverse announcements cause a new wave of mentions, so this could be the eye of the storm. 2023 could be the year our first metaverse is fully realized, and brands must act now to be ready to get on board.



Mentions of metaverses over time - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022, Forecast until October 2022

Tom Simpson

Board Member,
MMA APAC

Expert opinion

Think of the metaverse as the intersection of a few trends. Immersive reality, Web3, which covers digital assets via NFTs and blockchain, and most importantly, gaming – the first metaverse showcase combining these trends. We see consumers immersed in 3D worlds, represented by avatars dressed in bespoke gear, spending virtual currency.

This space demands a new approach from brands – non-interruptive ads, co-creation, and value exchanges are key. The metaverse is not when everyone puts on their VR goggles – this will never happen. It's when our virtual lives begin to overtake our physical lives in importance. We call this the Play Economy."

Expert opinion

We are just getting to know all our alternatives and possibilities in the metaverse. I think 2023 will still be a year of exploration, where many brands will dare to continue exploring and finding ways to join us. The biggest challenge will be finding ways to add value to this platform and not upload us just because everyone else is doing it."

Rebeca Ricoy Paramo

Regional Marketing Director

Duolingo

Expert opinion

Rezwana Manjur
Editor-In-Chief
MARKETING-INTERACTIVE

In 2022, the word ‘metaverse’ became a staple in the marketing dictionary with many brands exploring possibilities in the space. While still at a nascent stage, we think that the arena will only grow and mature over time as brands find their footing around it.

No doubt, there are still many unanswered questions around measurement metrics and engagement in the space, but forward thinking brands with their eye on the future are already experimenting and finding their ground in the space so as to have first mover advantage.”

Expert opinion

As humans we have always longed for connection, whether with our loved ones or at work. So far connections were built around documenting and sharing our experience as images or videos, but with the metaverse we can create and live shared experiences where we are fully immersed, connected, and beyond the physical limitations."

Neeraj Gulati
Partner
Accenture Song

Trend in action - Dubai into the metaverse

It's not only businesses investing in the metaverse. Cities are too.

As a technical leader, Dubai has already recognized the value the metaverse can deliver for the future, launching its Dubai metaverse Strategy in July 2022. This forward-thinking strategy is positioning the emirate's focus on the metaverse to ensure they're a key player in this rising tech - both economically and with employment opportunities In 2022, Dubai was mentioned alongside the metaverse 240k times, with this one tweet receiving over 7.4k engagements since its launch.

As pioneers, expect Dubai to have a critical say in the future of the metaverse in the years to come.

Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

When it comes to launching new technology, it's not about who shouts the loudest but who gets the most love. **Sentiment analysis** enables brands to understand exactly what consumers think about each metaverse concept, helping them to identify which ones are most relevant to their audience and where they should invest in building consumer connections.

Before joining the metaverse, ask: Is this the right space for my brand **right now?** What is my primary use case? Do I have resources for long-term involvement?

What we've learned on social and Khoros Communities translates to how brands should think about the metaverse:

- Driving authenticity and ownership through user-generated content
- Brand love through community engagement, rewards, and recognition
- Surprising & delighting through activations and events
- Partnering with creators to develop content and experiences that resonate with your audience
- Brand reputation management and monitoring

Trend #7

Predictive analytics will disrupt marketing

Predictive analytics has been making waves across other industries. Now we foresee it disrupting marketing.

What's the trend?

Predictive analytics isn't new. It's been used in underwriting and credit scoring for several years, using existing big data to predict potential future outcomes.

We'll see more marketing and social media professionals start to integrate predictive analytics into their processes. Social listening can quickly and easily provide the big data needed, and now we'll see the AI capabilities catch up to provide accurate and valuable predictions.

The capability brings so much potential, with the ability to look into the future of a trend, topic, or campaign and understand how it will adapt in the coming months. Yet, only **42% of marketers say they have predictive analytics capabilities.** Expect this to change in 2023.

Talkwalker Khoros

Why it's important now

Predictive analytics is on the rise, with mentions up 20% since January 2022, with significant positive sentiment. Broadly, this AI tech is making waves.

