



FOREWORD

Last year, AI was the new shiny thing in the world of trends. And two years ago? Not even a footnote. Fast forward to today, and it's the must-have tool everyone's talking about.

The pace of change is dizzying, and in the world of social media, it's not just about keeping up; it's about finding a way to jump on the speeding train without spilling your coffee.

Social media itself is growing bigger, bolder, and more integrated into every facet of life. New platforms emerge, new trends dominate, and somehow, it all manages to fit into the palm of your hand. Next year promises to be the era of zero-click content, where a single post can take you through an entire sales funnel without ever leaving the platform. Social is no longer just about entertainment or casual scrolling; it's where we live our lives—from learning and shopping to connecting and creating. It's the ultimate Swiss Army knife for modern existence.

Our 96 page trend report dives into all this and more. It's designed to help you navigate this ever-changing landscape, where the rules are rewritten faster than you can say "algorithm update."

A massive thank you to the 29 experts who took the time to share their insights. Without your perspectives, this report wouldn't exist. So, here's to you—and here's to an exciting, unpredictable, and undoubtedly trend-filled year ahead.



- **Jari Lähdevuori**
Executive Creative Director & Partner
Kurio - The Social Media Age(ncy)
- **Erika Danielsson**
Strategist
Kurio - The Social Media Age(ncy)
- **Juian Boulding**
President
thenetworkone



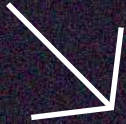
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

8 Trends for Social Media Marketing 2025



We interviewed experts from 23 of the world's leading independent agencies. Their insights can be summarized in the following eight points.

- Entertainment and escapism reign
- Search is going social
- Feed as a funnel
- From creators to curators – nailing the niche
- THE format of 2025: Influencer Format
- HumAI, the creAItor
- AI-first insights
- Zero-Click Content



METHODOLOGY

The insights were gathered by interviewing 29 social media marketing experts from 23 award-winning independent agencies, chosen from the 12000+ strong list of agencies in thenetworkkone. The respondents are all part of the world's leading independent network, thenetworkkone, hailing from countries as diverse as USA, India, UAE, UK, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, South Africa and South Korea. The interviews were done in November/December 2024.

All the respondents are using social media to help their clients do better communications, marketing, and eventually, business. They don't work with any particular social media platform or service-provider, thus their insights come from an objective point-of-view. Coming from not only different countries, but also different types of agencies, their answers offer a 360 view of social media marketing for the upcoming year.



01.

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SOCIAL MEDIA
MARKETING
TRENDS 2025

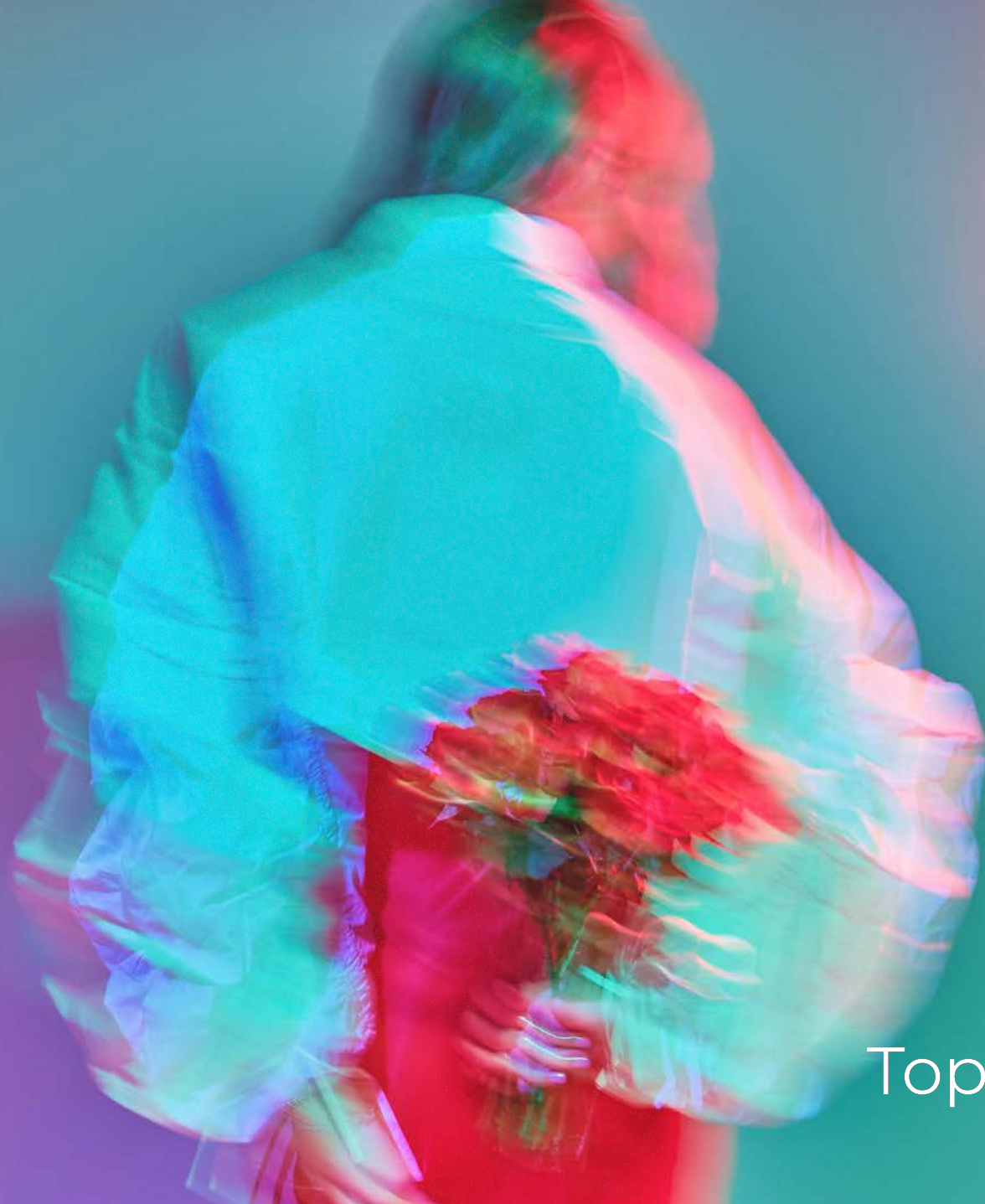
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**SOCIAL MEDIA
MARKETING
TRENDS 2025**

Top Trends





Entertainment and escapism reign

TREND

#1

“Social media has evolved from simple networking tools into entertainment platforms. This shift has blurred the lines between social media and traditional entertainment. And because of this, entertainment is no longer just a category of content - it's the expectation, even for serious topics or brand messaging. - - And let's not overlook the rise of comedy creators. With so many people using social media as a primary news source, humor offers a much-needed escape. We're even seeing luxury brands, traditionally known for emotionally neutral campaigns, jumping on board with comedy content. Brands like Marc Jacobs and Loewe are collaborating with comedians on social to bring a fresh, playful twist to their image.” – **Thinkerbell**

“Entertainment has emerged as a central theme in this new personal branding landscape. Social media creators, and everyday users present themselves as entertainers, using creative formats to engage their audiences. From short videos and podcasts to visually stunning social media posts, self-expression is now a form of entertainment where the individual becomes both creator and brand.” – **Liwa**

“Everything Is Television, Except Traditional TV: Audiences are turning to TikTok, YouTube, and Twitch for entertainment, leaving traditional TV behind. These platforms offer something TV cannot: interactive formats that foster ongoing connections, create excitement, and instill a sense of urgency. - By 2025, these platforms will dominate as the primary entertainment destination on how we watch and connect. They are embracing and incentivizing long-form, interactive content to meet this demand. Spotify is expanding its video capabilities to complement podcasts, while YouTube overhauls its TV app to better showcase native creators, positioning itself as a challenger to streaming giants. Meanwhile, Twitch continues to lead with record-breaking events like Kai Cenat's Mafiathon, reflecting the growing appetite for engagement. This shift highlights a fundamental change: viewers crave social connections, high-energy interaction, and a deeper sense of belonging.” - **Adolescent Content**

“This shift in TikTok could be explained by the fact that it never truly was a social media, more an entertainment media.” – **Bright Mind**



Search is going social

TREND

#2

“Social platforms are set to seriously challenge traditional search engines as the primary brand discovery tool in 2025. Already, 64% of Gen Z have used TikTok as a search engine according to Adobe’s research, with the common expression being, “I Don’t Google, I TikTok” - - A quarter of people said they primarily use social media to search and communicate online, this trend is only set to rise next year. The takeaway for brands? Your digital content needs to be entertainment led, social-first effortlessly shareable.” – **Launch**

“Social media is becoming – especially for the younger generation – the new “Google search bar.” The real difference with the old-style search is that people don’t look for specific information about products and services but for inspiration.” – **NextDifferent**

“ One of the most significant shifts in social media marketing will be the increasing SEO relevance of social media activities. Platforms like Reddit, with their strong focus on user-generated content and community engagement, will play a key role in driving organic traffic and boosting search engine rankings.” – **PIABO Communications**

Social media platforms are increasingly being used as search engines, particularly among younger users who prefer discovering brands through social channels rather than traditional search engines like Google. From global news to disease awareness – all information is now readily available. This shift necessitates that brands optimize their social media presence by employing SEO best practices tailored to each platform.” – **Medulla**

“ There is no reason why brands shouldn’t list on socials instead of Google, as this is the real place where users are.” – **180heartbeats**

look for specific information about

in social media marketing will be
key role in driving organic traffic



Feed as a funnel

TREND
#3

“Platforms like Instagram and TikTok now offer integrated shopping tools, allowing users to discover, evaluate, and purchase products seamlessly within the app. This “discovery-to-conversion” pipeline has redefined the role of social media as a **Jam Session Agency** managed payment solutions.

“One of the most interesting trends I see is the rise of social commerce in the US — where platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook aren’t just places to consume content, but essential hubs for discovering, exploring, and purchasing products. For me, it’s hard to imagine how much longer we’ll rely on the traditional shopping journey, which requires us to leave social platforms, visit a website, add items to a cart, login, and enter our credit card information. It’s a clunky, friction-heavy experience that just doesn’t align with the fast-paced, seamless nature of modern life, especially for the savvy, next-gen user.” – **DANG**

“The key shift is the consolidation of social networks as transactional platforms. Thanks to advanced social commerce tools, platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest will further integrate with direct payment solutions. This will transform marketing strategies, shifting from lead generation to direct sales closures within the same channel. Additionally, the use of generative AI to create personalized campaigns in real time will become standard practice.” – **Inbrax**

“Social media platforms will increasingly connect desire and purchase - especially in regard to the speed between the buying impulse and the actual buy.” – **PIABO Communications**



From creators to curators – Nailing the niche

TREND
#4

“Curators are the next influencers. And CAs we look ahead to 2025, the creator economy will continue to evolve, driven by multiplatform campaigns, short-form video dominance, and AI-generated content. Creators will increasingly act as curators, filtering the noise to deliver content that resonates with their audiences. For marketers, this means evolving beyond sponsored content to partnerships and embracing curators as key figures in shaping brand identities in more subtle and creative ways.” – **Jam Session Agency**

“Online content is increasingly overwhelming, in reaction to this, a new type of influencer is emerging: the “culture curator.” These culture curators provide two things: the synthesis of content available and a uniquely entertaining perspective. As the landscape continues to evolve, brands will need to consider how they can partner with these emerging curators to express their brand through new mediums or even inspire new products.” – **Zulu Alpha Kilo**



The Format of 2025: Influencer Format

TREND

#5

“ We no longer buy into the influencer; we buy into the distribution those formats promise. Sure, brands still chase after influencers with big follower counts, but they know call them better. They understand that high followers don't always mean high engagement. Instead, they ask: What's the unique IP this creator brings? A podcast? A Reel series? A recurring character? A viral joke that's now a signature? In today's world, content is their most valuable asset. It's their arsenal, and they're both quartermaster and sharpshooter. Influencer marketing is becoming less about personalities and more about media planning. Brands don't just want the person — they want the format and the reach it guarantees. And they're ready to pay top rupee for it. In 2025, the message is clear: your format is your superpower, and it's what keeps brands coming back. – **The New Thing**

“ Brands are no longer interested in celebrities; they're interested in the ones who create and use the trends. They want to know why they call them the reason.” – **180heartbeats**

“Celebrities shine annually in multi-million dollar Super Bowl ads, but the best ones leveraged celebrities in a content creator-esque, integrated marketing communications play.” – **Retroviral**



AI-first insights

TREND

#6

“AI can help unlock insights into audience behavior, predict trends, and personalize content, but the narrative core must come from a deep understanding of brand identity and audience values. This fusion of data-driven insights and creative storytelling creates an ecosystem where technology amplifies, rather than replaces, human ingenuity.” – **Liwa**

“AI algorithms analyze user behavior to deliver highly personalized content recommendations. - - AI has also revolutionized social listening by providing real-time, predictive insights. Marketers can now detect emerging trends, anticipate audience needs, and refine campaigns before trends peak, ensuring relevancy and maximizing impact.” – **Medulla**

“AI isn't just levelling up the game - it's revolutionising it. It supercharges the ability of marketers to uncover sentiment analysis, powers impactful market research, allows AI focus groups and enables rapid strategic pivots like never before.” – **Launch**



HumAI n, the creAI tor

TREND

#7

“While many users have embraced AI tools to generate content quickly and efficiently, the real skill is in refining that output. AI cannot fully replace human creativity, especially when it comes to building a personal brand. Audiences crave authenticity and emotional connections, which means creators need to take AI-generated content a step further by editing and infusing it with their unique personalities, voices, and values.” – **Leonardo1452**

“AI-powered content tools will be the MVPs of 2025. - - My thesis is that the magic happens in the friction between creativity and tech. It’s the marketers who can balance AI’s efficiency with human storytelling who will truly thrive.” – **Bright Mind**

“ On the other hand, social media faces a new challenge as profit and efficiency are prioritized over authenticity. Platforms are quickly being filled with spammy, low-quality content, and ‘AI sludge’ become mainstream. Creators need to learn how to embrace AI for effective communication while never losing sight of the human touch.” –

Day One Agency



Zero-click content

TREND

#8

“We also believe that zero-click strategies will increase. Content that is born and dies in the social network without impacting any other touchpoint. Content that is useful enough that it does not need to be reinforced with any web URL or download of any kind.” – **Atrevia**

“It may seem obvious, but I’ve noticed starting to understand what zero-click content is: valuable insights or engaging material provided directly on the platform without requiring users to click elsewhere.” – **Leonardo1452**

“Everything apps” embody the trend toward consolidation and utility. Inspired by the success of platforms like WeChat, these super-apps promise to integrate social networking, e-commerce, payments, and productivity into a seamless ecosystem. This appeals to convenience culture, where users increasingly demand a centralised experience to manage their digital lives.” – **THINKHOUSE**

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SOCIAL MEDIA
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The Interviews



180HEARTBEATS + JUNG V MATT



→ **Sylwia Rytel,**

*Head of Social Media &
Influencers*

*"There is no reason why brands
shouldn't fight to be on top search
lists on socials instead of Google, as
this is the real place where users are."*

180HEARTBEATS + JUNG V MATT (PL)

180heartbeats + JUNG v MATT is an independent interactive agency, established in Warsaw in 2007. Creativity, independence, and faith in the power of innovation are amongst the greatest values, driving the agency. Our mission is: creating brand excitement and partnering with brands that want to make a change.



180HEARTBEATS + JUNG V MATT

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Emerging users' expectations are both higher and lower regarding the content they consume. This requires a special kind of equilibrium that not many brands know how to provide. Consumers want to see authenticity behind use of trends, odd partnerships, or real-time marketing empty slot in a content calendar. This doesn't mean a big budget, huge production, or lavish influencer trips, but ideas tailor-made for the lovely creative that we spend hours developing won't mean anything if its only message is the generic one that the brand wants to communicate. With the use of GenAI, they can do it themselves, so what they need is for us to listen to them and follow their lead. Focusing on the narrative and seeing how it aligns with the audience's expectations and preferences is the sweet spot we should all aim for.

