

State of User-Generated Content 2021



TINT
BY FILESTACK



Note from the CEO

This past year taught us the importance of being present through tumultuous times. It was this emphasis on real-time engagement that kept us grounded to continue to serve our teams, customers, partners and communities while it felt like the world was unraveling.

It also helped us become better listeners than we'd ever been before. We listened as customers asked their favorite brands to empathize with current events, take a stand, and do their part. Becoming part of the conversation was no longer a question—it was a requirement. Now, we're starting to see the shifts that this is creating in the marketing landscape.

We're honored to present the 2021 State of User-Generated Content report by TINT, a deep look into how brands increasingly elevate the voices of their fans, customers, influencers and teams – plus winning strategies for the next 12 months and beyond. Our report shows that UGC is more important than ever and contains several surprising findings and actionable tips for taking full advantage of emerging trends.

The insights in this report demonstrate the importance of incorporating your customers' voices as a core element of your marketing and brand strategy. I hope you find this year's State of UGC to be a helpful guide.

Sameer Kamat
CEO, TINT

Table of Contents

Note from the CEO and Table of Contents	02
Executive Summary and 2021 Themes	03
Overview	04
Theme #1: The Battle for Engagement	05
Theme #2: Omnichannel is No Longer Optional	09
Theme #3: Influencer Marketing has a New Definition	13
Theme #4: Social Meets eCommerce	16
Theme #5: The Rise of Virtual and Hybrid Events	19
About TINT	23
Thank you	24
Methodology	25



Executive Summary

User-generated content (UGC) increases trust, engagement, and revenue – and it's everywhere. From travel and tourism to education, retail, and eCommerce, UGC helps people decide which products, services, and experiences to trust.

Our study finds that 93% of marketers agree that consumers trust content created by people more than content created by brands. The allure of high engagement and strong conversion rates has prompted brands across industries to recognize the power of UGC and explore ways to incorporate more of it across their marketing channels.

Past research showed us the importance of UGC in the customer journey and its impact across organizations. Now, in TINT's 2021 State of UGC report, we examine how UGC plays a critical role in effective marketing strategies. Through our research, we uncovered 5 prevalent themes surrounding UGC, how it's used, and what to expect in the future. These themes cover topics from helping marketers be more effective in reaching their goals to being the ultimate conversion tool for the next wave of social commerce.

2021 Themes

- ▶ **Theme #1: The Battle for Engagement**
As marketers struggle to prove ROI and consistently create engaging content with limited resources, organizations are turning to using UGC to alleviate increased expectations and responsibilities.
- ▶ **Theme #2: Omnichannel is No Longer Optional**
Marketers and social media managers, specifically, have a massive and underrecognized responsibility to build and scale brand reputation and engage their audience wherever they are. By investing in the proper resources, brands can practice social listening and strengthen the connection they have with their audience.
- ▶ **Theme #3: Influencer Marketing has a New Definition**
Influencer marketing is so much more than celebrities and people with millions of followers. UGC and employee-generated content (EGC) exert true influence by turning customers, fans, and team members into visible and impactful brand advocates.
- ▶ **Theme #4: Social Meets eCommerce**
People are increasingly shifting to social media to stay connected, 24/7 and everywhere they go. These shifts in consumer behavior coupled with the meteoric rise of online shopping are driving social commerce – intertwining the purchase experience with social content.
- ▶ **Theme #5: The Rise of Virtual and Hybrid Events**
Bans on travel and in-person gatherings forced brands to adopt digital-first experiences – which bred new event models, virtual experiences, and increased expectations. For brands, conferences, and events, the focus is on maximizing engagement and creating personalized experiences that build trust.





Alyssa
@alyssafashionista

I love my new watch. Keeping me on time wherever I go. #watchlife

28 78 4h ago

Ninety-three percent (93%) of marketers agree that consumers trust content created by people more than content created by brands

Introducing the State of User-Generated Content 2021

The past year showed brands the importance of being connected to their audience and customers. Brands that were well attuned to the voices of their customers were able to listen and quickly, efficiently, and skillfully pivot their messaging and product offering during tumultuous times. In one of the most chaotic years of our lifetimes, marketing and communications teams strategized creative ways to make these pivots in real-time across a rapidly and unpredictably changing landscape.

TINT surveyed marketing professionals, from boutique agencies to global brands, to learn about their experiences in 2020 and identify the themes driving strategy over the next year. We found that many plan to rely on user-generated content and employee-generated content more than ever.

Moving forward, brands must learn how to distribute and deploy more

content across new and emerging platforms to meet their customers whenever and wherever they are.

UGC can help with content production demands while increasing engagement. Smart brands will look for opportunities to turn customers into brand ambassadors and leverage trends in the meteoric rise of social commerce, like shoppable UGC, to increase conversions.