But, we're also starting to see the topic creating a buzz within social media audiences i.e., those that include phrases like PR, marketing, or comms in their bio.

7% of conversations around the topic include the keyword future, but if you want to be a trendsetter, you need to realize the future is now. Expect more leading brands to make the most of predictive analysis to forecast the next big industry trends.

Keywords mentioned by marketing professionals about predictive analytics - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

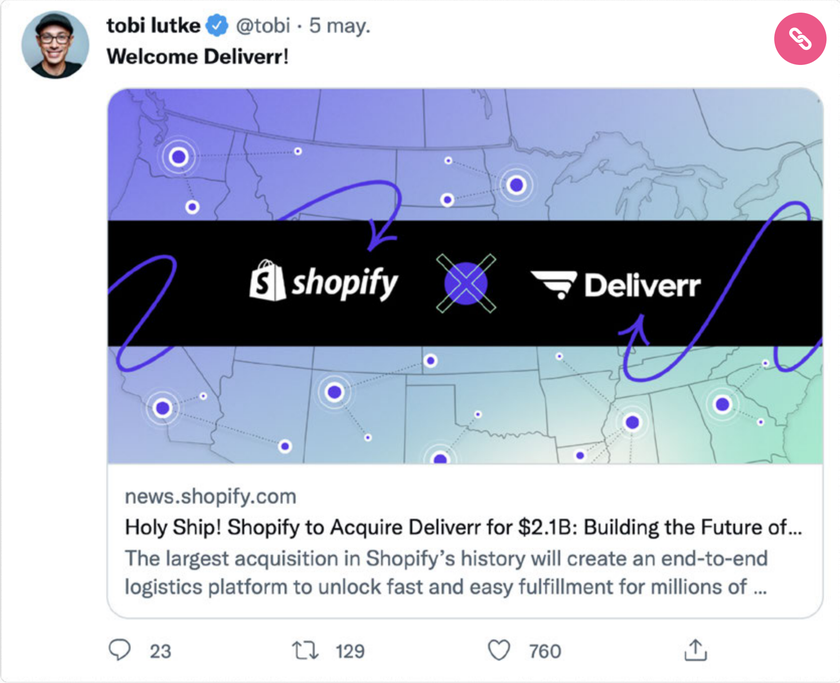
How many times as marketers have we wished for a crystal ball to peer into the future to ensure success? Well, that's exactly what predictive analytics has begun to do. Marketers have worked tirelessly to understand past performance in an attempt to better plan for tomorrow by piecing together historical data, reviewing articles/news, and manually coming to some conclusion.

Predictive analytics finally uses the power of AI to automate this, at scale, with the most reliable industry data, and in real time. It might seem like a pipedream, but predictive is already used in everything from insurance to shipping. 2023 will be when marketers get to join in the fun."

David Low

CMO

Talkwalker



Trend in action - 'Deliverring' better customer service

Predictive analytics may be new in marketing, but it's already a valuable data analysis technique used in a wide variety of industries.

Deliverr was a logistics startup that used predictive analytics to anticipate consumer demands, enabling the company to pre-position items close to geographical areas of anticipated need. This capability is highly valuable. Worth $2.1 billion to Shopify, when it bought Deliverr in May 2022. eCommerce isn't the only industry that predictive analytics is shaking up, and in 2023, we will see it start to make a big impact on social media marketing.

Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

Talkwalker is already ahead of the game when it comes to **predictive analytics**. In 2022, we launched Forecasting, allowing brands to predict how a conversation will evolve in the coming months through the AI analysis of historical data. By using Forecasting, brands can get a better idea of the next big trend within their industry and those that will dissolve over time.

Even if predictive analytics is new to your brand, there is a ton of opportunity to start small. It's easy to get overwhelmed, so start with the question you're looking to answer and build from there.

Once you nail down your question, use social listening data or CRM data to build a story around your audience's needs or behaviors. Benchmarking this data will help your team identify patterns over time as well as anticipate audience needs that drive ROI.

Trend #8

The environment will no longer be an afterthought

Enough words. Consumers and brands will finally come together for impactful environmental change.

What's the trend?