At the same time, when fun comes into play, everything might go out the window as social media users seek not only information but also One mismatched TikTok video that is fun can equal a whole campaign in changing the perception of the brand. Be creative, push the limits, don't be afraid to do something out of the box, and focus on what you want to say, not only how you want to do it. It's the Internet, so your content will still end up sandwiched between evergreen cat videos, news broadcasts, and the latest beauty releases present Stand out and stand for something you believe in.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

We can see the rise of understanding that the brand has to have something to say on social media and not treat it as solely a way to highlight the offer. Users want to see if you have any ideas for your brand and not just jump from trend to trend with the product in hand. A distinctive tone of voice, content you can create on your own that is still engaging and shows the brand's essence is key. Don't shy away from using USG or content creators to be closer to your audience, but always remember what you want to say and how the brand should be perceived. Coherence doesn't have to be boring, just know who you are and what suits you. Forcing content and trends will always seem fake, we all didn't have brat summer, even if we said we did. Social care has always proven to be a great source of insights; now, it has become a tool of community building that is necessary to be closer to the customer who expects and deserves it. It's a two-way conversation that benefits everyone. Focus on the don't be afraid of exploring BlueSky, Lemnif, and newer emerging ones that might become the go-to in 2025 in the light of current changes, so be prepared to follow your audience.

The use of AI needs to be highlighted as it is more common now and will slowly be taking over different aspects of running social media channels. Don't underestimate its power by keeping it in the creative part only and generating new versions of the sad cat video (we all know which one) or personalizing creatives into oblivion, but use it to better understand the metrics and data. Social listening, analyzing the sentiment, and overall performance - can all be evaluated in depth using new tools, and as we learn new approaches to social media, it's important to see how things work in our day-to-day communication.



180HEARTBEATS + JUNG V MATT

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

The great AI debate continues, and it's more important than ever as GenAI is here to stay and change the way we work forever. If you haven't adapted the use of it on the daily in 2024, 2025 might be the last call for it. It's widely known that it can be used for creatives (including videos and animations), reducing the work on the production team, bouncing back ideas and synthesizing insights, increasing levels of social care, optimizing campaigns, and personalizing assets. The possibilities to create great content and analyze everything thoroughly before and after the launch are endless. However, we can't forget that not only are we using it, but our audience is as well, so we should be prepared for it and make the brands as promptable as possible. Chat GPT and other tools are slowly becoming another touchpoint in the campaign ecosystem to meet our audience, and we need to be ready for that.

Not forgetting B2B communication, similarly to B2C, it's necessary not to just push the huge amount of personalized assets with every offer possible and hope that one will stick and end up in more business. Focus on the message, have it clear from the start and consistent among all channels, and then adapt & adjust. Every business will be optimized using AI and personalizing each creative as much as they can, so remember what differentiates your products and use it as an umbrella idea that later can be molded into what is needed.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Authenticity is more important than ever before. For the last few years, we have all witnessed the growth of the importance of micro and nano influencers that users could actually relate to, solve their problems, and their price point. Nowadays, we can pool and focus on specific niches that match the interests of our brand ambassadors, creators from particular interest groups, and their content can be beneficial. Especially that the community they belong to is of belonging to the audience and brand reaching out to appreciate it by creating something just for unique to make them feel seen.

It's about the quality of the reach and not just the big numbers. Moreover, using influencers as co-creators of ideas and not just campaign with insights into what the users want to see. Times of one-sided detailed briefs are over; they are the ones who create content and let them show that they call themselves influencers. It's well to UGC and visual content creators who have been on the rise for the past few years as a way to make the assets the users want to see.



ABELSON TAYLOR GROUP



→ **Helen Hoye,**

*Associate Director of
Engagement*

"The rise of AI in social media is reminiscent of the era when online dating first entered the digital space. People were excited, skeptical, and even apprehensive all at once. Yet, over time, it became a new normal."

ABELSON TAYLOR GROUP (USA)

Abelson Taylor Group is a wellness marketing agency that delivers a return on imagination. From insights and strategy to creative and execution, we're imaginative in all the market behaviors and deliver for our clients: improving being while providing tangible market results that grow your brand.



ABELSON TAYLOR GROUP

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Today, users are more comfortable in their social media environments than ever before. Platforms increasingly tailor content suggestions based on users' historical interactions, creating a highly personalized experience. Users now expect that the moment they open a social app, they'll not only see updates from accounts they follow but also discover additional content aligned with their preferences.

However, the sheer abundance of these "content flavors" is at times, overwhelming. Brands are constantly striving to avoid being perceived as "outdated" or "annoying" in their social media presence and interactions with their audiences.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

With the formalization of a potential TikTok ban earlier this year, other social platforms have actively responded by finding ways to attract users. YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram have introduced new features and embraced the short-form video format, capitalizing on the growing trend of "snackable" content.

Unsurprisingly, TikTok influencers and content creators have migrated to other platforms. YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram have programs to reward creators and encourage their migration. These efforts aim to establish their platforms as the new go-to destinations for short-form video content.

While direct TikTok competitors have been quick to react to the potential disruption, it will be interesting to see if platforms like X, Threads, or the emerging player BlueSky will remain focused on their core offerings of real-time, short-form text updates or pivot to incorporate emerging trends.



ABELSON TAYLOR GROUP



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

There is no doubt that 2024 has been defined by the undoubted and significant influence of AI. AI has permeated various aspects of the digital world, including social media. Its presence is everywhere—from AI-powered content editing tools to personalized chatbots. AI enables users and brands to create and engage on platforms and forecast data with unprecedented speed, and customize their presence and experiences almost instantly. This innovation has elevated social media to a level previously unseen in its history.

The rise of AI in social media is reminiscent of the digital space. People were excited, skeptical, and even apprehensive all at once. Yet, over time, it became a new normal. Similarly, while we are still exploring AI's full capabilities in the social sphere, and not all users and brands have embraced its potential, its impact on the social landscape will undoubtedly grow more profound in the years ahead.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Content creation has become easier than ever, and influencers are increasingly offering content around topics they are genuinely passionate about. However, by 2024, the influencer market has become oversaturated, leading to a loss of authenticity. Brands are increasingly being inundated with product offerings and demos, which can overwhelm audiences and dilute the impact of influencers. This shift is making it harder for brands to connect authentically with their target audience.

Many influencers have leaned into the easy "money" of sponsored content. This over-commercialization often erodes audience trust, making it harder for brands to connect authentically. Additionally, brands that avoid influencer marketing may find it difficult to stand out in the crowded social space.

To overcome these common challenges, the key lies in partnering with content creators who excel in their niche and adopt a storytelling approach that is unique, authentic, and engaging. These creators foster deeper connections with their audiences, helping brands stand out and build lasting trust.



ADOLESCENT CONTENT



→ **Raven Baker,**

*Social & Community Lead
Serenity Griffin, Community
Manager*

“Reliant on AI for validation, young people use it to calm anxiety, boost confidence, or make decisions when friends or family aren’t available. Users can also personalize their AI, shaping it into the ideal companion they can’t always find in the real world.”



→ **Serenity Griffin**

Community Manager

ADOLESCENT CONTENT (USA)

Adolescent Content is a global agency and content studio uniquely powered by Gen Z and youth creators. Founded to amplify youth voices, Adolescent specializes in crafting innovative campaigns, commercials, branded content, and social strategies that resonate with today’s diverse, ever-evolving youth market.

Through Youthtellers, its dedicated research and insights division, Adolescent uncovers actionable data and emerging trends, ensuring brands stay ahead of the curve in youth-driven markets.



ADOLESCENT CONTENT

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Everything Is Television, Except Traditional TV: Audiences are turning to **TikTok**, YouTube, and Twitch for entertainment, leaving traditional TV behind. These platforms offer something TV cannot: interactive formats that foster ongoing connections, create excitement, and instill a sense of urgency. TikTok Live, for example, keeps creators streaming for hours, sharing intimate details, and encouraging viewers to return for continued engagement. 82% of our Youthtellers, ages 15-27, say they feel more connected to creators and their stories when content is longer and more in-depth.

It's like a **never-ending FaceTime** with your favorite creator, a heightened body-doubling experience. On Twitch, streams like Kai Cenat's bring surprise guests, unpredictable moments, and real-time interaction, creating an experience that is both dynamic and captivating.

By 2025, these platforms will dominate as the primary entertainment destination for young people, redefining how we watch and connect. Spotify is incentivizing long-form, interactive content to meet this demand. Spotify is expanding its video capabilities to complement podcasts, while YouTube overhauls its TV app to better showcase native creators, positioning itself as a challenger to streaming giants. Meanwhile, Twitch continues to lead with record-breaking events like Kai Cenat's Mafiathon, reflecting the growing appetite for extended, shift highlights a fundamental change: viewers **crave parasocial connections**, high-energy interaction, and a deeper sense of belonging.

23 Y/O F - Los Angeles, CA: "I see the demand for longer-form stories that are broken up into small pieces continuing. It's always been a thing, and it will continue to be. Short-form videos are a big thing right now, so that deters people from longer videos. People have a very short attention span unless we're talking about the TikTok multiparters. Think storytime-style videos, but ones where the story is spread out across a series of multiple TikToks, rather than being a singular long video."

20 Y/O F - Kansas City, MO: "I feel more connected to creators or their stories when they share longer, in-depth content because it makes them seem more human and relatable. It feels less like curated, planned content and more like a friend's private story, where they're sharing their authentic thoughts and experiences. This deeper level of sharing allows me to see their personality and struggles, making it easier to connect with them on a personal level. It creates a sense of intimacy and trusts as if they're inviting me into their world rather than just presenting a polished version of themselves."

Slang Is Losing Its Regionality: Social media allows everyone to connect, regardless of where they are based. Slang that was once considered regional is now easily shared online and quickly adopted into daily vocabulary.

Driven by **TikTok's algorithm, the fascination** with African American Vernacular English (**AAVE**), and the **cultural energy** of cities like New York, Baltimore, Los Angeles, Houston, Chicago, and Miami, social media breaks down geographic barriers, making regional expressions more accessible than ever.

A phrase coined in one city can go viral and become part of someone's vocabulary halfway across the world. While this diffusion highlights the cultural impact of these regions, it often strips slang of its original context and meaning, reshaping how language travels and evolves in the digital age. Long story short, as we move into 2025, **different ways of speaking will continue to converge**, making us sound more and more alike.

23 Y/O F - Miami, FL: "Though there is technically a difference between AAVE and slang (in my opinion), I believe most slang words originate from AAVE nowadays. AAVE has always been around, and as an African American my parents, friends, or community may enter the public domain via wider adoption on the internet. I don't want to be arrogant and say every single slang word has originated from AAVE, but a lot of them clearly have."



ADOLESCENT CONTENT

22 Y/O M - Hesperia, California: "I'm white, so take this with a grain of salt. If I had to guess, rap music and the queer community seem like the two main routes that take AAVE from being something white people find annoying (obviously, this is a huge generalization, but I've seen slang terms like 'bae' and 'lit' go from 'too ghetto' to 'hip with the kids' in real

Users Will Make Purchases to Signal Sameness: Users are leveraging their purchasing power and attention to signal their ability to conform to societal trends, fostering a culture where "**sameness**" becomes a form of **social currency**. 73% of our Youthtellers, ages 15-27, think having similar products or styles as your peers helps foster a sense of belonging.

People will buy more of the same products, wear more of the same clothes, and adopt shared habits to feel accepted. This behavior will become even more common as the need for connection intensifies, driven by aspirational lifestyles and seamlessly showcase the goods needed to achieve the look and fit the part.

The desire to belong is universal, but in 2025, this need will evolve in ways that empower brands to demonstrate how their products and services can help users achieve this sense of belonging. Whether through fashion, technology, or entertainment, users will feel a stronger **urge to align with mainstream trends**, affirming their place in the larger social narrative.

23 Y/O M - Austin, TX: "Being similar to other people gives you a sense of comfort that you belong and that you feel valued. We like to feel represented as people but also be recognized as individuals."

24 Y/O F - Somerset, NJ: "Certain items are a signifier of belonging significance to the group of people that you belong to. I think people have chosen to align your

Users Turning to AI for Emotional Validation and Friendship: Young people are turning to **AI chatbots** for emotional support and friendship, often connect with their friends. As loneliness becomes more common, we will see an increase in young people using AI to fill emotional and social gaps. Whether for relationship advice, AI provides **immediate support** that is accessible, non-judgmental, and free from the complexities of human relationships. Unlike friends who might judge, gossip, or offer biased advice, AI can remain neutral.

Reliant on AI for **validation**, young people use it to calm anxiety, make decisions when friends or family aren't available. Users can also personalize their AI, shaping it into the **ideal companion** that often can't always be found in the real world. By 2025, with AI increasingly seen as a reliable, supportive, and non-judgmental presence.

26 Y/O F - Tinton Falls, NJ: "I like ChatGPT because it helps me decipher what people's meanings are behind their words. As an autistic person, I often take things too literally and sometimes struggle to see beyond that. ChatGPT helps a lot with that aspect."



ADOLESCENT CONTENT



SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Food as Entertainment: In 2024, food became a **luxury** and a **central aspect of social life**. By 2025, restaurants are set to become the #1 “third space.” With Americans managing tighter budgets, food will be the primary indulgence when they choose to splurge. Restaurants are capitalizing on this shift, tapping into multi-sensory dining experiences, experiential dishes, personalized menus, and highly shareable interiors. 65% of our Youthtellers, ages 15-27, say they prefer to socialize with friends at chain restaurants like Chili’s, Olive Garden, and Raising Canes. Items like sizzling fajitas, limited edition merch, cost-effective offers, and colorful daiquiris are all major draws.

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

People Will Engage More with Features That Offer Anonymity: There’s an increasing **sense of shame** tied to digital behavior, driven by concerns about how others might judge the content users engage with, the algorithms that feed it to them, and the amount of time they spend on their devices.

Features that enable more private interactions are encouraging greater engagement and screen time. For instance, Instagram took an early step in August 2019 by removing the “followers” section of the notification connections were liking and following. This gained momentum in June 2024 when Elon Musk removed the feature on X (formerly Twitter) that allowed users to see the interactions of people they follow.

By obscuring this information, platforms are reducing the pressure of public scrutiny and creating spaces where users feel more comfortable exploring and engaging freely. As apps continue to **prioritize anonymity**, these features are likely to become key drivers of user retention and interaction, shaping the future of digital social spaces.

24 Y/O M - Los Angeles, CA: “I like more content now [since I don’t need others seeing what I like, nor do I want them to perceive me.]”

20 Y/O M - Kansas City, MO: “I find myself liking more content what I engage with. The removal of the visible “like” feature provides a sense of privacy and reduces the fear of judgment from others about my preferences or opinions. It feels more freeing to engage with content without worrying about how my likes might be perceived. This change allows me to focus on genuinely liking content that resonates with me rather than curating an image based on public engagement.”



ADOLESCENT CONTENT

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

As the influencer economy continues to grow, we will see more large platforms turning to monetization strategies that emphasize exclusivity. This shift will drive the rise of paid communities, paid close friend lists, subscriber-only content, and other forms of personal access. These approaches will not only help followers feel more connected to the creator, fostering deeper trust and loyalty, but will also provide influencers with valuable additional revenue streams.

Beyond paid communities, this trend will expand to include unique forms of engagement, like Billie Eilish using her close friends list on Instagram to tease new music, creating viral buzz and boosting her platforms. More creators will follow suit, offering exclusive access to coveted information, unfiltered 'secret' spam accounts to engage their most loyal fans, and the importance of exclusivity in digital engagement.





ATREVIA



→ **Óscar Peña de San Antonio,**

Chief Innovation & Digital Solutions Officer & Former President of Metaverse/ Web3 Commision from IAB Spain

“We also believe that zero-click strategies will increase. Content that is born and dies in the social network without impacting any other touchpoint. Content that is useful enough that it does not need to be reinforced with any web URL or download of any kind.”