Community and connection also take center stage in the event space, as virtual events and a new event model – hybrid events – look to continue for the foreseeable future.

At TINT, we're constantly learning through our work with over 5,000 leading brands, and we're excited to share that knowledge with you. We encourage you to use this report to inform your marketing strategy and to refer back to it as needed internally with your team – and externally in your content.



The Battle for Engagement

The results are in: the 3 most important KPIs to marketers are **engagement, leads, and ROI** – but there are some challenges.

Once again, we've found that **marketing professionals rank engagement as their top KPI** for the second straight year – with 41.2% of respondents ranking it at the top in 2020, a marginal increase over the 41% identified in past TINT research.

Engagement is a leading indicator of a brand's health because people willing to interact with a brand before converting into customers share interest in the brand. A brand that successfully aligns its values with intentional marketing can turn strangers into customers and loyal customers into advocates – but it comes down to consistency and giving each person what they want.

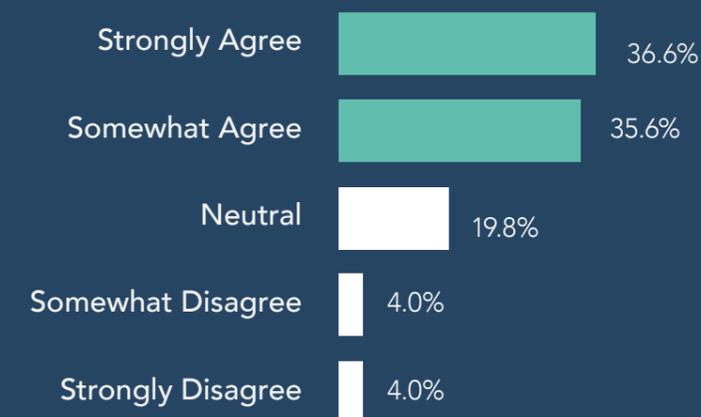
Consistent engagement is no small challenge when you consider our research finds **72.2% of marketers report having more job responsibilities now than compared to 2019**.

Research shows that marketers feel like they don't have adequate resources to succeed – with **time, budget, and team size being the main challenges** holding them back. Reduced budgets and head count mean that marketers now have more responsibilities with fewer resources.

41.2%

of marketers report engagement is the most important metric to measure

Q: I have more job responsibilities because of the pandemic



"There is no doubt that every marketer would love to be able to get more leads and report back to their company leaders on the ROI from their marketing budget.

However, for companies to take advantage of social media, a medium which was made for people and not for businesses, they need to learn to use social media as it was meant for: To engage and collaborate, not to promote and sell. That's why I am not surprised and actually encouraged that more and more marketers are using engagement as their main KPI when it comes to social media."



Neal Schaffer

CEO, PDCA Social Digital & Social Media Marketing Consultant, Speaker & Author
www.nealschaffer.com



The Time Crunch

More than half of marketers surveyed (52%) believe time is a challenge when it comes to social and visual content production.

This is an increase from our last report, which found that only 36% of marketers admitted their biggest concern

when it came to content marketing was not having enough time.

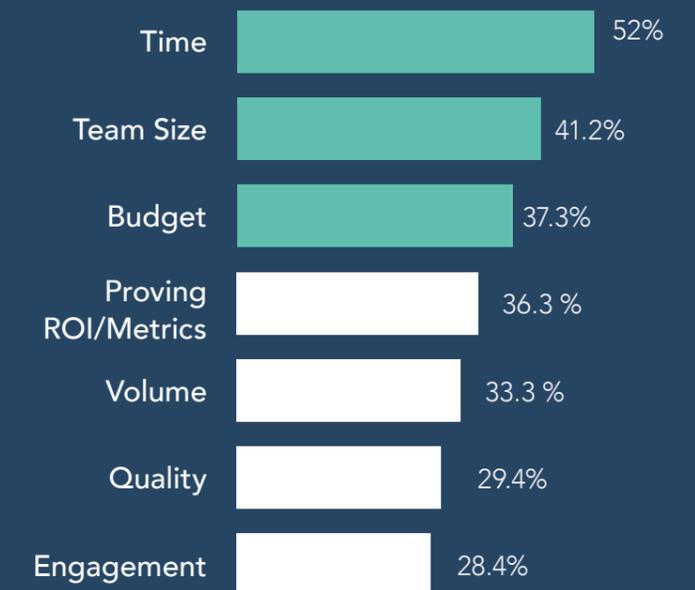
With consumers recognizing when brands are lazily cross-posting across their marketing channels, teams must instead source and post the right and most relevant content for each channel.