With rising awareness of rising global temperatures, and consumers now facing the direct repercussions of climate change, there is a genuine concern for humanity's impact on our planet. And every brand needs to make a concerted effort to make a difference.

There is a growing sense of urgency to the conversation, as consumers don't want to hear buzzwords like sustainability, green, or net zero. Instead, they need action that makes a genuine difference to the situation, with **around 82% of consumers wanting companies to put people and the planet before profit.**

In the coming year, we expect disruptor brands focused on sustainability to take larger bites of their market. Savvier consumers will also interrogate ecological claims, leading to more backlash against potential greenwashing claims.

Why it's important now

When it comes to sustainability, we're starting to speak the same language. These two word clouds compare the keywords consumers and brands are using around the topic, and it's easy to see a significant crossover.

This unified vision shows a true drive from both sides, and we should expect to see genuine brand impact on climate change and global warming. If 2022 was a wake-up call, 2023 will be the year the world finally takes action.

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Key phrases around sustainability by brands (top) and consumers (bottom) - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022

Marco Onorato

Co-Founder & CE,

Marketing Espresso

Expert opinion

Chasing trends is something instinctive, and there are many brands chasing this kind of perspective.

However, the challenge for sustainability and inclusiveness, as for all social issues, is to be able to incorporate these themes not simply into communications to position oneself, but into one's corporate culture, so that it becomes authentic and effective in terms of marketing and value proposition.

In this way, brand marketing can make itself coherent and integrated to the overall identity, and not simply a matter of circumstance."

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

Companies' success will depend on having a defined purpose, consistent and clear across all communication channels to create a connection with their audiences. It must ensure a balance between financial growth, respect for the environment, and the social well-being of the communities in which they operate."

Rosalva Rivera
Marketing Director
Mexico & Latam
UPS

Expert opinion

Sebastian Macan

Communications Manager

KfW

The increasing focus on the three core aspects of sustainability - ecology, economy, and social issues - in social media fundamentally reflects society's increased awareness of this topic. This development is to be welcomed without any hesitation.

Net zero is more than just a buzzword: climate neutrality is the standard by which every company will have to be measured in the future. We experience the effects of this in the behavior of our consumers on a daily basis: we are confronted more and more frequently with questions about the carbon footprint of our projects and financial activities, and with good reason. We see this increased interest as an opportunity to take on board new impulses and communicate our work as a digital transformation and development bank."

Expert opinion

Nathalie Nahai

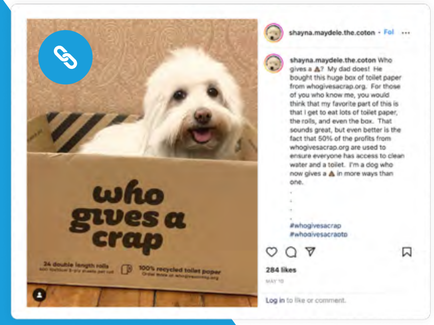
Best-selling Author and Podcast Host

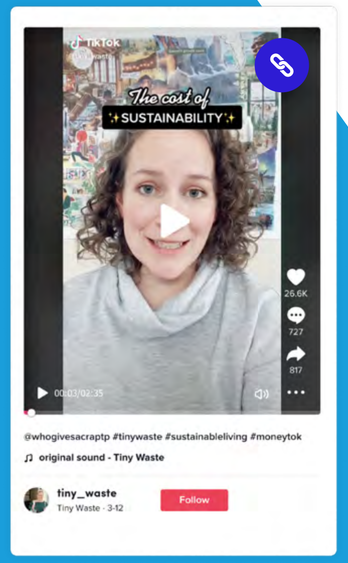
The Hive Podcast

Community

As more Millennials, Gen Z, and Gen A bring their values-driven expectations to the brands they interact with, the success (or failure) of these organisations will increasingly hinge upon their integrity.

Whatever the industry, if brands want to capture the imaginations and purchasing power of this cohort, they will have to demonstrate that they can uphold what I call the Four Cs: commitment to a set of values or ethical principles; congruence in word and deed; consistency of ethical behaviours over time; and coherence in intention and action (doing the right thing for the right reasons, and not just because it looks good)."