ATREVIA (ES)

We are a Global Communication and Corporate Affairs Agency, operating in 17 countries and a Partner Agency in 30 more territories. We have developed a methodology that enables companies to solve complex problems, with multiple stakeholders, through listening, strategy, creativity, and different agency and consultancy practices. We believe in commitment, and from the moment and the way we operate, we can become activists of the change, and drivers of a sustainable future. Because there is a way to communicate, to create sustainability plans, to define the purposes and the c the relationship with the shareholders and with the interest groups, and that makes the difference. Because the change rests in the hands of the companies, we can help them to integrate the change into each of their decisions. Creating movements, dialogue networks, studies, and counseling every day, putting the focus on people.



ATREVIA



S L M Y

KURIOE
THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGENCY

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

A rebalancing of forces is taking place in the platform ecosystem. The new world order is driving people -and also brands- to make decisions about the channels they want to be on in the coming years. There is a lot of pressure.

This will result in a further fragmentation of the audience, which is moving to new spaces more in line with their individual values and interests. This shift is being seen in those users migrating from X to Threads or BlueSky, or from X to LinkedIn. These movements in user behavior in social media are indicative of the search for environments that favor privacy and authenticity, away from the misinformation and toxicity that sometimes characterize the Internet giants. This trend will continue in 2025.

This phenomenon is also followed by brands, which are not willing to appear in spaces that have an impact on their reputation and encourage misinformation. The advertising industry is looking for new places to publish its content strategies and boost positioning through more controlled and secure paid media strategies.

On the other hand, we find ourselves in relevant change on the consumer side. If there is one word that defines the relationship between technology, economy, and society today, it is the search for quick alternative solutions to any daily issue that requires time and effort. In slang, they call it smartcuts or shortcuts, and it's a buzzword, a trend among Millennials and Generation Z. A new set of beliefs with which to approach life, at all levels.

Anyone who has daughters or sons between the ages of 14 and 22, let's ask them. They prefer a quick fix by searching TikTok than risk of self-diagnosis and self-medication linked); they prefer a video pill on Instagram of how to make a healthy recipe in two minutes than consulting a cookbook by the most renowned chef or the best nutritionist; they give more credibility to the agile investment recommendations of "experts" and mill flood YouTube than following a regulated financial investment guide. Shortcuts offer immediate rewards. They satisfy in a context where the pace of life is increasingly accelerated, and where time is a precious resource.

In this context, we are talking about a new type of consumer who seeks immediate solutions, who is not willing to waste time, who values work-life balance, who makes intensive use of technology, and who focuses on optimizing everything that affects his or her life, from health or entertainment to financial.



ATREVIA



SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Speed. Social networks are the thermometer of the functioning of the Society. They are its loudspeaker. And it progresses, mutates, and evolves at a dizzying pace. So does its content. That's why content creators are the ones who best respond to this challenge, and brands are aware of it. They need to reach their audiences with the content that best connects with them while at the same time, they need greater speed in generating a response.

We will see an increase in investment in creator marketing, with a greater weight on micro-influencers and macro-influencers versus the strategy.

We will also see an increase in investment in social media oriented to business objectives, such as sales. Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok are leading the way in social commerce, a trend that will increase in 2025 because it is a direct route to improving the shopping experience.

We also believe that zero-click strategies will increase. Content that is born and dies in the social network without impacting any other touchpoint. Content that is useful enough that it does not need to be reinforced with any web URL or download of any kind. A trend that has also begun to be glimpsed in conventional SEO strategies, where users reward getting quick information from the go to the brand's website.

This will have a tremendous impact on the measurement of digital marketing strategies and, of course, on the recent efforts of brands to increase the weight of First Party Data.

On the other hand, social networks are authentic spaces for people's conversation, especially through comments. This has begun to arouse the interest of brands, which are exploring ways to integrate into the conversation in the most appropriate way. Brands are intervening by commenting on the content of content creators, in a strategic way, with brief comments, and with agile interventions made in less than 24 hours. This will be a trend as long as brands do not compromise the authenticity of content creators' comments.



ATREVIA



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

2025 will be the year of full integration of AI into social media creative production pipelines. Brands are pushing agencies and social media teams to accelerate response times to viral trends and phenomena, while asking for more data-driven planning and editorial production.

We will see an increase in the use of AI-based workflows for image creation, animation of static elements, non-linear editing, sound, transcoding, multi-language translation, development of virtual influencers.

It will be important to learn to balance the weight of AI and human participation in the creation of content for social media. We are facing channels that base their success on authenticity, dialogue between people and relationships. The use of AI should not alter that equation. Brands that cross the red line run the risk of disconnecting their audiences, as is happening with many vertical media that are reducing their staffs and teams in favor of AI, at all stages of the process, from ideation, generation and production.

One of the most relevant applications in the field of social media will be the use of virtual archetypes for content creators and brands. For those who do not know what this is, it is the creation of a virtual entity (an AI-based personalized assistant), which has the character of a real person, a buyer persona, and is able to convincingly emulate their way of thinking, behaving or buying. Thanks to this, content creators will be able to develop content automatically with much greater relevance, tailored to the preferences, concerns and behaviors of the target audience. They can also be used to respond to questions, make comments or personalize any brand interaction with their micro-audiences. Of course, and with more precise training, it is possible to use them in online reputation management, responding appropriately to negative comments or reacting to positive ones.

Along with artificial intelligence, advances in technology, specifically with augmented reality (AR), are revolutionizing the user experience. It has been shown that advances at the technical level (texturing, lighting, raytracing), as well as in the hardware of the latest mobile devices, makes the development of amplified experiences via AR through Instagram, TikTok and other platforms a trend evolves in parallel to the increase of social shopping within these platforms, as virtually testing products significantly reduces the risk of purchase.



ATREVIA

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

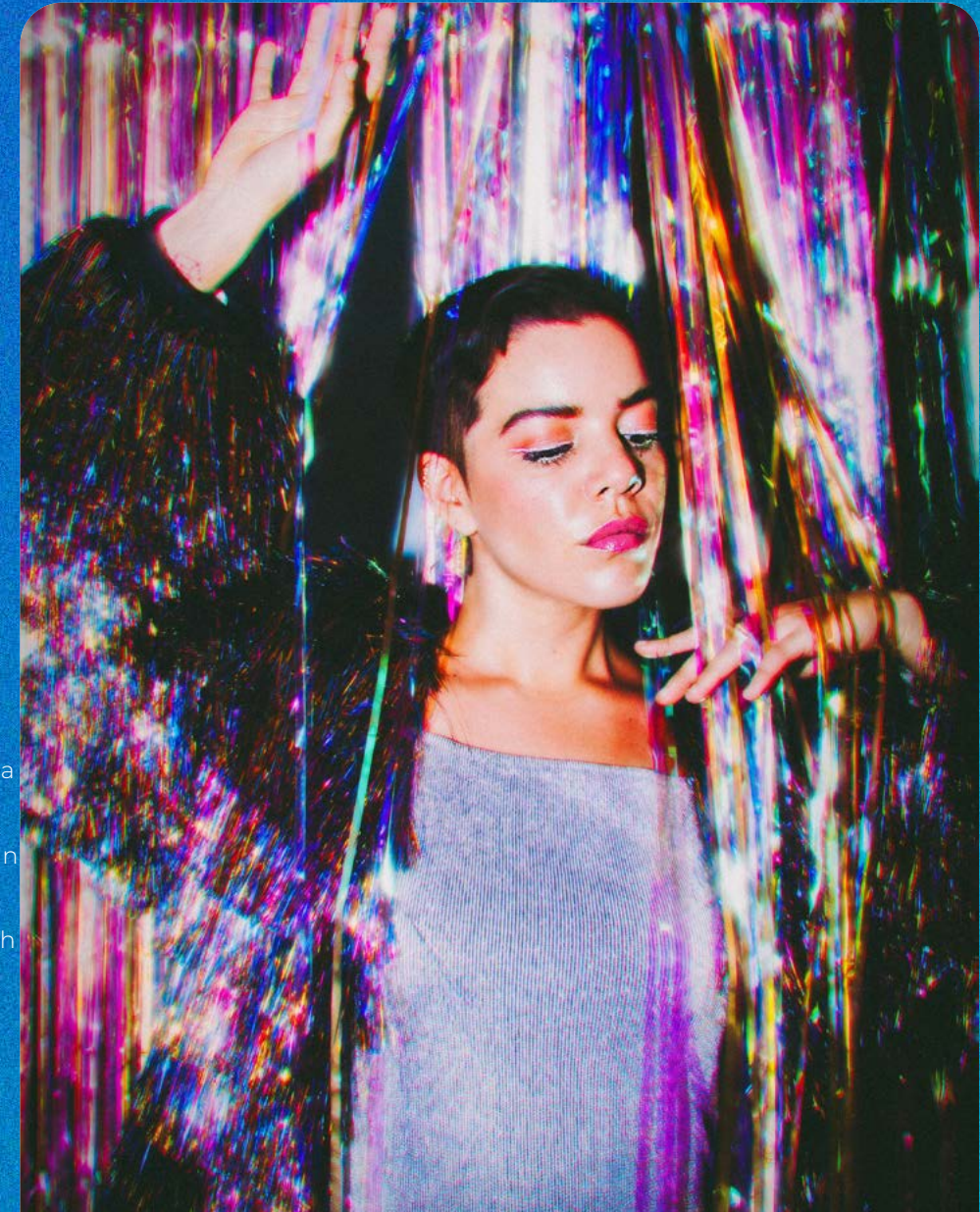
Elon Musk's recent tirade on X sums up what is to come: "You are the media now". We are going to experience a repositioning of the role of content creators globally, an increase in their relevance in brand strategies versus conventional media. It is about the democratization of content on a global scale, therefore, the number of people who want to share their knowledge, monetize their content and produce authentic content will increase (podcasters, video content creators, online trainers, etc...). The value of niche content will increase. And the fragmentation of audiences will accelerate further.

We should not be surprised, then, to see micro communities talking about niche topics such as "mindfulness techniques for eSports players", "green gadgets for people who live in vans" or "waste-free cooking for college students".

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

LinkedIn has become an efficient channel for demand-generation. content creation is the basis of this strategy, we are going to see more and more brands innovating in content formats and typologies on this platform. Short videos are a format that is gaining ground, and so is the use of micro-influencer content creators.

Along with micro-influencers, many brands have realized that there is a fantastic pool to create fresh, truthful, and authentic content with a direct impact on the brand. This trend, called Employee Advocacy, will continue in 2025. Employees bring authenticity to content creation and are a help in any content strategy based on organic growth. Within this strategy, we must add the personal brand-building efforts of the company's top managers, CEOs, and even the dolphins who are called upon to continue the management and leadership of a family business.





BRAND NEW AGENCY



→ **Jinah Ha,**

Campaign Director

“Building relationships and fostering trust between brands and consumers will emerge as the most critical strategy.”

BRAND NEW AGENCY (KR)

Brand New Agency is a creative agency based in Korea. It develops communication strategies and various creative solutions for brands. The agency has an impressive track record, having won awards at prestigious international advertising festivals such as Cannes, Clio, and the New York Festivals. Its major clients include leading consumer goods brands such as Jack Link's, Henkel Consumer Brands, and Yuhan-Clorox.



BRAND NEW AGENCY



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

The most notable trend of 2025 is the democratization of content creation. Users are no longer passive consumers of content but are establishing themselves as active creators. This shift has been accelerated by the advent of generative AI, which has lowered the barriers to content production. With various AI technologies and platforms, users can easily create high-quality content. This change not only leads to greater content diversity but also fosters the activation of new content creation communities.

Another key trend is the growing popularity of short-form and vertical video content on social media platforms. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are rapidly expanding, providing an endless canvas for creativity and storytelling. Understanding the short-form content trend and creating differentiated creative content will remain critical tasks in 2025.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

The most fascinating transformation in social media marketing is its evolution into a community-driven space. Moving beyond simply p follower counts, social media is becoming a hub interests and values. Building relationships and fostering trust between brands and consumers will emerge as the most critical strategy.

Consumers no longer rely on one-sided messages and instead seek connections with people who share similar interests. At the heart of this trend lies the concept of authenticity. Rather than asserting their own stories of their consumers. Collaborating with diverse creators actively engaged in these communities offers a compelling way to achieve this.

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

The most noteworthy technology of 2025 is generative AI. This innovation is revolutionizing content creation, establishing itself as a powerful tool for both brands and consumers. The ability to effortlessly generate text, images, videos, and music is expanding the ecosystem of social media content.

Whereas traditional marketing pushed mass-produced content to consumers, generative AI now enables the automatic creation of content tailored to users' preferences and interests. This presents an exciting opportunity for brands and marketers to attract new users and captivate their attention.

Generative AI is not just a new tool; it is fu d engage with social media. This technology will continue to play a central role in shaping the future of social media.



BRAND NEW AGENCY



INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Influencer marketing is shifting from macro-influencers to micro-influencers. While follower count was once the key metric for evaluating influencers, today qualitative factors such as authenticity and engagement are more important. Influencers with genuine engagement and authenticity play a crucial role in endorsing who attract and immerse consumers in the brand.

Micro-influencers establish a relatable image and rapport through social media, earning high levels of trust and strong connections with followers. This contrasts with macro-influencers, who, despite larger audiences, often lack the same level of engagement due to ad-heavy content. The relationship between micro-influencers and brands resembles a small tribe, making communication targeted and effective. This strategy with high ROI relative to marketing budgets.

Moreover, while macro-influencers often involve higher costs and limited accessibility, leading to one-off campaigns, micro-influencers are better suited for fostering long-term relationships with brands. Acting as brand ambassadors, they can extend their influence within the communities they center.

By 2025, targeting the communities of diverse micro-influencers aligned with brand personas will become a core marketing strategy.

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

The application of generative AI in B2B is growing rapidly. Generative AI serves as a powerful tool for sales teams, enabling them to generate email drafts, presentation materials, and customized proposals. These tools save time and enhance customer communication, allowing teams to manage more potential clients and boosting ROI by reducing repetitive tasks.

In B2B communication, the utilization of generative AI is rising. For instance, AI can create materials such as industry news and trend reports to attract potential leads, automatically distribute them, and analyze their performance. AI also collects real-time data on how content is consumed, making instant adjustments as needed to improve reach and engagement rates.



BRIGHT MIND



→ **Alexander Morad,**

CEO

"We already see a loss of interest in UGC, and I think that will mostly be replaced by AIGC (AI-generated creators). It's already too easy to create amazing AI creators with apps such as Captions suddenly, you can have 20 different creators talking about your product in 5 different languages in just one day."

BRIGHT MIND (SE)

Bright Mind will help you "out entertain" your competition. We're specialized in social media. We're on a mission - we want to make every business understand the importance of using social media the right way. Let us help you with your social media and we promise you that we'll increase your sales, give you new insights about your costumers and enhance your brand even more."



BRIGHT MIND

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Social media has slowly shifted into a new era, one where platforms are increasingly creator-first. Instagram, for example, has become casual photo dumps that kind of revived it a bit celebrating milestones or achievements. Interestingly, similar direction, slowly transitioning from a place where creators and influencers dominate. By 2025, we'll see a shift away from the "wild west" of user-generated content. It's very premature for TikTok, this usually happens when a generation pivots to a new platform and I don't see Gen Alpha blowing up a new one during 2025, and when they do, it will probably be avatar-based. This shift in TikTok could be explained by the fact that it never truly was a social media, more an entertainment media. Either way, consumers more passive than they've ever been, putting a lot of responsibility on the platform's algorithms.

One wildcard to watch is Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book). If it plays its cards right, it could bridge the gap globally as we wait for the next big social media sensation. It's a fascinating moment where the old rules of social media are fading, and the future feels wide open.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

AI is reshaping the game for social media marketing, making it more segmented, dynamic, and efficient. In 2025, the rise of agencies to create more personalized campaigns at scale is a key trend. AI-powered creatives and automation will have a direct effect on both consumer behavior and marketing. It's the marketers who can balance AI's efficiency with human storytelling who will thrive. Social commerce will also explode, especially on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. It's all about creating a seamless journey from discovery to purchase.