Marketers and content teams must find ways to make the most of the time they have. The use of UGC and employee-generated content (EGC) can save resources with AI-driven UGC discovery to realize considerable time savings while building trust and increasing engagement.

52%

of marketers feel time is a challenge when it comes to content production

Q: What are your top 3 challenges when it comes to social and visual content production?



"Social media content that is spontaneous, and sometimes even risky, can see huge returns. However, the process can be fast-paced and messy, which isn't how Marketing has traditionally operated."



Yazmin Slim
Digital Marketing Manager
Universal Pictures



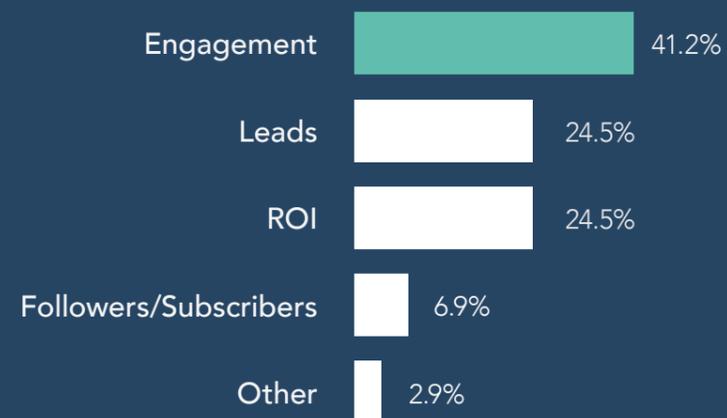
ROI

ROI remains in focus with nearly one quarter (24.5%) of marketers indicating that proving ROI is important to their role. However, a study by Deloitte reports that only **six percent (6%) of CMOs feel they are actively working on growing revenue across all global business activities.**

One area that can positively impact the bottom line for business is relationship-building through social.

In its Social Transformation Report, Hootsuite found that 67% of mature organizations were more likely to agree that social media built strong relationships that benefited the business.

Q: Which of the following KPIs is most important to your role?



"We are so closely tied to pipeline and revenue more than ever before. That can sometimes make us second guess our ability to tell amazing stories, create inspiring campaigns, or give back in meaningful ways.

In an effort to always prove value and ROI, we sometimes lose our way when it comes to the meaningful impact marketing can make.

I think finding that balance is a huge struggle and can manifest itself for marketers in strange ways, such as dysfunctional team dynamics, attribution wars, or (probably the worst!) boring marketing."



Rachel Truair

Sr. Director of Revenue Marketing
Confluent



Budgets

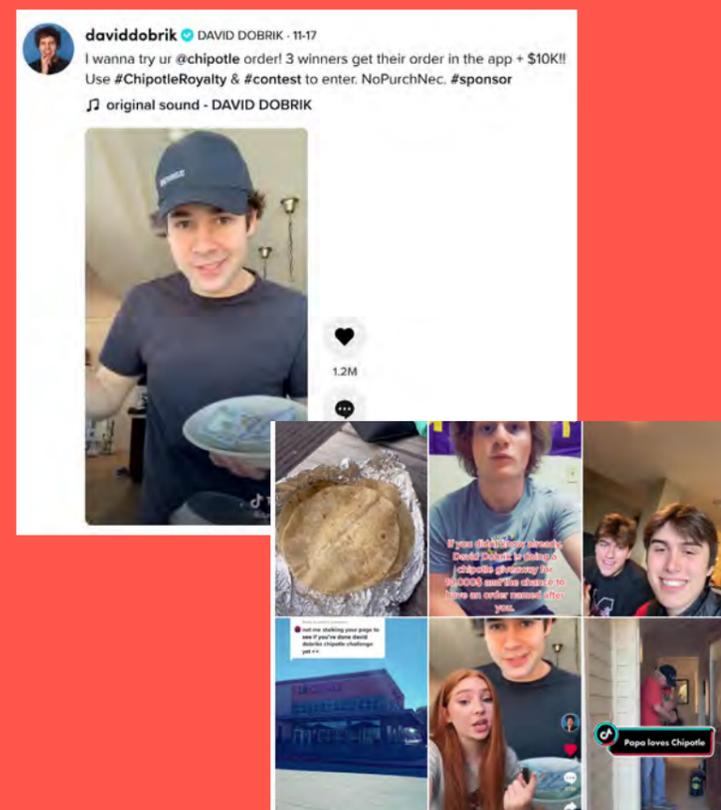
In 2020, more than half (51.5%) of respondents indicated a reduction in marketing budget while only 16.9% of marketers experienced budget growth.

While there is an expectation that marketers should produce more engagement and tie it back to ROI, the problem is that creating – and properly marketing – engaging content takes time and money.