Trend in action - ‘Who Gives a Crap’ is on a roll

Some up-and-coming companies have the environment baked into their DNA. Who Gives a Crap is a 100% recycled toilet paper startup that gives back 50% of its profits to fund sanitation solutions.

Its popularity had been steadily increasing since its creation in 2012, thanks to its impertinent tone on social, fun product packaging, and speedy delivery model, but the pandemic accelerated that trend.

The Australian company now ships its colorful paper products to over 40 countries, raised **$41.5 million** in capital in 2021, and generates remarkable consumer engagement, with the majority of its 4000+ yearly mentions originating organically from Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok - including in **reviews** of hospitality experiences!

Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

To understand these massive global trends, you need data. **A lot of data.** That's why Talkwalker offers so much. With social media sites, including Twitter Firehose, Facebook, Instagram, Weibo, WeChat. Plus blogs, forums, news sites, and more from across the internet. Along with the capability to add 1st party data into the mix, wherever your consumers are discussing these big topics, we're listening.

If you are exploring brand messaging around environmental or social issues, your brand must have credibility to back it up. If your brand does not have a history of social responsibility, start making changes internally and get results before creating a campaign. To prepare for a social responsibility campaign on social, be ready for backlash by having a FAQ doc for your community managers to reference. Knowing how and when to react will make your audience feel heard while answering their questions.

Trend #9

Customer experience will get even more social

Social media will be the go to place to connect with your customers.

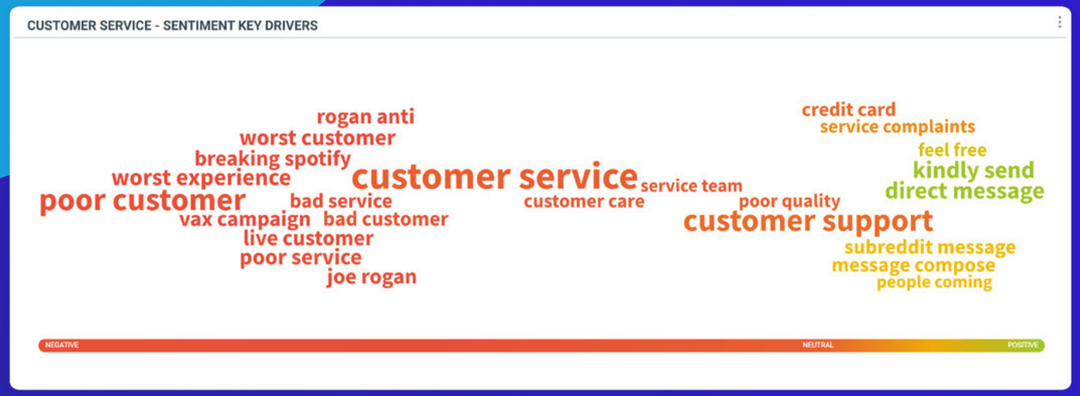
What's the trend?

75% of consumers say the pandemic has driven long-term changes in their behaviors and preferences, one of which is a bigger focus on urgency. Time is more precious, and nobody wants to waste it - even when it comes to brand interactions. The rise of instant deliveries from companies like Gopuff demonstrates this - the disruptive consumer wants things now.

The new challenge is that many brands are struggling to provide instant products. Many industries, such as automotive, are suffering from supply chain issues, causing significant frustrations for customers.

Brands must prioritize customer experience instead. Providing support, information, or solutions as fast as possible is the answer, with social media enabling brands to accelerate their response times.

In 2023, expect more brands to create dedicated in-channel social media support channels, enabling a fast, efficient response no matter which platform consumers use to get in touch.



Sentiment analysis of key phrases related to customer service - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022

Why it's important now

While customer service requests on social media remain stable, these types of posts are seeing higher engagement. When people post complaints, these posts are resonating more within their communities, which signifies the larger customer base has similar issues or questions.

To help prevent any of these engaging complaints from becoming a crisis, brands will become more proactive, sourcing and resolving these large-scale problems before they blow up. There is one guiding light. When you look at the sentiment drivers around customer service, ***direct message*** and ***kindly send*** are the only phrases driving positive sentiment.