BRIGHT MIND



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

AI-powered content tools will be the MVPs of 2025. When it comes to creativity and creation, we have platforms such as Captions, Hey Gen, Onsocial, and Picta, I've never, really separated it. I usually add b2b+b2c and create b4h, which is business 4 humans. At the end of the day, I run a business, but I consume social media as a human. I believe it will become like LinkedIn are evolving from boring corporate spaces into hubs for storytelling and thought leadership and are stronger now with their focus on short-form videos. There has been a little rise during 2024 when it comes to Employee-generated content, not too much, though, and I think it will stay the same during 2025.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

In 2025, it's all about micro- and nano-influencer will be much more segmented, niche creators who have insanely loyal followings will be very strong. They're perfect for brands looking already see a loss of interest in UGC, and I think that will mostly be replaced by AIGC (AI-generated creators). It's already too easy to create amazing AI creators with apps such as Captions suddenly, you can have 20 different creators talking about your product in 5 different languages in just one day. Brands are catching on, using them for campaigns where full creative control is key. Another trend? Long-term partnerships over quick collabs. With the rise of AI creators and micro-turn to the bigger influencers for long-term part teaming up to build stories over time, creating deeper audience connections. It's less about "one and done" and more about playing the long game.

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

Onsocial, Picta, I've never, really separated it. I usually add b2b+b2c and create b4h, which is business 4 humans. At the end of the day, I run a business, but I consume social media as a human. I believe it will become like LinkedIn are evolving from boring corporate spaces into hubs for storytelling and thought leadership and are stronger now with their focus on short-form videos. There has been a little rise during 2024 when it comes to Employee-generated content, not too much, though, and I think it will stay the same during 2025.



DANG



→ **Karan Dang,**

CEO & Founder

“Long-form content will make a comeback. I’m not talking about the long-winded corporate messages, but rich, in-depth storytelling that adds value, and then microcontent will fill in the gaps—snackable pieces of content that complement and drive home the broader narrative.”

DANG (US)

DANG is a creative consultancy and agency specializing in Next-Gen Centricity™. Founded by internationally acclaimed Creative and Brand Executives Karan & Shruti Dang, DANG focuses on crafting innovative strategies and impactful storytelling tailored for Gen Z and Gen Alpha. With a deep understanding of culture, creativity, and community, DANG helps brands break into culture authentically through trend analysis, digital anthropology, and cutting-edge creative storytelling. Whether brand experiences, unlocking or designing for the future, DANG is where bold ideas meet next-gen innovation.



DANG



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

In my opinion, by 2025, social media will become an even more integral part of our daily lives, not just for entertainment, but as a functional tool that blends seamlessly with our routines. One of the most interesting trends I see is the rise of social commerce in the US—where platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook aren't just places to consume content, but essential hubs for discovering, exploring, and purchasing products. For me, it's hard to imagine how much longer we'll rely on the traditional shopping journey, which requires us to leave social platforms, visit a website, add items to a cart, login, and enter our credit card information. It's a clunky, friction-heavy experience that just doesn't align with the fast-paced, seamless nature of modern life, especially for the savvy, next-gen user.

We've already seen the beginnings of this on TikTok and Instagram, where you can watch a video, tap on a product, and make a purchase without ever leaving the platform. I believe this will only accelerate. By 2025, I expect shopping to be almost instantaneous—whether you're scrolling through a TikTok feed or interacting with an influencer's livestream. This means the journey from that stop for something and speak to the values. As a result, long-form content will shorten, and social platforms will become essential to the purchasing process. Gen Z and Gen Alpha are all about efficiency, and if social media can become a more useful, snackable, entertaining, it will likely become their go-to space for discovering and buying everything from products to experiences. Social media is no longer just a passive, entertainment-driven tool—it's becoming an all-in-one digital marketplace and service hub.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

For me, the most exciting shift in social media marketing by 2025 will be the rise of founder-led marketing. As I see it, brands have been overrun by a sea of impersonal, mindless advertising that consumers are starting to tune out. With younger generations rejecting traditional marketing, the need for authenticity and relatability has never been greater. Founder-led marketing, where the actual person behind the company becomes the face and voice of the brand, is something I've seen grow in popularity, and I truly believe it will skyrocket in the next few years. We've already seen this at the upper echelons with figures like Brian Chesky of Airbnb more personal, public roles, but by 2025, this trend will extend far beyond the tech giants.

Consumers, especially Gen Z, have increasingly shown they want to connect with brands on a deeper, more personal level. They are not looking for a logo or generic brand message; they want to know who is behind the brand and what that person stands for. This is where founder-led marketing comes in. I think brands that embrace this trend and humanize themselves by showcasing their leaders will be able to create a more authentic connection with their audiences.

What excites me the most is how this shift will also make community-building the new face of brand development. Instead of simply pushing out advertising, brands will need to foster genuine relationships with their communities. They'll need to listen to their audience, engage in meaningful conversations, and build spaces where people feel they belong. This is especially true for younger generations, who are drawn to brands that stand for something and speak to the values. As a result, long-form content will make a comeback. I'm not talking about the long-winded corporate messages, but snackable pieces of content that complement and drive home the broader narrative. I really believe 2025 will see this balance of long-form and microcontent become the foundation of successful social media marketing.



DANG



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

In my view, the most exciting technology trend in social media by 2025 will be AI integration at scale. We're already seeing the power of AI in platforms like TikTok and Instagram with their recommendation algorithms, but I think it's going to become even more personalized. Platforms will be able to use AI to predict not just what you'll like, but what you'll buy—transforming how brands can engage with their audiences. AI will also automate and optimize content creation, helping marketers generate creative assets more quickly and efficiently while maintaining high standards.

For me, the real game-changer will be AI agents that take on multiple roles. These agents will combine processes and oversee the lower-funnel marketing tasks, like quality control and optimization, allowing human teams to focus more on strategy and high-level creative work. For example, AI might automatically adjust a campaign based on real-time data, ensuring that content reaches the right audience at the right time. It's going to take away a lot of the grunt work and make campaigns smarter, faster, and more effective. As much as AI will assist in creation, I still believe human oversight will be key to refining the content and ensuring it resonates with the target audience.

But AI isn't just about efficiency—it's also about new capabilities. I'm particularly interested in how social platforms will continue to introduce new ways to make money directly from engagement. Whether it's through livestream shopping, branded content, or interactive ads, platforms will continue to offer new avenues for creators and brands to generate revenue. This will make social commerce an even more integral part of how brands connect with their audiences, and how influencers monetize their followings.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

I think one of the most important shifts in influencer marketing has been dominated by big names, I'm seeing a shift toward smaller, highly engaged audiences. I really believe that micro-influencers are going to become more prominent because they offer more genuine, personal connections with their followers. These influencers often have more dedicated, loyal communities. For me, this is a huge opportunity for brands to tap into these niche audiences that align more closely with their values and messages.

What I find even more exciting is the shift toward how many influencers are moving away from just being sponsored to starting to build their own products and businesses. They're monetizing their communities in innovative ways—whether it's through launching their own product lines, creating subscription-based services, or even starting their own digital platforms. This move gives creators more control over their income and enables them to build businesses that are directly connected to their followers. It's a game-changer for the creator economy, and I believe it will lead to more collaborative opportunities for monetization.



DANG

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

When it comes to B2B, I think social media will be at the forefront of brand-building efforts. Traditionally, B2B marketing has been more formal, with a focus on email campaigns, LinkedIn posts, and industry-specific content. B will be the driving force for B2B companies looking to humanize their brands and build deeper relationships with clients and partners. LinkedIn, in particular, is evolving into a powerful marketing tool for B2B brands, providing a platform for content, networking, and thought leadership all in one place.

I also see B2B influencers playing a bigger role. These are leaders with a loyal following, and they will help B2B brands connect with a more engaged audience. This is a shift I'm particularly excited about because it humanizes the B2B space, making it more approachable and relatable. The B2B world will become more social-led, where content creation, community engagement, and relationship-building become central to brand strategy. Social media will be the place where B2B companies can showcase their values, share insights, and nurture long-term relationships, all while positioning themselves as authentic and transparent brands.





DAY ONE AGENCY



→ **Jordan Alperin,**

Creative Strategist

“Social media faces “AI-enshittification,” a term coined by writer Cory Doctorow to describe the decline of platforms as profit and efficiency are prioritized over quality. Social feeds are quickly being filled with spammy, low-quality content where ‘brain rot’ and ‘AI sludge’ become mainstream.”

DAY ONE AGENCY (USA)

Day One Agency is an independent creative communications agency designed to help brands build legacy through relevance. We believe that nothing earns relevancy and connection like a great story, and have structured our creative powerhouse to help brands Shape, Share and Fuel those stories. Since our founding in 2014, we’ve partnered with world-renowned brands like American Express, Chipotle, Converse, e.l.f, Nike, Lyft, Ferrara, and more. With a focus on fewer, deeper client relationships, we power our work with mutual investment, ruthless prioritization, and an obsession with the consumer to develop breakthrough creative.



DAY ONE AGENCY



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Platforms have long shaped our algorithms, prioritizing engagement metrics over user preferences – looking at you, Meta with the controversial move to make Instagram feeds recommendation-heavy. And yet, as we move into 2025, the balance of power is beginning to shift. While platforms still dictate algorithms and platform features, users are increasingly asserting their influence in a fragmented community versus actively creating two-way user interactions, showcasing a growing desire for digital autonomy and a rejection of the pressure to perform for algorithm-driven engagement.

This shift is especially evident in the recent migration from X (formerly known as Twitter) to Bluesky. This marks a pivotal moment as a legacy platform is finally being shaken to its core by users seeking spaces that prioritize community support and transparency. In a more subtle user power move, Instagram's "Grid Zero" trend, where users archive or delete posts to create a blank slate, signals a pushback towards posting performativity. Similarly, on TikTok only about half of users actively post, favoring a more intentional approach to social media. Recognizing this shift, both TikTok and Instagram have introduced features that allow users to reset feed recommendations, responding to growing demands for control and personalization.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Building a 'digital community' is not a new concept, but it's becoming a buzzword that social media professionals love to latch onto. But the best brands and creators that stay winning, understand the difference between a one-way broadcast and a two-way conversation. They're honing in on the superfans. We're experiencing a digital cultural shift where fans aren't just involved in the comment section, but are true collaborators in the inner workings of brand participation.



DAY ONE AGENCY



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

AI has dominated the news cycle for the past two years, reshaping every possible industry and conversation across the internet. In 2025, the key focus is reaching a point where AI is no longer just experimental, it's an integral part of the social media experience for both users and creators. From appearing visibly in our feeds to working behind the scenes in analytics or concept ideation, AI is changing the way we consume content and create content.

We're navigating a delicate balance between AI-driven ideation, and making social media processes more efficient. For example, TikTok's new Creative AI suite, Symphony, empowers creators with tools to brainstorm new ideas and instantly take the work out of generating voiceovers or subtitles. On the other hand, social media faces a new level of competition by writer Cory Doctorow to describe the decline of platforms as profit and efficiency are prioritized over quality. Social feeds are quickly being filled with spammy, low-quality content where 'brain rot' and 'AI sludge' become mainstream. To stand out, brands will need to learn how to embrace AI for efficiency and two-way user communication while never losing sight of the human touch.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Deeply integrated creator partnerships that go beyond one-off collaborations are the key focus. Influencer content isn't enough in 2025. Influencers are showcasing their commitment to fans or a specific brand associations.

This shift is driving innovative approaches to influencer marketing, moving away from 'middle-man' copy and paste content into a more authentic, creator-led space. Brands like Starface are also leading the charge in initiatives like Star Market, a merch store featuring original handmade creations crafted by niche creators. These close relationships are taking over the role of traditional agencies, and will only continue to become more dominant as brands seek to connect with their audience in a more meaningful way.



INBRAX



→ **Ricardo Álvarez,**

*Director Planning,
Social Media*



→ **Sebastián Berríos,**

Social Media Manager



→ **Pancho González,**

*Co-Founder & Chief
Creative Officer*

“AI-powered chatbots will merge with immersive experiences, allowing brands to interact with users through 3D avatars or virtual reality environments. Additionally, social platforms will leverage predictive models to recommend content not only based on interests but also on emotional states detected through contextual signals.”

INBRAX (CH)

Inbrax is an ad agency full of creative services with digital marketing at heart.



INBRAX



S L M Y

KURIOE
THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGENCY

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

PG: The most interesting trend is the rise of private and community-based social networks. Users are seeking more intimate and authentic environments, migrating from mass platforms to options like Discord, WhatsApp Communities, or Telegram groups, where they can interact in safer, more personalized spaces. Additionally, ultra-short content consumption and immersive formats (such as 3D videos or augmented reality) will become dominant, driven by the evolution of devices like smart glasses.

RÁ & MÁ: Short Videos and Authentic Content: The most significant trend in user behavior on social media in 2025 is the dominance of short video formats and the demand for authentic content. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are leading in engagement, blending entertainment with authenticity. These formats have shifted from simplistic productions to sophisticated narratives, addressing user expectations for real, relatable stories.

Statistically, these platforms favor brevity and authenticity, catering to algorithms that prioritize concise and engaging content. Users gravitate towards relatable storytelling, pushing brands to focus on building authentic connections through emotional resonance. For example, TikTok's endless short stories create an addictive and immersive experience.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

PG: The key shift is the consolidation of social networks as transactional platforms. Thanks to advanced social commerce tools, platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest will further integrate with direct payment solutions. This will transform marketing strategies, shifting from lead generation to direct sales closures within the same channel. Additionally, the use of generative AI to create personalized campaigns in real time will become standard practice.

RÁ & MÁ: Integration of Social Commerce and Search Features: The integration of social commerce into social media platforms represents the most critical shift. Platforms like TikTok now double as search engines, offering users practical recommendations and authentic reviews. This trend has tremendous implications for marketing, especially in the awareness and consideration stages of the customer journey.

For example, users search for answers like "Best restaurants nearby" or "Ideal washing machines for small apartments," where brands collaborations excel. Social commerce enables seamless shopping experiences, blending user-generated content with e-commerce functionality.



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

PG: The most relevant technology will be the advanced integration of generative AI and visual voice assistants in social networks. AI-powered chatbots will merge with immersive experiences, allowing brands to interact with users through 3D avatars or virtual reality environments. Additionally, social platforms will leverage predictive models to recommend content not only based on interests but also on emotional states detected through contextual signals.

RÁ & MÁ: AI Revolution in Content Creation and Strategy: transforming content creation, enabling automation, mass personalization, and real-time analytics. Despite challenges with “plastic” textures in generated content, AI optimizes targeting and operational efficiency. Future gaps in emotional connection, enabling brands to maintain authenticity while scaling personalization.

AI's analytical capabilities and creative support streamline processes, but emotionally resonant content still requires a human touch. Over time, AI's ability to replicate authentic emotional nuances will likely grow, enhancing its utility in digital storytelling.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

PG: The most important change will be the rise of blockchain-based creator economy. AI-generated influencers (NFTs) will transform how influence is measured and creators who combine authentic content with technological innovations, focusing on metrics such as building active communities and contract transparency through smart contracts.

RÁ & MÁ: Micro-Influencers and Niche Communities: A shift in influencer marketing is the rise of micro-influencers with greater authenticity and direct connections with niche audiences. These smaller-scale influencers offer targeted reach and high engagement. Community segmentation, for instance, fan communities like those for “Mortal Kombat” demonstrate the power of listening to these niche groups to adapt strategies and revitalize engagement.

Collaborating with influencers embedded in subcultures can authentically and resonate with highly specific audiences, while aligning with broader trends emphasizing community-building over traditional mass marketing.



INBRAX



B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

PG: In the B2B space, social networks will become key platforms for education and thought leadership building. LinkedIn will expand its offering of advanced analytics and segmentation tools while emerging platforms focused on vertical sectors (such as engineering, healthcare, or sustainability) will allow companies to develop deeper, more strategic relationships with potential clients. Furthermore, hybrid events and metaverse experiences will become essential for B2B interaction.

