

# SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS 2019

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2018 was a tumultuous year for brands and marketing leaders. Concerns around fake news and data privacy led individuals to question their trust in politicians, media outlets, social networks, and businesses alike. Those same concerns extended to how brands forge relationships with customers, and the data we use to do so.

The slowdown in organic reach on social required that we dive deeper into paid strategies to get our messages across. And the constant need to prove the return on our marketing spend remained, demanding we balance brand and performance marketing to optimize the impact of our teams' efforts against broader business objectives like brand health, revenue growth, customer retention, and profitability.

While 2018 had its challenges, they translate into tremendous new opportunities for us to establish deeper, more authentic relationships with our customers in 2019 and beyond—connections that will help us achieve those broader business objectives.

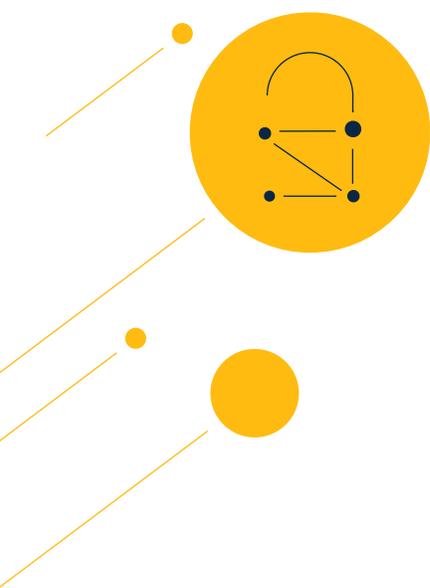
*Social Media Trends 2019*—our third annual report on global trends in social media—shares in-depth analysis of the biggest challenges and opportunities that will keep marketers awake at night this year. Share the report with your teams to equip them with insights into the biggest trends, practical recommendations on how to leverage them, and examples of best-in-class brands getting it right.



### HOOTSUITE'S SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS 2019 REPORT

Using data from our annual survey of 3,255 customers, plus exhaustive market research and interviews with industry analysts, this report will help you understand where social is going.

[Get the Report](#)



# TREND 1

## Rebuilding trust

In recent months, consumers, regulators, and media observers have called into question the privacy, accuracy, and ethics of nearly every social network. The result: According to the [2018 Edelman Trust Barometer](#), 60 percent of people no longer trust social media platforms.

To turn this trend into a competitive advantage, smart brands are focusing less on maximizing reach and more on winning customer confidence with transparent, quality engagement. That means respecting individuals' privacy, being open and transparent about when and why data is collected, and then using the data that customers are willing to share to create personalized 1:1 experiences that deliver unique value.

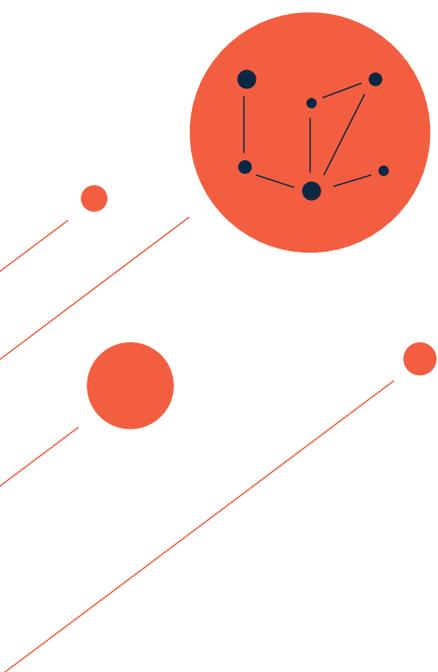


### CAST YOUR SHADOW AS A LEADER ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Use your own social profiles on networks like LinkedIn and Twitter to engage your audience by putting a face to leadership, sharing industry and business insights from your perspective (within regulatory and compliance guidelines), and celebrating company and team successes to humanize your brand and give customers someone to put their trust in.

But note: social can't be feast or famine. You must be dedicated to delivering content that's important, interesting, and timely for your followers on a regular basis.





# TREND 2

## Storyliving

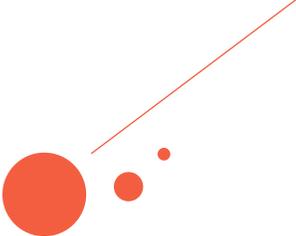
With Stories growing 15 times faster than feed-based sharing, Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook Stories are leading the shift from traditional storytelling to more compelling *storyliving*.

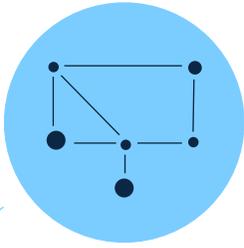
As individuals become accustomed to these authentic, in-the-moment, and often raw views into the lives of others, their experiences and expectations around storyliving will carry over to their interactions with brands. This opens the door for brands to share more human stories of their own in less polished formats, inspiring audiences to engage, try, and buy.



### GET IN ON THE STORIES ACTION

Use Stories to host intimate fireside chats with leaders you know and respect, and to celebrate the successes of your team. Events like this are well suited to the lo-fi Stories format, and allow audiences to experience your world while putting a face to your brand.





## TREND 3

# Closing the ads gap

Increasing competition in paid social is forcing marketers to rethink how they ensure their brands and offers stand out. Getting the right content to the right audience in the right format at the right time has never been more critical.