When consumers have direct contact or connection with a brand, it's almost always seen in a positive way. No matter how that conversation started.

Expert opinion

Never has a smooth collaboration between Social Media and Customer Experience teams been more important. Workflows between customer support agents, social media managers, and CX experts need to be 100% defined and adhered to - otherwise unhappy users will pile up and make themselves heard, leading to deteriorating brand perception.

The same applies the other way around: brand promoters who are not being treated the way they deserve, or who are not being given any air time, are a lost opportunity for any brand to shine in moments when it matters most."

Daniel Nuss

Marketing Director

Aramex

Expert opinion

Anja Petrovski

Marketing and PR Director

Volkswagen

Volkswagen is famously ‘the people’s car’ so putting our customers first drives our marketing strategy and even more so on social media. Social media for us is a two-way street, yes it’s an important channel in terms of advertising but it has to be more than just advertising, it’s also a channel where our customers can engage with us as a brand – whether this includes making it easy to book a test drive through chat functionalities, highlighting existing customers through UGC, or showcasing the potential lifestyle customers can unlock when they are behind the wheel of a Volkswagen.”

Expert opinion

Today, customer-to-brand communication (through social media, primarily) is neither new nor unexpected. For many global brands, there is little distinction between a "regular" or "real-world" customer and a "social media audience" – they are often one and the same.

However, their attention is also unevenly distributed across their individual channel touchpoints or ecosystems. Therefore, brands are – or should be – constantly testing (and, hopefully, learning on) new channels and digital spaces where the connected customer lives."

Jason Cruz

Head of Global Content Strategy (SEM)

Shell

Dennis Wakabayashi
Global Voice of CX
Team Wakabayashi

Expert opinion

In all areas of the world, the influencer economy is taking precedence as the premier form of communication with customers.

We are seeing long-format content productions taking a back seat to the vast number of short-form content creators who are captivating audiences for longer periods of time, and this means a major shift in relationships between brands and audiences.

Simply put, eyeballs are now squarely pointed in the direction of social media channels, and the trend continues to accelerate post 2021 when TikTok became the most widely downloaded mobile application on Earth.

This means that brands everywhere are wise to incorporate social media channels and short-form content as a primary customer experience - especially at acquisition and retention touchpoints."

Trend in action - Starbucks stirs up genuine connections

Offering a great customer experience doesn't mean driving huge engagement numbers. It's about making personal connections and changing customers' lives one step at a time.

The initial comment from this customer could easily have been ignored by Starbucks. But by connecting, offering help, highlighting a brand feature, and improving accessibility, it's boosted that brand connection.

And since the whole conversation was held publicly on Twitter, all consumers can follow the interaction, and see real customer experience in action. Expect more brands to follow suit in 2023, with more 121 brand-consumer connections.

Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

Reviews are another interaction point for customers. They provide an opportunity for consumers to raise issues with a brand or highlight things people love. Talkwalker's review data provides brands with a view of their reviews across the web. Many of which can be engaged with and reacted to from within the platform. A timely thanks or acknowledgment of an issue can go a long way to boosting the quality of your customer experience.

As your brand adjusts to meet this demand, consider a brand love approach on social media. This shifts strategy from a passive reaction to a mission rooted in active social engagement. Revisit your social feed through the brand love lens. If your brand is suffering from shipping delays, seek out opportunities to keep hype high and provide value-add content to jumpstart their experience. Like the Starbucks example, consider how your team can seek out response opportunities that **not only provide customer service** but build customers for life.

Talkwalker Khoros

Trend #10

Personas are over, you will think ‘communities’

2023 will mean more community building, creating more loyal, engaged, and connected consumers.