RÁ & MÁ: TikTok and Short-Form Video for B2B Engagement: Even in B2B, platforms like TikTok are emerging as creative and discovery hubs. Businesses leverage short-form videos to highlight innovation and build thought leadership. The authenticity and brevity demanded by B2C audiences are now spilling into B2B communication, creating opportunities for companies to humanize their brands and foster connections in a relatable manner.

Moreover, AI-driven personalization allows B2B marketers to segment audiences and deliver tailored messages efficiently. The balance of these tech solutions positions B2B brands as both relatable and forward-thinking.



JAM SESSION AGENCY



→ **Oana Oprea,**

*Head of Digital
Planning & Brand
Strategist*

"The future of advertising isn't just reaching audiences; it's being invited into their world."

JAM SESSION AGENCY (RO)

Jam is an agency with a unique blend of progressive business and creativity, collaborating to create brands that resonate with today's generations and those to come. Jam is the most awarded local independent agency in recent years, proud to collaborate with business partners who are passionate, courageous individuals, who continuously challenge traditional communication models with the aim of creating authentic emotions.

In 2023, Jam Session Agency was ranked 1st European independent agency. In 2024, Jam received 10 awards and 11 awards at local festivals like the Romanian PR Awards and the Internetics Gala.

Overall, Jam Session Agency was recognized for its creativity and impact on global competitions like WARC, SABRE, D&AD, and Golden Hammer, reinforcing its position as one of the top independent agencies in Europe.



JAM SESSION AGENCY



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Certainly, in terms of how people use social media, one of the fastest-growing trends that we have analyzed is **The Rise of Private and Niche Communities**.

As social platforms become crowded, and the algorithms become increasingly unpredictable and incomprehensible, private groups and specialized communities are thriving. Platforms like Discord, Slack, and WhatsApp are being used for deeper, more focused interactions – with engagement rates soaring to nearly 50% —ten times higher than on traditional platforms (Buffer, 2024).

The trend of private and niche communities is not only visible on standalone platforms like Discord and Slack but is also shaping functionalities within mainstream social media apps like Instagram and Facebook. For instance: (1) **Broadcast Channels:**

Instagram's broadcast channels, such as those used by influencers and brands to create a one-to-many connection, allow them to share exclusive updates, and behind-the-scenes content, and engage directly with their most dedicated followers, fostering a sense of belonging and exclusivity. (2)

Close Friends and Private Feeds: Tools like Instagram's "Close Friends" and Facebook's friend list-specific feeds offer users more personalized content. One example of hopping on this trend was leveraged by Billie Eilish, who launched her "Close Friends" list for a limited time, creating not just a sense of exclusivity but also a direct connection.

For our industry, tapping into these tools means aligning with the growing demand for meaningful interactions and leveraging exclusivity to build trust and loyalty. The future of advertising isn't just reaching audiences; it's being invited into their world.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

I think that the last 4 years in particular have seen a significant shift in social media marketing. "Influencers at the marketing table"; they are now pivotal players in sales and marketing strategies. Our work involves not only crafting engaging content but also delivering measurable e-commerce outcomes.

Viral trends on platforms like TikTok, such as the #FetaTok trend that reached over 600 million views but also triggered a global 67% surge in feta sales exemplify this shift. (Greekcitytimes, 2024). These viral movements don't just sell products—they shift industries. From food to fashion, businesses are increasingly integrating social commerce strategies to harness this momentum.

Platforms like Instagram and TikTok now offer integrated shopping tools, allowing users to discover, evaluate, and purchase products seamlessly within the app. This "discovery-to-conversion" pipeline has redefined the marketing industry, this evolution demands a rethinking of social media's purpose.

Social media specialists must balance the art of engagement with the science of sales, bridging the gap between brand-building and direct revenue generation. The future of e-commerce lies in these hybrid roles, where creativity and commerce converge.



JAM SESSION AGENCY



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

It's hard to answer a question like this without mentioning the impact that AI has already begun to have, from content creation to analysis and reporting. AI's integration into social media marketing has truly revolutionized the way content is created, providing unprecedented speed, scalability, and personalization. A notable recent example of this trend is Coca-Cola's 2024 Christmas campaign, which reimagine its iconic "Holidays Are Coming" ad. By leveraging AI platforms, Coca-Cola was able to rapidly produce over 100 different versions of the commercial, customized for various global markets (The Campus Agency, 2024).

But AI's impact on social media marketing extends beyond content creation into crucial areas like social listening, insights generation, and reporting. Tools we use - **li Emplify** and **Brandwatch** - are perfect examples of how AI can optimize these functions. These platforms allow us to analyze vast amounts of social media data in real-time, offering actionable insights about consumer behavior, trends, and brand sentiment.

As AI continues to develop, its role in social media marketing will expand even further, making tools essential for staying competitive in an increasingly data-driven landscape. These technologies empower marketers to go beyond simple content creation, turning raw data into actionable strategies that can directly

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

(My personal favorite): Curators are the next influencers. And Curation is the new algorithm people crave. I loved seeing the rise of curators in the digital landscape. Curators like Tiffany Schuman) or Jeremy Fragrance (@jeremyfragrance) are discovering, selecting, and sharing content that resonates with a particular niche or audience. Unlike classic influencers who rely on inspire their audiences by shaping perceptions and setting trends without necessarily pushing sales directly. They act as tastemakers, guiding their communities through their personal selections, be it through fashion, travel, or new technologies.

This shift is particularly relevant as audiences seek authenticity and a sense of community rather than just product promotion. Curators tend to have smaller, highly engaged followings compared to traditional influencers, making them more trusted due to their perceived genuine interest and expertise. For brands, working with curators means focusing on fostering relationships and providing value rather than just creating transactional partnerships.

As more consumers seek personalized, trend-driven experiences, curators offer a powerful way to tap into niche markets and drive conversions through curated, engaging content. For brands and marketers, this means partnering with curators as key figures in subtle and creative ways.



JAM SESSION AGENCY

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

Collaborative content in B2B marketing is a trend that's picking up and it's fascinating to see how it's evolving.

By partnering with experts, influencers, and other brands, value-driven content that resonates with their target audience, builds credibility, and generates organic leads. Whether it's a joint webinar, a podcast, or a co-authored blog post, these collaborations bring together fresh perspectives and deepen the connection with customers. **It's not just about sharing content anymore; it's about sharing value,** building trust, and expanding reach through authentic, community-driven interactions.

Lately, I've been interested in how LinkedIn has taken collaborative content to the next level by introducing features that allow users to co-create value-driven content directly on the platform. LinkedIn Events, for example, allow B2B brands to host live events and invite other industry leaders to co-host webinars or panels. The benefits of this type of collaboration are twofold: it allows the host brand to share the spotlight with experts in their field, and it gives the guests access to thought leadership. The results are impressive as well since LinkedIn declared that Live videos, on average, get 7x more reactions and 24x more comments than native videos produced by the same broadcasters (LinkedIn Marketing solutions, 2024).





LAUNCH



→ **Victoria Jenkins,**

*Associate Director of
Social*

“According to a recent survey by Capterra, Generative AI is expected to produce 48% of all social media content by 2026, and 83% of companies anticipate increasing their investment in Gen AI tools.”

LAUNCH (UK)

We're Launch, one of the UK's leading independent creative brand PR agencies. Driven by creativity and exceptional talent, we cover the full range of PR, from social media and content, to experiential and media relations. What sets us apart? For us, it's providing a term, ownable 'creative territory' on the channel. It's a skill we've honed across hundreds of brands and thousands of campaigns. We Own It. And we push our clients to do so, also.



LAUNCH



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

Social platforms are set to seriously challenge traditional search engines as the primary brand discovery tool in 2025. Already, 64% of Gen Z have used TikTok as a search engine according to Adobe's research, with the common expression being, "I Don't Google, I TikTok". The platforms user-generated social content is often cited as feeling "more authentic" than the ads and optimised websites typically found at the top of traditional search engine results. A quarter of people said they primarily use social media to search and communicate online, this trend is only set to rise next year. The takeaway for brands? Your digital content needs to be entertaining, algorithm-friendly and effortlessly shareable.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

AI has revolutionised how marketing teams and the industry work on social media campaigns, and this trend is set to only accelerate in 2025. According to a recent survey by Capterra, Generative AI is expected to produce 48% of all social media content by 2026, and 83% of companies anticipate increasing their investment in Gen AI tools.

AI isn't just levelling up the game - it's revolutionising it. It supercharges the ability of marketers to uncover sentiment analysis powers in fact, market research, allows AI focus groups and enables rapid strategic pivots like never before. AI, like any tool, is only as effective as the prompts guiding it, and the most impactful Gen AI campaigns always incorporate a human touch.

There's a big disconnect currently between AI usage and levels of public trust. A recent YouGov survey found that 73% of consumers are concerned about AI-generated content, so brands need to think carefully about how they are applying this tech and ensure that they are being transparent about its usage.

The challenge for 2025 and beyond is clear: brands must harness the power of AI thoughtfully, blending tech innovation with human creativity, to build trust and create campaigns that truly resonate.



LAUNCH



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

The metaverse is maturing. It's set to fundamentally reshape social media in 2025, merging the digital and physical worlds into an immersive, interactive experience. It's no longer just about gaming or digital hangouts; it's becoming the foundation for social shopping, networking, and socializing.

Traditional social media platforms focus on scrolling through 2D content, but the metaverse will introduce 3D spaces. In 2025, the metaverse will allow for large-scale social gatherings, from virtual concerts to conferences, where you can attend as an avatar. As VR and AR devices become cheaper and more accessible, everyone from artists to brands is establishing a presence there.

With the right virtual infrastructure, people can engage in social activities that feel less limited by physical and geographic constraints, opening up more accessible, globalized opportunities. The metaverse will redefine social media recommendations - to time spent in virtual spaces, interactions within branded worlds, or participation in gamified brand experiences. Influencers of their real-life personas, hosting branded events and product launches in these virtual worlds.

Niche social communities and content creators will flourish in the metaverse, allowing for hyper-personalized 3D environments. Ultimately, the metaverse is set to blur the lines between social media, gamification, and e-commerce, creating an entirely new digital ecosystem for connection, creativity, and commerce. Brands and users alike will need to adapt to this dynamic shift.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Local is the new global. Micro-influencers with niche expertise are likely to prosper like never before. As people crave more relatable content, the glamorous global influencers are feeling a tad out of touch. Style influencers with highly tailored, hyper-local content are thriving. Platforms are already experimenting with neighborhood-based feeds - with smaller private groups, and influencers are creating bespoke content. Think less content of celebrities having cocktails in Capri and more customized recommendations from your local coffee shop.

Forget one-size-fits-all. Deloitte's data shows that consumers are more likely to purchase from brands that deliver personalized experiences. Generative AI is fuelling hyper-personalized content experiences, creating everything from individualized music playlists based on your daily mood to AI-powered shopping assistants that recommend products similar to items you recently purchased. Brands are also using generative AI to help create text, images, or videos. This trend is only set to rise exponentially.

This social media trend taps into the return to authenticity. Consumers are craving more intimacy and less gloss, really owning their authenticity and bespoke expertise.



LAUNCH



B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

2025 is set to see a further surge in Employee A social media. Employees act as brand ambassadors by sharing company updates and personal experiences to humanize the brand and expand its reach organically. Gen Z influencers are taking the reins, and through their LinkedIn resumes, they're tackling career challenges head-on and sharing raw, unfiltered industry insights.

According to LinkedIn's data, "87% of B2B buyers prefer content from trusted industry influencers over branded sales messages." LinkedIn expertise and credibility to B2B sales and data shows that "67% of B2B buyers engage with influencer content during the consideration journey." Social brand ambassadors don't just sway the decision-makers at the top, they infiltrate the entire buying committee, sparking credibility across every stakeholder in the room.

In 2025, the B2B brands that thrive will utilize a powerful collective of social storytellers, who turn authentic connections into measurable ROI.



LEONARDO1452



→ **Gaby Arriaga,**

Business Trends Consultant, Creator of the Near Future Thinking tool, Founder of Leonardo1452 and Business del Futuro

"It may seem obvious, but I've noticed that companies are finally starting to understand what zero-click content is: valuable insights or engaging material provided directly on the platform without requiring users to click elsewhere."

LEONARDO1452 (MX)

Leonardo1452 is a consulting company specializing in consumer trends in Latin America and the creator of the tool Near Future Thinking©. As trend hunters we look for tendencies that point to nascent market dynamics that have not yet come into companies' purview – markets in early stages of development. Leonardo1452 is an expert at detecting these emerging habits that can approach with the force of an ocean wave so that you can make effective business decisions about what to adjust to ensure your pre-eminence in years to come.



LEONARDO1452



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

One of the most interesting and important trends in social media is the move to humanize AI. While many users have embraced AI tools and efficiently, the real skill now lies in adding a human touch. Audiences crave authenticity and emotional connections, which means creators need to take AI-generated content a step further by editing and infusing it with their unique personalities, voices, and values. This approach ensures that the content feels genuine and resonates deeply with the audience.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

A significant shift in social media marketing is the use of predictive analytics to anticipate future buying behaviors and preferences. By leveraging high-quality first-party social media customer actions at each stage of the sales funnel and optimize campaigns to make a big impact at crucial moments. This involves analyzing vast amounts of user-generated data—likes, shares, comments, and demographics—and using historical data to forecast trends. The result is the ability to create highly personalized experiences that resonate with audiences, maximize ad spend, and drive stronger business outcomes.



LEONARDO1452



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

It may seem obvious, but I've noticed that companies are focusing on what zero-click content is: valuable insights or engaging material provided directly on the platform without requiring users to click elsewhere. Examples include threads (on platforms like Threads or Bluesky, especially as people leave X) or TikTok videos that deliver the full experience up front. As users increasingly prefer this approach caters to their preference for instant insights without interruptions. For instance, LinkedIn posts without links often see higher engagement, making zero-click content essential for B2B brands looking to stand out and capture attention in an increasingly competitive space.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

A significant shift in influencer marketing is the focus on neurodiversity. Influencers are increasingly discussing and advocating for neurodivergent individuals, sharing their own experiences with neurological differences like autism, ADHD, and dyslexia. By sharing personal stories and creating educational content, influencers are helping to raise awareness and challenge misconceptions. For brands, incorporating neurodiversity into campaigns goes beyond inclusivity—it fosters deeper connections with audiences, challenges stereotypes, and promotes a more understanding society. This approach enriches narratives and paves the way for a more inclusive marketing landscape.



LIWA



→ **Sagar Rege,**

*Partner & Director at Liwa
Content Driven*

“AI-powered tools and user-friendly software have removed the technical barriers to content creation. Tasks that once required specialized skills—such as graphic design, video editing, or writing—are now accessible to anyone with a smartphone. This accessibility has redefined personal branding from the domain of marketing professionals to something almost anyone can pursue.”

LIWA (UAE)

Liwa is a hybrid creative agency + production house that evolved from a conventional agency model 13 years ago to bridge the common budget and timeline gaps between concept development and production. By integrating creative strategy and execution under one roof, we streamline processes, ensuring that every idea we propose is purpose-driven production-ready from the ou

We partner directly with brands and global agencies to creatively problem-solve across both ideation and execution. From narratives to producing world-class video content, we deliver end-to-end solutions tailored to business objectives. Our expertise spans live-action, animation, mixed media, and full-scale productions — crafting compelling stories that connect brands with audience

Our work has been recognized at the highest levels of the industry, with award wins including Gold at Cannes Lions, LIA, D&AD, Midas, New York Festivals, and Clios. This legacy of creative excellence underscores our commitment to producing work that’s both creatively ambitious and strategically impactful.



LIWA



S L M Y

KURIOE
THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGENCY

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

The Evolution of Personal Branding: From Envy to Expression.