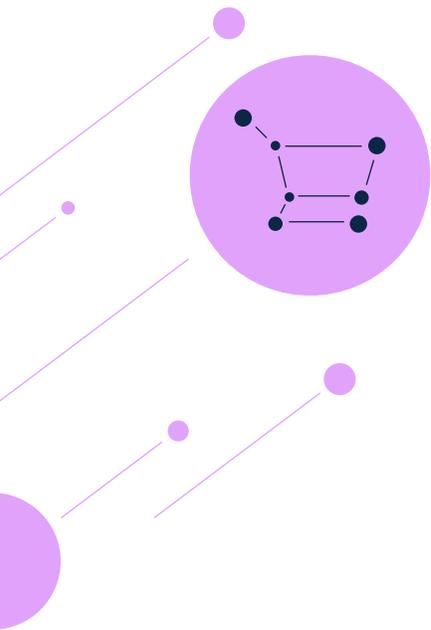
Top-performing paid social teams are getting results by pairing ad spend with an equivalent investment of time, creativity, and targeting savvy. They're delivering personalized content that's important, interesting, and timely to their audiences—while staying authentic and genuine to their brand. Brands that respect and engage with customers as individuals and use relevant content to add value will see the biggest return.



### BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN BRAND AND PERFORMANCE MARKETING

Your teams are likely already seeing interdependencies and blurred lines between brand and performance marketing. What constitutes “paid social”? Traditional ads in news feeds? Boosting high-performing organic content? Are your customers enjoying a consistent, well-executed, best-in-class experience across all channels? You get the picture.

Bring your teams together to align goals, strategies, tactics, and KPIs, and encourage collaboration to achieve and report on results together.



## TREND 4

# Cracking the commerce code

The buyer's journey—no matter whether B2B or B2C—is playing out more than ever on social media. Social is how individuals consume media, connect with others, interact with brands, seek recommendations, and ask for support. It's also how and where individuals are making buying decisions—and increasingly, it's where they're completing the actual purchase, whether that's for goods, services, or a free trial.

If your brand isn't on social, you're missing out on revenue opportunities. Finding ways to make shopping live, interactive, and seamless—especially on mobile devices—is key. In 2019, the most successful brands will go the extra mile to show customers how products and services can fit into the context of their lives.

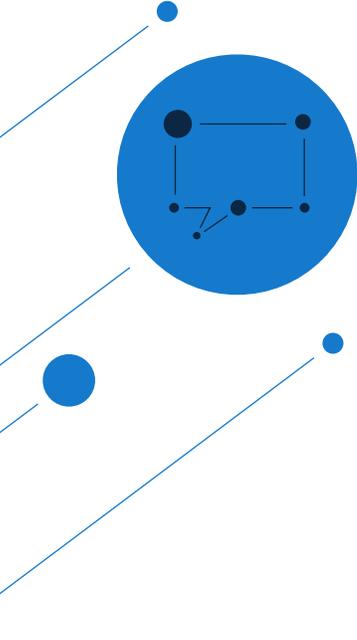


### **SERVE AS A CHAMPION FOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

Social has become integral at every stage of the customer journey. Serve as the champion for your customers to ensure all teams in your enterprise deliver a best-in-class experience at every touchpoint.

To identify opportunities for improvement, form a team to audit each stage of your customers' journey. Encourage testing to help teams deliver the right experience to the right customer at the right time.





## TREND 5

# The rise of messaging

Concerns around privacy have led social media users to private channels like Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and WeChat. In fact, according to the [2018 Q3 Global Digital Statshot](#) by We Are Social and Hootsuite, the top four messaging apps globally now count nearly five billion monthly active users.

Customer perception and expectations around direct messaging continue to change, with 69 percent of customers now saying that directly messaging a company helps them feel more confident about the brand. This shift is creating new opportunities to engage 1:1 with customers, as they increasingly prefer messaging for interactions like support.



### DEMAND A UNIFIED VIEW OF YOUR CUSTOMER

Creating a unified view of your customer is the holy grail for marketing leaders today. Uniting your customer data and technologies can seem daunting, or even impossible—but the reality is that if you want to deliver a best-in-class customer experience, a unified customer view is now an imperative.

When serving customers in social, the rise of messaging also means you'll need a cross-channel platform that allows your teams to capture, route, and respond to customer messages, all while integrating with your CRM system to keep track of interactions.



## ● WHAT'S NEXT FOR SOCIAL?

Social media remains a significant opportunity for organizations of every size and industry around the globe—and it's no longer confined to supporting narrow marketing objectives around building and managing a brand. All the trends point to the inevitable role of social in driving broader business results and delivering a best-in-class customer experience across your organization.

Social has become a critical element across every customer touchpoint, from awareness to advocacy, from social marketing to selling and support. That's because customers expect brands to meet them where they are, in the manner in which they want to engage—not the other way around.



### **EXPAND THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION**

Like the “digital” champions of a few years ago, take on the role of leader and change agent, using your experience and expertise to lead your enterprise to become a social organization.

Your customers, your partners, and your investors will all thank you for the positive impacts to brand health, revenue, customer retention, and profitability

**Hootsuite is the leader in social media management.**

**We help all organizations succeed with social with our expertise, open ecosystem, and scale.**

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