Community

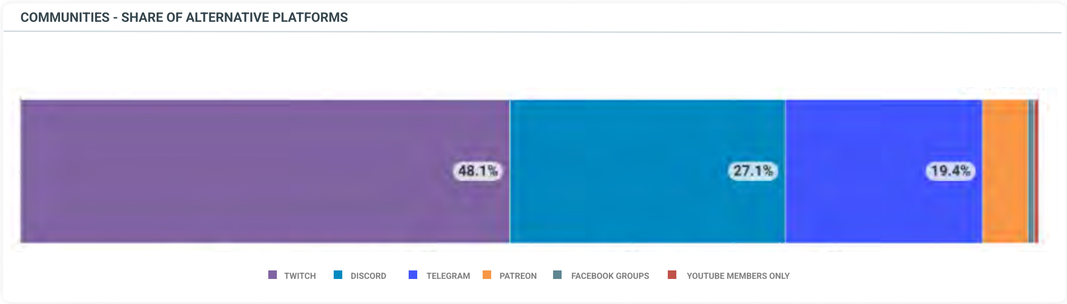
What's the trend?

The pandemic and its aftermath left behind a very different breed of consumer. One rapidly adapting, with a new range of interests and drivers. Persona marketing will no longer work, as consumers are now too changeable to pin down.

So in 2023, brands will move further away from personas and target their broader brand communities. They will focus on gaining a deeper knowledge of their consumer ecosystems, with a need to understand exactly who is driving and sharing brand-focused conversations. Influencers of all sizes, employee advocates, and even average consumers will be engaged within brand communities to generate authentic connections and consumer-led content.

Private social media platforms like Discord, Signal, and Geneva will enable this, with genuine connections instead of streams of content. **9.2% of Americans now use Discord at least once per week**, so there's demonstrated community demand.

With 66% of brand communities saying that their community has led to increased loyalty, it's no wonder more brands want to boost their closeness to their consumers when spending power is spread thinner.



Alternative platforms mentioned by community leaders and influencers - Talkwalker Consumer Intelligence, Jan to Aug 2022

Why it's important now

While influencers still get started on the most popular social media platforms (TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter), we see a growing number of calls from these public figures to join private communities on alternative platforms such as Discord or Telegram to create closer connections with their audience. In these spaces, it's less about the **influencer broadcasting content**, and more about the exchange between all community members.

2023 will be the year that brands start to understand these community ecosystems to create more organic relationships and connections.

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Ben Jeffries

CEO

Influencer

Expert opinion

Over the past few years, we've seen the advertising industry as a whole move from talking at their consumers to talking with them. Creators and creator marketing have played a huge role in this move, and the way advertisers navigate their relationship with their consumer base.

Meanwhile, TikTok has changed our perception of the way advertisers should understand their audiences; moving away from demographics and towards values, interests, and mindset. As of 2023, consumers have thus been reimagined as communities; groups who should be understood, and advertised to, based on a more human, modern frame, and it will be advertisers who take this approach, who win in the coming year."

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

Parry Headrick

Communications Manager

Crackle PR

Brands are strengthening their communities to build better connections, and edge further away from the 'hard sell.'

Influencers, content creators, even employees, are being tapped into to create rawer, more genuine interactions, with more localized and audience-personalized content and experiences."

Talkwalker Khoros

Expert opinion

Soh Wan Wei

CEO & Founder

IKIGUIDE Metaverse Collective

Communities, rather than technologies, are the heart and spirit of the metaverse.

To win over consumers in the metaverse, global brands will have to create better fan experiences by telling stories together. This means co-creating heartfelt experiences with their consumers, and sharing the ownership of the brand in a meaningful manner.

In the open metaverse, users are free to participate in more than one community. This makes it imperative for brands to play the long game by inspiring community members, and enabling authentic connections."

Expert opinion

More and more brands will hire content creators in-house who: 1. have built-in audiences, 2. have audience + platform expertise. These content creators will become the faces of the brands they represent, especially in B2B. People trust people more than companies. Expertise is key to building trust with your audience. Investment in creators will need to continue to grow."