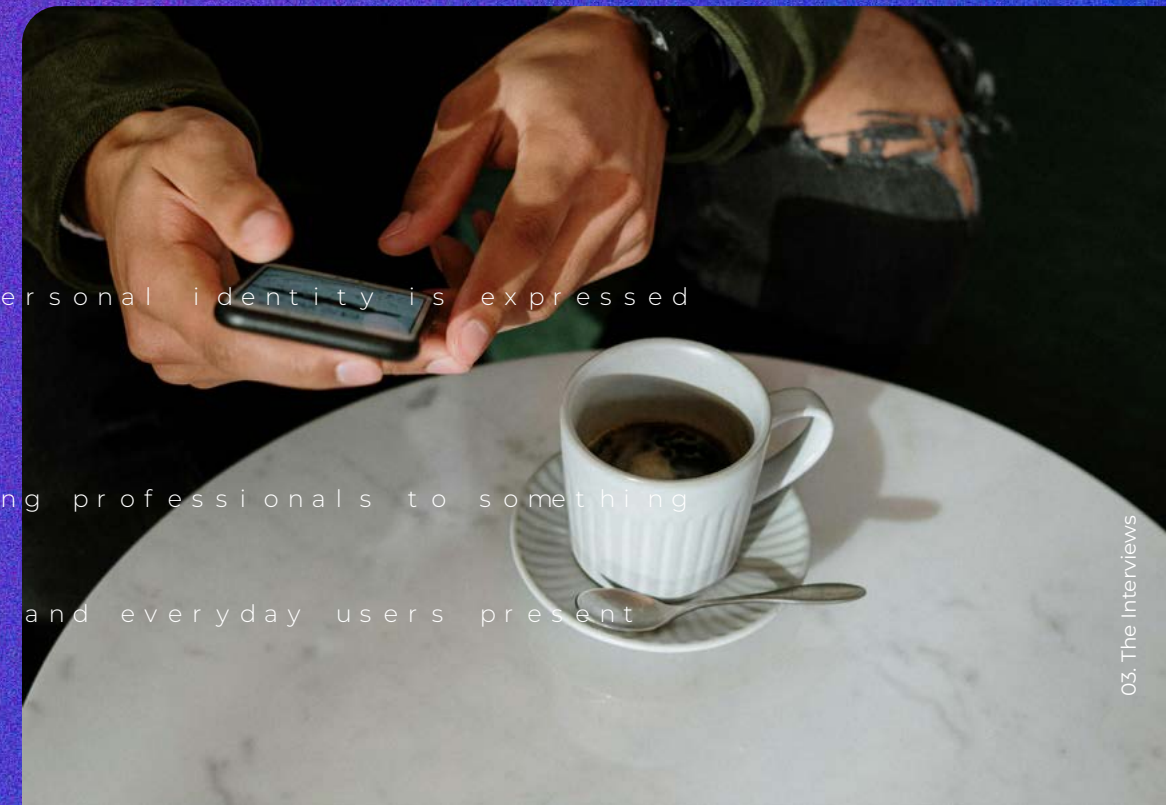
Personal branding has undergone a dramatic transformation in the digital age. What once centered on inducing envy through curated images of success has evolved into open, authentic self-expression. Today, individuals use digital platforms to showcase achievements and communicate their values, beliefs, and creative visions. This cultural shift reflects a more profound societal change where personal identity is expressed through stories rather than status symbols.

A driving force behind this change is the democratization of technology. AI-powered tools and user-friendly software have removed the technical barriers to content creation. Tasks that once required specialized skills—such as graphic design, video editing, or writing—are now accessible to anyone with a smartphone. This accessibility has redefined personal branding from the domain of marketing professionals to something almost anyone can pursue.

Entertainment has emerged as a central theme in this new personal branding landscape. Social media influencers, content creators, and everyday users present themselves as entertainers, using creative formats to engage their audiences. From short videos and podcasts to visually stunning social media posts, self-expression is now a form of entertainment where the individual becomes both creator and brand.

The availability of creative tools has also expanded the range of voices in the digital ecosystem. People from diverse backgrounds can now share perspectives that might have remained unheard in a pre-digital world. This inclusivity has reshaped what it means to be a “personal brand.” It’s no longer about perfection or exclusivity—it’s about authenticity, relatability, and connection.

As AI technology continues to advance, the future of personal branding looks even more dynamic. AI-driven platforms will enable even more personalized and immersive content, pushing the boundaries of how stories are told and shared. This evolution underscores a key insight: personal branding has shifted from envy-driven presentation to meaningful expression. In this era, everyone has the potential to be a creator, a storyteller, and ultimately, a brand.





LIWA



SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

The Power of Storytelling in the Age of AI-Driven Content.

The digital media landscape has never been more fragmented. Audiences are scattered across various platforms, each shaped by specific preferences and consumption habits. For instance, Gen Z makes purchasing decisions on gaming platforms like Roblox and Fortnite, while millennials lean toward social media and streaming services. This evolving ecosystem demands more than just targeted marketing—it calls for storytelling that resonates across diverse touchpoints.

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has further disrupted digital marketing, enabling image and video production where creativity faces virtually no limits. AI-driven tools empower brands and agencies to produce dynamic, visually striking, and emotionally engaging content at unprecedented speeds. However, this technological leap comes with a critical challenge: ensuring that creativity remains rooted in relevance and context. Even the most visually impressive content risks fading into digital noise without a compelling story.

For brands and agencies alike, harnessing AI's potential goes beyond using it as a production tool—it's about making storytelling more impactful. AI can help unlock insights into audience behavior, predict trends, and personalize content, but the narrative core must come from a deep understanding of brand identity and audience values. This fusion of data-driven insights and creative storytelling creates an ecosystem where technology amplifies, rather than replaces,

consistency in message and tone. Meanwhile, agencies need to push the boundaries of contextual creativity, crafting stories that offer interactive experiences and immersive media. Success depends on a shared commitment to creating stories that are both innovative and culturally and emotionally resonant.

In this evolving digital era, AI-powered storytelling isn't just a marketing trend—it's a necessity. The future belongs to those who can blend human creativity with technological prowess to craft stories that inspire, engage, and drive action. The ultimate competitive advantages remain in a world where imagination has no boundaries, context, and creativity remain.



LIWA



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

Embracing AI with a Human Touch: The Future of Storytelling in 2025

As AI continues to reshape creative industries, it's not just the technology itself but how humans adapt to it. In the coming years, particularly in 2025, the defining creative feature will be the human ability to infuse content with authentic storytelling. While AI offers unparalleled opportunities—generating characters, creating environments, and scaling content—the human touch will elevate stories beyond algorithmic output.

AI-powered tools already enable the creation of immersive content at scale, reducing production time and costs. However, this technology comes at the expense of creativity. For brands, the challenge lies in balancing economic gains with artistic integrity. Using AI should not be viewed merely as a cost-saving measure but as a creative multiplier that empowers human talent to explore new frontiers in storytelling.

For example, in filmmaking, the roles of directors, producers, and production designers remain essential—even in AI-driven projects. While the physical shoot may have transitioned from real-world locations to virtual environments, creative professionals still shape the vision, mood, and narrative direction. AI is a tool that enhances creative output, not a replacement for human insight.

From a client's perspective, this demands a mindset shift. Brands must recognize that AI-driven production still requires expert talent to craft meaningful narratives that resonate with audiences. They should invest not just in technology but also in people who understand how to use AI effectively—directors, producers, and production designers who can craft virtual worlds, and editors who can seamlessly blend real and digital elements.

Fostering an industry-wide learning culture is equally important. The responsibility to adapt doesn't rest solely on institutions—it extends to individuals. As AI evolves, professionals across creative disciplines must embrace continuous learning to refine their craft. This human-AI partnership will be the cornerstone of future creative success.

Ultimately, AI's true potential lies not in its ability to generate content but in how it amplifies human creativity. The future of storytelling in 2025 and beyond will be defined by how we navigate this new landscape with empathy, originality, and a willingness to push creative boundaries. In 2025 and beyond, the power of storytelling will depend on how well humans and AI collaborate to transform imaginative possibilities into compelling realities.



LIWA



S L M Y

KURIOE
THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGENCY

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

The Future of Influence: AI-Driven Digital Personalities

As we move toward 2025, the world of influencers is set for a major evolution driven by artificial intelligence. What began as experimental AI characters on social media is quickly becoming a strategic marketing tool, with brands creating custom digital influencers who embody their values, voice, and vision.

Unlike human influencers, AI-driven personas offer brands a new level of control. They can be programmed to say the right things, live curated digital lives, and consistently reflect the brand's identity. These digital influencers eliminate the unpredictability of human behavior, ensuring seamless brand representation.

However, the real challenge lies in giving these AI personalities a human essence. Success won't come from simply saving money on partnerships—it will depend on brands' ability to craft AI personas that feel authentic and emotionally resonant. Audiences connect with stories, emotions, and struggles. Brands must create digital personalities that resonate in meaningful ways.

One of the most exciting prospects is the potential for long-term brand storytelling, where digital characters can take on immersive roles in campaigns, animated series, or even metaverse experiences.

The future of influence isn't about replacing humans—it's about redefining the boundaries of storytelling. AI-driven influencers must embody authenticity, proving that technology can enhance—not dilute—the power of genuine human connection.

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

Breaking the B2B Content Barrier: Embracing Entertainment and Technology in 2025

The traditional notion that B2B content must be formal, serious, or purely informational is outdated. As I often remind my clients, marketing professionals and executives at B2B organizations don't go home to watch corporate videos—they unwind with compelling content on platforms like Netflix or Amazon Prime.

As we approach 2025, the possibilities for B2B storytelling are immense, thanks to advances in AI-powered content creation and scalable production technologies.

With today's tools, producing high-quality, visually stunning, and emotionally engaging content is no longer the exclusive domain of big-budget consumer brands. B2B companies now have the ability to craft narratives that resonate not only with their business clients but also with broader audiences, including end-users and even government institutions (B2G).

This convergence of B2B, B2C, and B2G marketing creates unprecedented opportunities for brands to elevate their communication strategies. By embracing cinematic storytelling, immersive brand experiences, and emotionally driven narratives, B2B organizations can transform complex product offerings into compelling content that informs, inspires, and entertains, evolving

Tech content platforms can further enhance this creative push by streamlining production processes, personalizing campaigns, and generating data-backed insights. These technologies empower B2B marketers to deliver highly relevant and creative messaging at scale, ensuring their content breaks through the digital clutter.

The future of B2B marketing isn't about abandoning professionalism but embracing human-centric storytelling. By adopting an entertainment-driven approach, B2B brands can build deeper, more emotional connections, redefining the way they communicate. As thought leaders in a rapidly evolving digital landscape, in 2025, success will belong to those willing to tell stories that inform, engage, and inspire.



MEDULLA



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

The most interesting and important trend in social media usage is the growing integration of AI. AI is transforming how we interact with social platforms, from content creation to personalized recommendations. Here's how:

Content Creation: AI-powered tools are making it easier for individuals and businesses to create engaging content. Generative AI can produce text, images, and even videos, reducing the time and effort required for content creation. This democratization of content creation is opening up new opportunities for creators and businesses of all sizes.

Personalized Experiences: AI algorithms analyze user behavior to deliver highly personalized content recommendations. This means users are more likely to see content that interests them, leading to deeper engagement and stronger connections with brands. For businesses, this offers a powerful way to deliver relevant messages.

Ethical Considerations: As AI becomes more integrated into social media, ethical considerations are becoming increasingly important. Issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the potential for misinformation need to be addressed to ensure the responsible and ethical use of AI.

Patient Outreach in Healthcare: Health organizations are using social media to start conversations, connect with consumers, and drive awareness. By incorporating AI-driven tools such as telehealth services, chatbots, and systems for remote diagnosis and patient monitoring into social media, they can deliver customized content, improve access to high-quality medical care, and elevate patient outcomes.

B2B Implications: For B2B businesses, AI-powered social media offers new opportunities. AI can help analyze market trends, identify potential customers, and personalize marketing messages. Additionally, AI-powered chatbots can provide efficient customer support, freeing up sales team



MEDULLA



SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

One of the most interesting and important shifts in social media marketing for 2025 is the growing emphasis on **hyper-personalization powered by AI**. Social platforms are evolving from one-size-fits-all approaches to highly tailored experiences driven by advanced algorithms, predictive analytics, and machine learning. This trend impacts marketing functions, teams, and the industry in three significant ways:

Customer-Centric Strategies: Social media marketing is no longer about broadcasting; it's about creating micro-moments of relevance. Marketers can now use AI-driven insights to design personalized campaigns that speak directly to individual user preferences, behaviors, and needs, fostering deeper engagement and brand loyalty.

Shift Toward Conversational Commerce: Platforms are integrating shopping experiences into their ecosystems through AI chatbots, shoppable posts, and voice search optimization. Teams adapt by merging social and e-commerce strategies, ensuring seamless user journeys from discovery to purchase.

Emphasis on Authenticity and Community Building: With the rise of platforms emphasizing niche interests and decentralized social networks, brands need to focus on creating value-based communities. Influencer partnerships are shifting towards more genuine collaborations that align with a brand's mission as audiences demand transparency and purpose-driven content. Subject matter experts, such as healthcare providers and professionals, are gaining more popularity as influencers.

Social Media as a Search Engine: Social media platforms are increasingly being used as search engines, particularly among younger users who prefer discovering brands through social channels rather than traditional search engines like Google. From global news to disease awareness – all information is now readily available. This shift necessitates that brands optimize their social content by employing SEO best practices tailored to each platform.

Implications for Marketing Teams:

- + **Upskilling:** Marketing teams need to develop AI literacy and learn to work effectively with AI tools.
- + **Data-Driven Decision Making:** AI-powered analytics tools provide valuable insights to inform data-driven decision-making.
- + **Ethical Considerations:** Marketers must be mindful of ethical implications, such as data privacy and algorithmic bias.
- + **Adaptability:** The rapid pace of AI development requires marketers to be adaptable and embrace newer technologies.

For the healthcare and pharma industry, **increased emphasis on patient-centricity** is one of the most significant shifts in social media marketing. The needs, concerns, and experiences of patients rather than simply promoting products.



NOT PERFECT



→ **Aurelija Plioplyte,**

Head of digital

“Users are less loyal to their favourite social media networks and their attention span is at an all-time-low. Therefore, there is no need to spend money and focus on long and interconnected storytelling - the solution is simple - create a VIBE.”

NOT PERFECT (LT)

Not Perfect Companies is an integrated creative, digital, and design agency established in 2000 that's grown to be almost 100 people. We're renowned for creative work that gets the nations talking. Whether that be in our home region of the Baltics or in an increasing number of countries around the world.



NOT PERFECT

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

0 attachment. 0 loyalty. As dramatic as it may sound, there is a noticeable pattern: users and creators often leave a platform right when it stops trending or loses its enjoyable factor and becomes boring. Take BeReal as an example — it experienced a huge surge in popularity at first, but people soon became bored because it required too much commitment. Although platforms are continuously searching for new ways to enhance gamification and flexibility, not everyone is meeting users' growing demands.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Users are less loyal to their favourite social media networks and their attention span is at an all-time-low. Therefore, there is no need to spend money and focus on long and interconnected storytelling – the solution is simple – create a VIBE. One content piece can be strong enough if you play your cards right and have distinct brand assets. Great examples of such social media communication tactics are progressive fashion brands (e.g., Jacquemus, Balenciaga), Ryanair. Every post is a new small campaign.

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

This year, Meta launched its own AI, which provides a range of services, from content suggestions for creators to real-time answers for customer inquiries. In contrast, LinkedIn is developing collaborative articles by combining AI-generated topic suggestions with contributions from relevant LinkedIn members. As a result, this technology is establishing a permanent presence in the social media landscape, and innovative ways to utilize it are expanding.

Another emerging trend is zero-click content. The launch of "Threads" has popularized the use of platforms that deliver information without requiring users to click through for more details. This trend has been embraced by various brands and has become an integral part of their communication strategies.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Influencers are being increasingly overshadowed by creators, such as those on TikTok, who have a more specific niche and present themselves in a more relatable and authentic manner, gaining popularity not only on TikTok but also across various social media platforms. Trends like "What I Eat in a Day" and "Day in My Life" offer users a genuine, down-to-earth connection. As a result, this kind of everyday content is likely to dominate in the coming year, especially given the noticeable decline in overly polished and curated content.



OSAKA LABS



→ **Sam Gormley,**

Founder & Global CEO

“These platforms [e.g. Walmart Connect’s B2B tools] are leveraging first-party data to target B2B buyers with the same precision as consumers, which is driving efficiency in procurement processes and reshaping how B2B retail operates”

OSAKA LABS (UK & USA)

Sam Gormley is a digital marketing innovator with a passion for all things Internet, specializing in the rapidly evolving world of retail media. As the founder of Osaka Labs, Sam combines data-driven insights, creative strategy, and emerging technologies to help businesses thrive in the online marketplace. With a deep commitment to harnessing the power of digital platforms, Sam focuses on Walmart marketplace solutions and retail media advertising, ensuring clients stay ahead in the competitive e-commerce landscape. Through strategic planning and a vision for integrating AI-driven efficiency to unlocking growth and transforming how businesses engage with their audiences online.



OSAKA LABS



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

The most important trend is the rise of retail platforms like Walmart as media hubs, transforming how people discover and shop for products. Social media behaviors are bleeding into these platforms—shoppers are engaging with video content, personalized recommendations, and reviews directly within retail ecosystems. For Walmart, in particular, users are treating it like a hybrid of Amazon and TikTok, leveraging in-app search, shoppable content, and AI-driven product suggestions to make purchase decisions. This shift is massive for brands—it’s no longer just about being on social; you need to have a robust presence directly on retail platforms, too.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

The biggest shift is the convergence of retail media and social media marketing. Platforms like Walmart Connect are essentially becoming social platforms in their own right, complete with dynamic ad placements, influencer collaborations, and shoppable videos. Walmart’s investment in its retail media network has made it an end-to-end ecosystem for reaching, engaging, and converting customers. For marketers, this means creating strategies that integrate seamlessly across social channels and retail platforms, ensuring a unified experience from discovery to purchase.

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

Walmart’s Retail Media+AI innovation is setting a new standard. Features like predictive analytics for ad placement, in-app shoppable video ads, and enhanced targeting based on purchase history are revolutionizing the space. Walmart’s ad tech stack allows for precise, bottom-funnel targeting, which blends social-style engagement with direct conversions. Another game-changing feature is the incorporation of AR and VR into product browsing on platforms like Walmart, enabling immersive experiences that make the digital shopping journey feel tactile and personal.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Retail platforms are redefining the influencer game. Walmart, for instance, is building tools that let creators showcase products in sponsored posts or livestreams hosted on the Walmart app itself. This removes friction and keeps audiences within the platform, making measurable sales. These retail-integrated partnerships are more transparent and ROI-driven, appealing to marketers looking for direct

B2B 2025: If you didn’t touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

For B2B brands, retail platforms like Walmart are shifting how businesses collaborate and advertise. Walmart Connect’s B2B tools now allow wholesalers, distributors, and even SaaS providers to market directly to decision-makers who are purchasing for laborations or B2B buyers with the same precision as consumer procurement processes and reshaping how B2B retail operates. For marketers, it’s about understanding these hybrid retail spaces and capitalizing on tools tailored for bulk buyers and business accounts.



PIABO COMMUNICATIONS



→ **Stefanie Söhnchen,**

*Vice President Strategy /
Lead Digital*

“Social media platforms will increasingly connect desire and purchase - especially in regard to the speed between the buying impulse and the actual buy.”

PIABO COMMUNICATIONS (DE)

The communications agency PIABO, based in Berlin, is the leading European full-service partner for the digital economy. PIABO provides outstanding international visibility for companies in the fields of e-commerce, food tech, HR tech, health tech, consumer electronics, IoT, and AR/VR, Cybersecurity, Deep tech, and green tech. The range of services offered by its multidisciplinary consulting teams includes public relations and social media, as well as brand strategy, content marketing, and programmatic advertising. PIABO is led by founder and CEO Daniel Harzer and COO Bonow and COO Daniela Harzer. PIABO, a long-term partner, has been actively supporting its clients in achieving their local and global growth and development goals since 2006. Its client portfolio includes GitHub, Google, Lieferando, Omio, Sequoia Capital, Shopify, and Withings.



PIABO COMMUNICATIONS



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

One of the most important developments will be the rise of a forum-like culture on platforms like LinkedIn, Reddit, and Discord. This trend will be particularly relevant for B2B brands, as professionals are increasingly looking for spaces to engage in expert discussions and share knowledge.

Niche communities that are centered around specialized topics are emerging, with users deeply engaging in discussions and debates. This offers marketers a valuable opportunity to establish thought leadership and build meaningful relationships through authentic participation.

Additionally, we'll see a continued focus on second-hand markets and local groups, especially for finding deals and promoting sustainable products. Brands can make use of this by supporting community building around their brand and integrating their products or services into these groups in a meaningful way.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

One of the most significant shifts in social media marketing will be the increased SEO relevance of social media activities. Platforms like Reddit, with their strong focus on user-generated content and community engagement, will play a key role in driving organic traffic and boosting search engine rankings. Marketers optimize their social media content with SEO in mind, focus on relevant keywords, engage in discussions, and build high-quality backlinks.

Another major shift will be the rise of AI-powered automation. This will enable marketers to scale their efforts significantly, especially in the e-commerce sector. AI tools able to automate content creation, scheduling, and even community management are becoming increasingly prominent, allowing marketers to dedicate more time to strategic initiatives.



PIABO COMMUNICATIONS

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

Social media platforms will increasingly connect desire and purchase - especially in regard to the speed between the buying impulse and the actual buy. Features like "search on-screen" (already being implemented by brands like Samsung) and enhanced AI-driven UX will enable users to identify and purchase products they see in social media content with minimal effort and maximum speed. This smooth integration of shopping functionalities will shorten the customer journey and encourage impulse purchases.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

The influencer marketing landscape is becoming increasingly need to prioritize hyper-relevance and authenticity to stand out from their competitors.

This means collaborating with influencers who are either h audience or have a truly unique and engaging personality. expertise or creators who distinguish themselves with their unique voice and style are becoming increasingly prominent. This is also due to the proven higher impact of micro-influencers that marketers are discovering more and

While this trend applies to both B2C and B2B, the B2B infl free of competition. This will be a unique opportunity for brands to partner with thought leaders and industry experts to build credibility and reach new audiences.





RETROVIRAL

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

We've made everything artificial - from our intelligence to our dopamine needs - to outdoors with FAUX out-of-home CGI pieces.

The user craves experiential; whether it's an event or an authentic, raw, doccie style story, humans are on the hunt for more humanity. We are more than just thumbs clicking our consciousness to the top of a funnel.

The user of 2025 wants to be seen, heard, and truly engaged.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Our view is that branded content is evolving into branded entertainment. The extremes between the instant gratification, bite-sized content worlds of TikTok and Reels, and long-form streamers / YouTube offers brands an opportunity to integrate down howbiz used to sing, dance, but the best ones leveraged celebrities in a content creator-esque, integrated marketing communications play.

More shows will be built around brands or brand platforms, and this merger of creativity is incredibly exciting for copywriters the world over. The more authentic this integration, the more widely adopted this tactic will become.

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

Text to video will result in more content white noise than ever before and earned will require new ways to cut through the cacophony of clutter.

Your relationships are more important than ever in 2025. From clients to news editors. Budgets will be under pressure and demands of varieties of formats and durations (15s, 60s, 16x9, 9x16, 1:1) will expand to test your m

The earned media expert who understands branded content and has a trustworthy distribution network will be one of the most in-demand unicorns of the year.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

celebrities sing annually in multi-million dollar Super Bowl ads, but the best ones leveraged celebrities in a content creator-esque, integrated marketing communications play.

If your brand can tap into synergistic celebrity, you'll break the internet and sales records. Case in point - Michael Cera x CeraVe



RETROVIRAL



B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

Business people are just people. The B2B trends of 2025 will adhere to consumer principles:

- + More human humanity
- + Entertain your business audience
- + Cut through the clutter of corporate comms
- + Unlock the EMfluencers - your employee influence colleagues - from C-suite celebs to call center cool-kids - how can you build a reward program for the individuals encouraging the cons



THE NEW THING



→ **Viren Sean Noronha,**

Co-founder

"I've noticed the urge to use content as social currency is at an all-time high. What you share is your language, your vibe, and your identity. It's a handshake, a shout-out, and a personality quiz rolled into one."

THE NEW THING (IN)

The New Thing is an agency founded by Viren Noronha along with Gautam Reghunath and PG Aditiya of Talented. TNT was founded as a creator-led agency that prides itself on two things: 1) saying a strong NO to doing 30 posts a month and 2) making brands work for the internet instead of the other way around. Staffed entirely by creators, The New Thing's primary focus is to help their brands create cultural conversations and moments on social - something they believe very few brands are getting right.



THE NEW THING

USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

In a May 2024 interview, Adam Mosseri dropped a truth bomb that anyone who plays the social media game figures out sooner or later: share buttons are the ultimate FOMO button. You don't have to like, comment, or share to get a notification. You just have to click the share button before you've even finished watching a Reel. An entire generation of users has grown up with this behavior. It's not perfect. But in its imperfection, it opens doors to new ideas. The ones who embrace AI don't just meet deadlines—they redefine them.

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SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Social media teams are undergoing a major identity overhaul—and it's for the better. Gone are the days when these teams were packed with strategists, copywriters, designers, and creative leads — all extremely talented professionals, sure, but often people with zero skin in the social media game. Folks who post maybe once every few weeks, if that. Today, creators are taking the driver's seat on both the agency and brand sides. Social media teams actively want 'creators.' That's because 'social' has finally realized it works best in the hands of those actively creating for it. A few years ago, hitting a million views took a village. Social teams needed celebrities, production houses, expensive directors, massive media spending, and paid PR to hit a million views. Now? A million views is just a creator, a smartphone, and a joke on a regular Tuesday.

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

I hate to pile on the bandwagon, but AI has more than earned its buzzword status. It's the ultimate FOMO button for creators. Cutting down SCVs, doubling as a creative's soundboard, giving designers an extra hand drafting air tight JDs, and whipping up last-minute polished presentations. It's smashed its way into everything through AI—scripts, pitch decks, even this write-up—just to see what comes out the other end. It's not perfect. But in its imperfection, it opens doors to new ideas. The ones who embrace AI don't just meet deadlines—they redefine them.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

We no longer buy into the influencer; we buy into those formats promise. Sure, brands still chase but the smarter ones know better. They understand that high followers don't always mean high engagement. Instead, they ask: What's the unique IP this creator brings? A podcast? A Reel series? A recurring character? A viral joke that's now a signature? In today's world, an influencer's format is their and they're both quartermaster and sharpshooter. Less about personalities and more about media planning. Brands don't just want the person—they want the format and the reach it guarantees. And they're ready to pay top rupee for it. In 2025, the message is clear: your format is your superpower, and it's what keeps brands coming back.

That's because 'social' has finally



THINKHOUSE



→ **Donagh Humphreys,**

*Head of Social and Digital
Innovation*

"In 2025, the role of social marketers will expand from content creators to key contributors in the boardroom, where their insights into customer behaviour and data-driven campaigns inform overarching business decisions. With platforms serving as rich ecosystems for first-party data collection, marketing teams will increasingly be tasked with demonstrating how social media contributes to measurable outcomes, from revenue growth to customer retention. This evolution elevates social media leaders to strategic partners in shaping brand identity and market direction."

THINKHOUSE (IRE)

With headquarters in Dublin and London, THINKHOUSE is one of the world's leading independent agencies. Powered by youth culture, our digital-first, progressive brands that care about people and the planet. THINKHOUSE is a company! Reaffirming our goals and purpose at the heart of everything we do.



THINKHOUSE



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

The recent direction of travel in user behaviour is defined by two diverging paths: the **fragmentation of the social media space** and the simultaneous rise of “**everything apps**.” These trends reflect contrasting user desires—intimacy and specificity on the one hand, and convenience and integration on the other—both reshaping how platforms serve and retain their audiences.

On the fragmented side, users are increasingly drawn to niche platforms that offer **personalised, purpose-driven experiences**. Smaller, community-centric spaces like Discord or BeReal thrive by fostering emotional intimacy and aligning content with **specific interests**. This **content fatigue** and a desire for control extend to over digital interactions, with users prioritizing depth of connection over the breadth of audience. These platforms allow users to cultivate multiple personas tailored to different parts of their identity, whether professional, personal, or hobbyist. However, fragmented platforms face challenges in scaling while maintaining the trust and authenticity that make them appealing.

Conversely, “everything apps” embody the trend toward **consolidation and utility**. Inspired by the success of platforms like WeChat, these super-apps promise to integrate social networking, e-commerce, payments, and productivity into a seamless ecosystem. This appeals to **convenience culture**, where users increasingly demand efficiency and a centralised experience to manage their digital lives. Platforms like X (formerly Twitter) are already moving in this direction, embedding financial transactions, AI tools, and expanded content types. However, this drive for utility risks diluting the emotional connection that users associate with social platforms, turning them into transactional rather than social spaces. Moreover, the centralisation of services raises concerns about **data privacy** and monopolistic behaviour, potentially alienating users who value autonomy.

This emotional push-pull reflects a broader user desire at fostering intimacy and meaningful interaction but may leave users overwhelmed by the growing number of apps to manage. Meanwhile, everything apps deliver convenience and breadth but risk losing the specificity that makes niche platforms attractive. AI plays a crucial role in both models—enhancing personalisation in fragmented spaces and supercharging utility in everything apps—but its increasing presence also raises questions about the balance between human and machine-generated interactions.

Looking ahead, a few safe predictions emerge. First, niche platforms will continue to thrive, particularly among younger, digitally-savvy users who value authenticity and community. Second, everything apps will see adoption driven by their ability to integrate commerce, content, and daily utilities, likely dominating in regions where convenience is king. However, the challenge for both models will be navigating user trust, particularly regarding data ownership and privacy.

A possible if unlikely outcome in 2025 would be greater interoperability between platforms. Governments or user demand might push platforms to enable seamless **cross-platform interactions**, allowing users to combine the convenience of super-apps with the competitive landscape, creating a future where the choice between fragmentation and consolidation is no longer binary but complementary. Top of Form Bottom of Form



THINKHOUSE

TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

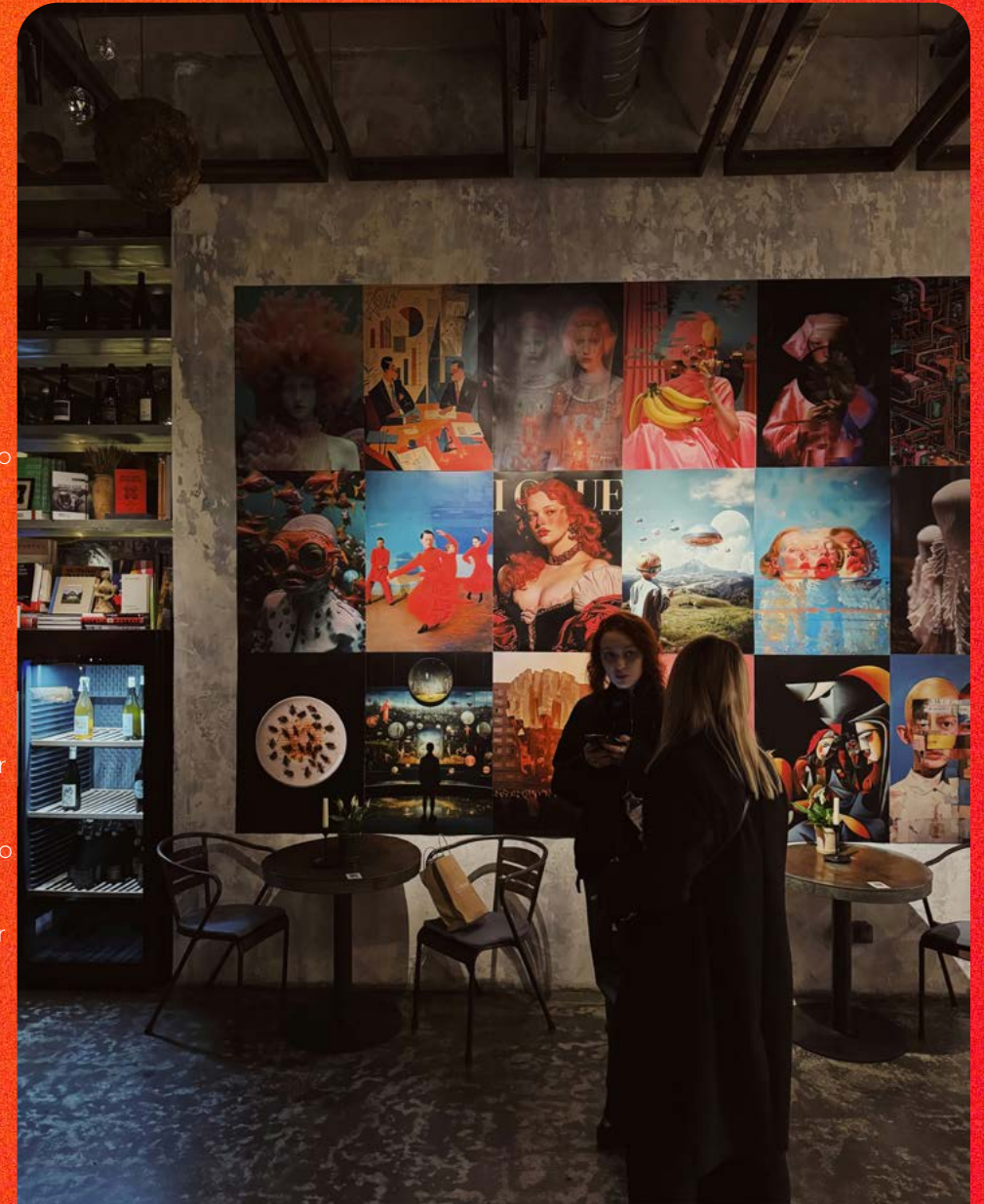
It will come to no surprise to any reader that we are predicting that AI technologies will have the greatest effect on the nature of social media in 2025. So, perhaps the future of social media creativity isn't human at all? Generative AI is poised to transform the way we create, share, and consume content in ways that are both exciting and unsettling. While machine learning has long powered social platforms, generative AI takes it a step further—shifting from curation to creation. This evolution promises to increase engagement for brands, creators, and agencies alike.