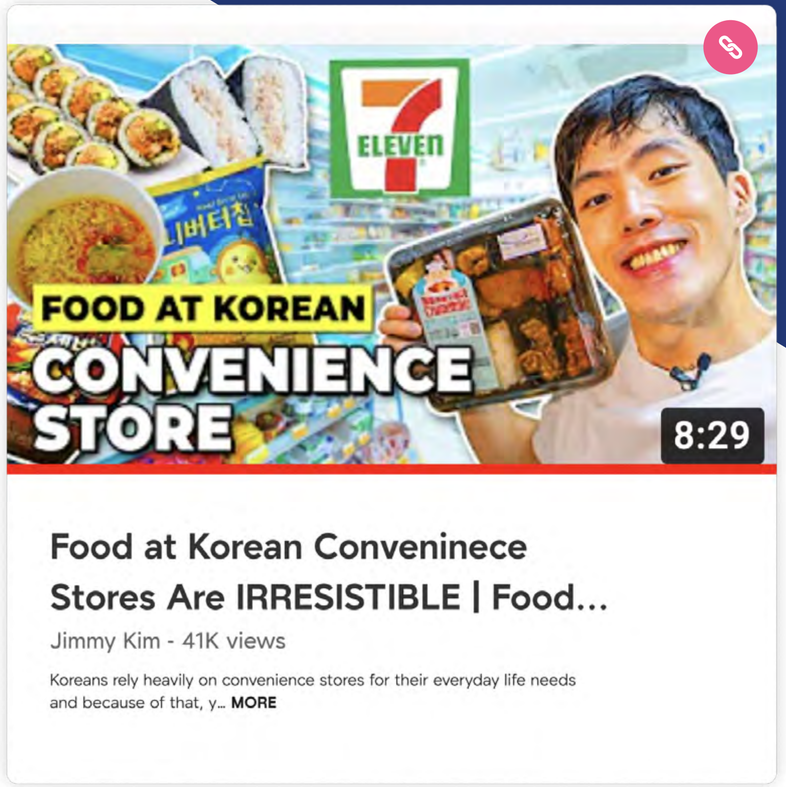
Daniel Murray
Head of Media and Founder
Sales Impact Academy
WorkWeek and Marketing Millennials

Trend in action - Jimuine community connection

Jimmy Kim, AKA, DeadlyJimmy is a popular content creator from South Korea. Originally, he focused on gaming content but has now launched a more community-focused channel - Jimmy Kim - which has already accrued 31.2K subscribers.

He often posts videos where he reviews food at convenience stores. He's also cross-communities, using Twitch to show his 96.5K followers the best nightlife and street food spots as live streams in the "Just Chatting" category, with content often showing him just walking or driving around, or even going on dates.

The type of content disruption that consumers are engaging with is changing. They want to see the reality of the world, with behind the scenes peeks, or chances to see alternative lives being led. Much of this community content can be rough around the edges, but it's genuine, and that's what consumers want.



Talkwalker Khoros

From insight to action

Talkwalker's **Influencer Network** allows brands to identify the key players within their community. That includes those that create original branded content and those that are amplifying it for others. You can also pinpoint the hashtags used within the community, which can be used for more focused campaign optimization.

Take stock of your current community, stakeholders and those you may not have considered as contributors to your brand. Observe how these communities are already showing up! Next, identify the most engaged players and gather conversation themes. As your community starts taking shape, remember the most successful community partnerships are rooted in creating equitable space for communities to share their ideas. Brands who not only recognize the ingenuity of communities but who also find ways to reward them for their contributions will stand above the rest.

Conclusion

For the coming year, keep one thing in mind before you engage in any brand action.

What does your disruptive consumer want?

Put your consumer first, and prioritize their needs, to have a sharper edge.
Able to predict ever changing demands, and ensuring your brand is a critical part of consumer conversations.

We have a real opportunity to listen harder, work better, and take more insightful actions.

Start with your consumer, and you'll end with success.

Methodology

This report uses insights identified using Talkwalker's **Consumer Intelligence platform**.
To ensure relevancy, most examples and visualizations used data from January to August 2022, although additional data may have been used in some circumstances. Mentions of topics were gathered from a variety of media, including news sites, social media channels, blogs, and forums.

Sentiment analysis is performed with an average of up to 90% accuracy, with the ability to detect sarcasm and ironic comments. Images are compared to a database of over 30,000 brand logos to help identify brands on social media and video.

Queries were used to identify the topics discussed. In some cases, these may have been improved using Boolean operators to help remove false positives.