Social media's success owes much to machine learning's ability to serve content users relentlessly consume, but generative AI introduces a new paradigm: creativity on demand. It promises to democratise creativity in much the same way smartphones democratised content creation.

With just a few well-worded prompts, anyone can now become a designer, writer, artist, or coder—no prior skills required. A small business owner, for example, can instantly craft a polished ad campaign complete with copy, visuals, and video. Agencies, too, stand to benefit: generative AI compresses the timeline for transforming concepts into fully realised assets within minutes.

But this democratisation comes with risks. Where smartphones with cookie-cutter content, generative AI could supercharge sameness—or worse, produce content that feels eerily off. Will social feeds evolve into a dynamic canvas of infinite originality, or a sterile stream of uncanny AI creations?

Generative AI offers both promise and peril. For brands and creators, it opens doors to unprecedented opportunities but also challenges them to maintain authenticity in an AI-saturated world. The question now is not whether AI will shape social media, but how. Those who embrace this shift early, with a keen eye on balancing innovation and authenticity, will shape the narrative of social media's next chapter.





THINKHOUSE



INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

2024 was a landmark year for creator marketing, with brands generating 486.6 billion impressions through partnerships—a staggering 184% increase from the previous year. Nearly 200,000 unique creators produced 3.1 million posts. As creator marketing continues to mature, it is evolving beyond scale into a more strategic, community-driven, and purpose-focused ecosystem.

A defining trend in the creator economy is the shift from audience size to audience trust. Brands are prioritising creator attributes and audience demographics over follower counts, reflecting a focus on quality and engagement. Loyal communities, leveraging platforms like Patreon and Discord to offer exclusive content and deeper connections. For marketers, these community-centric models unlock highly engaged audiences, allowing for more authentic collaborations and impactful campaigns.

Long-term partnerships are becoming the gold standard. In 2024, 40% of creators participated in multiple campaigns with the same brands, allowing them to integrate messaging naturally into their content. This shift from transactional, one-off deals to sustained relationships not only improves ROI but also builds credibility for both creators and brands.

Creators are also increasingly stepping into entrepreneurial roles, launching their own products, merchandise, and even businesses. This evolution sees creators transitioning from influencers to full-fledged brand builders. These developments are redefining partnerships, with co-creation and shared ownership becoming integral to successful collaborations.

The growing emphasis on sustainability and ethics is another major shift. Consumers are increasingly drawn to creators who advocate for social and environmental causes, and brands are aligning their partnerships with creators whose values resonate with their audiences. This trend underscores the rising importance of purpose-driven marketing within the creator economy.

The pressure of constant content production has also put creator well-being in the spotlight. Many are openly discussing burnout and prioritising mental health, resonating with audiences who value vulnerability. Brands must adapt by offering fair compensation, flexible timelines, and collaborative creator relationships.

As we look ahead to 2025, the creator economy will continue to evolve, driven by multiplatform campaigns, short-form video dominance, and AI-generated content. Creators will increasingly act as curators, filtering content that resonates with hyper-specific audiences.

The future lies in authenticity, innovation, and purpose. Brands that invest in long-term, values-driven partnerships with creators will not only navigate this dynamic landscape but also define the next chapter of digital engagement.

Examples like Emma Chamberlain's coffee line and MrBeast's Feastables highlight the vast potential of creator-led ventures. These developments are redefining partnerships, with co-creation and shared ownership becoming integral to successful collaborations.



THINKHOUSE



B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

By 2025, B2B marketing will be defined by its ability to deliver precise, efficient, and impactful strategies to mirror the hyper-personalised experiences of the consumer world, and social media platforms evolve into fully-fledged sales ecosystems will become pivotal.

Two key shifts stand out as game-changers:

Hyper-personalisation and ABM as the Gold Standard

By 2025, hyper-personalisation and account-based marketing (ABM) will be the cornerstones of B2B marketing strategies. AI-powered tools will enable mid-sized organisations to scale ABM campaigns that were previously resource-intensive, making it easier to deliver tailored content and offers to individual stakeholders within target accounts. For example, AI can help identify decision-makers, analyse their behaviour across touchpoints, and generate personalised emails, LinkedIn ads, or even dynamic content on websites. This will allow B2B marketers to align their efforts more closely with sales teams, driving greater engagement and higher conversion rates.

Social Media as a Pipeline Driver

Social media will solidify its role in lead generation and nurturing, with platforms like LinkedIn evolving into sophisticated tools for pipeline development. Enhanced features, such as AI-driven lead scoring, in-app demo booking, and integrated CRM capabilities, will make it easier for B2B marketers to move prospects seamlessly through the buyer's journey. This shift will position social media not just as a branding tool but as a critical driver of measurable business outcomes.



THINKERBELL



→ **Kerstin Allin,**

Lead Owned Thinker

“The power of this format [“bite-sized” stories] hasn’t gone unnoticed by brands. Many are now adopting episodic storytelling strategies, moving beyond one-off campaigns to create serialized content with cliffhangers, sequels, and ongoing narratives that build a deeper connection with audiences. This strategy transforms passive viewers into active, engaged fans who eagerly await the next installment.”

THINKERBELL (AU)

Thinkerbell represents the coming together of marketing sciences and hardcore creativity – or, as we like to call it, ‘Meas’. We are an agency of Thinkers and Tinkers and have extensive experience in the worlds of research, strategy, customer experience, owned, shared, earned & paid media, design, and creative execution. We have helped some of Australia’s best-known and most-loved brands bring their inner magic.



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USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

The most interesting trend is the continued fragmentation and proliferation of online content. Social platforms have transformed the once-shared, collective experience of mainstream media into something more dynamic and diverse. The days of gathering around to watch a trending show or cultural moment have evolved into a new ecosystem of clips, memes, and interpretations scattered across platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Reddit.

For many, especially younger audiences, mainstream is no longer dominant—it's just a starting point. A single episode of a show now sparks countless variations: hilarious TikTok trends, reaction videos, deep-dive analysis, and niche discussions in online communities. These fragments are consumed in hyper-personalised ways, tailored by algorithms and creators, making the experience unique for each viewer.

This shift is reshaping the way culture is created and interacted with. Cultural moments now take on new life as they evolve across platforms, inviting greater participation and creativity from users. It democratizes content, giving rise to diverse voices and niche creators who can connect with audiences in more meaningful ways. What was once a passive experience has become active, with everyone contributing to the narrative in their own way. There is no longer a single dominant source shaping public opinion. This is the new reality of popular culture: fragmented, dynamic, and profoundly personal.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

Social media has evolved from simple networking tools into entertainment platforms. This shift has blurred the lines between social media and traditional entertainment platforms like Netflix. And because of this, entertainment content - it's the expectation, even for serious topics or brand messaging.

Creators are leading this movement, particularly on TikTok and YouTube, where they craft episodic, highly engaging narratives that mirror mini-TV series. These "bite-sized" stories are addictive, creating anticipation and loyalty in ways traditional advertising rarely achieves. The power of this format hasn't gone unnoticed by brands. Many are now adopting episodic storytelling strategies, moving beyond one-off campaigns to create serialized content with cliffhangers, sequels, and ongoing narratives that build a deeper connection with audiences. This strategy transforms passive viewers into active, engaged fans who eagerly await the next installment.

Social platforms have become a primary source of entertainment. People turn to social not just to connect but to be entertained—and this shift demands that brands rethink their approach to content. Traditional advertising strategies that don't resonate, brands embrace storytelling that feels organic, engaging, and entertaining—because on platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels, you're not just competing with other brands; you're competing with the internet's most captivating creators.



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TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

An interesting shift we're seeing in social tech is the rise of decentralization, highlighted by platforms like Bluesky. Users are increasingly seeking more control over their online experiences, favoring platforms that prioritize autonomy and give them a greater say in moderation, algorithms, and community standards. However, this shift isn't without challenges—content moderation and safety become exponentially harder in these environments, raising questions about balancing freedom with accountability.

At the same time, there's a growing move toward subscriber-based models like Patreon, which are transforming how creators and audiences interact. Users are willing to pay directly for content that resonates with them, bypassing traditional advertising models. This shift is reflected in features like paid newsletters in the B2B landscape, where creators deliver tailored, authentic content to their most loyal supporters. Both trends highlight a broader desire for more meaningful, user-driven online experiences.

These shifts signal a future where social media is increasingly shaped by users and creators, with communities taking center stage. For brands and platforms, the challenge lies in adapting to this decentralized, personalized environment in ways to foster trust and connection.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

There's magic in the unexpected. We're seeing a rise in innovative content creators who carve out highly specific and distinctive niches, cucumber content or @ayame.p's reactions to things getting squished. Consumers are hungry for content that feels fresh, different, and even a little bit obscure.

For brands willing to be bold, this is an exciting opportunity. Partnering with unconventional creators—whose content may not fit traditional molds—can lead to surprising and memorable collaborations. These unexpected pairings not only spark creativity but also attract far more attention than a traditional, in-category partnership might.

And let's not overlook the rise of comedy creators. With so many people using social media as a primary news source, humor offers a much-needed escape. We're even seeing luxury brands, traditionally known for emotionally neutral campaigns, jumping on board with comedy content. Brands like Marc Jacobs and Loewe are collaborating with comedians on social to bring a fresh, playful twist to their image.

Ultimately, the boundaries of influencer/creator thriving in unexpected places, and brave brands are winning.

B2B 2025: If you didn't touch upon B2B in your answers to the above four questions, please share your thoughts on any of those within B2B.

In the B2B landscape, storytelling is becoming pivotal in social content. Platforms like Instagram and even TikTok are no longer just places for fashion or FMCG. Many B2B brands are realizing social as powerful tools for creating emotional connections and building trust with businesses and key decision-makers.

Brands like Square, GoDaddy, Canva, and Google are leading the way by leveraging storytelling to humanize their offerings. This shift is crucial because decision-makers in B2B markets are still people—they're on social, and they value content that resonates on a human level.



ZULU ALPHA KILO



→ **Sarah Yim,**

Strategy Director

“Online content is increasingly overwhelming, in reaction to this, a new type of influencer is emerging: the “culture curator.” These culture curators provide two things: the synthesis of content available and a uniquely entertaining perspective.”

ZULU ALPHA KILO (CA)

Zulu Alpha Kilo is a Toronto-based creative company that has built a reputation as an industry outlier and is one of the most respected independent agencies in the world. On two occasions, Zulu has won top honors from Ad Age, as Small Agency of the Year and International Agency of the Year.



ZULU ALPHA KILO



USER BEHAVIOUR 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important trend regarding how people are using social media?

We've entered an era of 'peak content' with hundreds of photos and videos that we scroll past once and struggle to find again. In this entertainment landscape, some brands are moving beyond one-off posts to tell a more sustained story.

This approach isn't limited to brands—it's also embraced by pop culture icons like Sabrina Carpenter. From her concert set design to her Erewhon smoothie, SKIMS campaign, and endlessly quoted "I'm working late, cause I'm a singer" line from Espresso, her branding leans into today's consumption-first minds and leaves breadcrumbs for her fandom to immerse themselves in her evolving tastes and the broader world of pop culture (i.e., the 'Kill Bill

Today's consumers look to society as a broader world to explore; they want to be able to thread narratives together and immerse themselves in the bigger story.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in social media marketing for the marketing function/teams/industry?

In recent years, brands and agencies have leaned heavily into reacting to culture. From trending audio clips to popular narrative formats, content teams have been liberal with where and when they show up. Today, it is no longer enough to simply "show up" on social, we need to link these fleeting moments with build mental availability on social.

Take Duolingo, for example, its viral (and now iconic) "BBL" skit fed directly into a larger campaign rollout that led to their Super Bowl spot, weaving together a narrative that built over time and spanned platforms. We are also seeing publishers like NYTCooking partner with marketing platforms like "manychat" to link digital journeys, sending editorial content to users via Instagram DMs when they comment on posts using a specific emoji.

In response to this, we will see the growing importance of the comms. Skillset as teams figure out how to navigate an increasingly complex efforts on social against business goals.



ZULU ALPHA KILO



TECHNOLOGY/FEATURE 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important new/trending technology or feature related to social media?

Many brands have already begun exploring AI-supported content production, be it pulling from asset libraries or adapting creative. I don't doubt that this will help scale our work. That said, if we are to realize the true potential of generative AI, it needs to remain in service of smart, creative strategy.

We did this in a recent campaign for Campbell's, where we reimagined what the iconic soup can have looked like throughout history — using generative AI. The Warhol-esque reproductions stemmed from an idea unique to the brand, distributed on a visually driven platform: Instagram. Moving forward, this combination of old and new could be a formula for success when working with generative AI.

INFLUENCERS/CREATORS 2025: What is the most interesting and/or important shift in influencer marketing for marketers/brands?

Online content is increasingly overwhelming, in part due to the emergence of the "culture curator." These culture curators provide two things: the synthesis of content available and a uniquely entertaining perspective.

On TikTok, we see creators such as @jasper_garner (who highlights small brands), @shannon.d.lange (who reviews Vogue Wedding features), and @BentonMcClintock (whose #thankgawd series pokes fun at extravagant designer items) use direct-to-camera commentary to react to and reinterpret what they discover.

Instagram, by contrast, caters to curators of aesthetics and niche "-cores" with popular curators like @migonettetakespictures, who shares whimsical "photo dumps" of animals, @trionfi_mondo who celebrates the artist, and @milkandhoney who curates the dreamy world of anime-inspired foods. On this platform, the focus shifts from commentary to the curation of exciting visual worlds like the curation trends of early 2000s Tumblr. In comparison to TikTok, these Instagram curators excel in curating distinctive moods that resonate with the aesthetically driven content on the platform.

As the landscape continues to evolve, brands will need to consider how they can partner with these emerging curators to express their brand through new mediums or even inspire new products.

THANK YOU FOR READING

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ANALYSTS → Erika Danielsson & Jari Lähdevuori

CONTACT → jari@kurio