As a solution, marketers are turning to user- and employee-generated content (UGC and EGC) to facilitate content production, build trust, and increase conversions.

Case Study: Chipotle and YouTuber David Dobrik

By encouraging and re-sharing content created by fans, customers, and employees, brands like Chipotle create higher engagement and ROI while spending less time and budget.



» For example, look at Chipotle's recent collaboration with YouTuber David Dobrik. Together, they launched the 'Make Your Order Famous' campaign – where they ask fans to share creative TikTok videos explaining why their Chipotle order is "superior" for a chance to win \$10,000 in cash (and have their order featured at Chipotle).

» Through this creative approach, Chipotle enables and captures UGC from TikTok and takes it all the way to the storefront to engage customers across digital *and* physical touchpoints.

Team size

Forty-three percent (43%) of marketing teams have fewer than 5 people in-house – and nearly half (41.2%) of respondents feel head count is a challenge when it comes to content production.

With few in-house staff, marketers need to be picky about what projects they focus on – and those projects need to be worthy of the time spent on them (and allocated away from other projects).

With engagement as a primary indicator of brand health (and social media making content creation more inclusive), marketers will increasingly care about measuring engagement for a direct correlation to leads and ROI. However, without the proper resources, budget, and team – marketers will need to lean on UGC, EGC, and strategic collaborations to alleviate where time, budget, and team size are lacking.

51.5%

of respondents experienced a reduction in marketing budget

16.9%

of marketers experienced budget growth

43%

of marketing teams have fewer than 5 people in-house

41.2%

of respondents feel head count is a challenge



Omnichannel is No Longer Optional

It was hard to ignore TikTok in 2020 as it garnered over 700,000 million global users and made headlines everywhere. Some everyday users, like Charli D'Amelio, became overnight success stories.

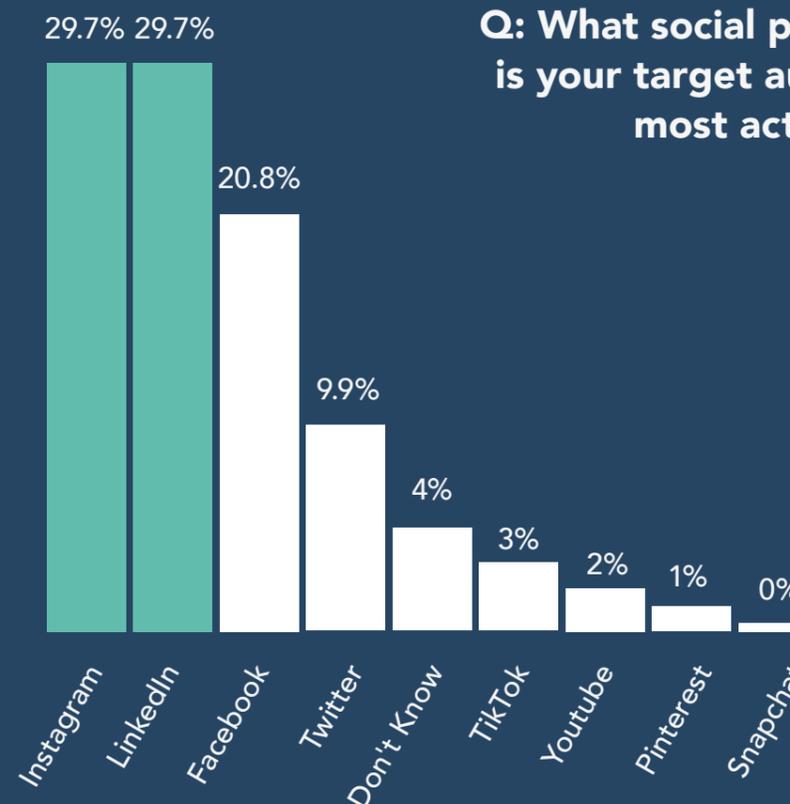
In less than one year of being active on TikTok, D'Amelio surpassed 100 million followers on the app – pushing creators to join the platform for its viral potential.



Is TikTok really a thing?

While it appears that TikTok is taking over the world, our data indicates organizations find their target audiences to be most active on traditional platforms like Instagram (29.7%), LinkedIn (29.7%), and Facebook (20.8%) – while **only 11.8% of organizations plan to increase their activity on TikTok in 2021.**

We believe there's still a lot of potential here, and the broader trend shows that there is significant fragmentation across channels. Gone are the days of being active on just one channel – now your customers expect to find you where they are.



"Most marketers struggle with feeding the content needs of ever-evolving and emerging channels. This is especially true for more established organizations that struggle to adapt in a meaningful and speedy way."



Simon Kopec
Social Media and Content Strategy
Hospitality



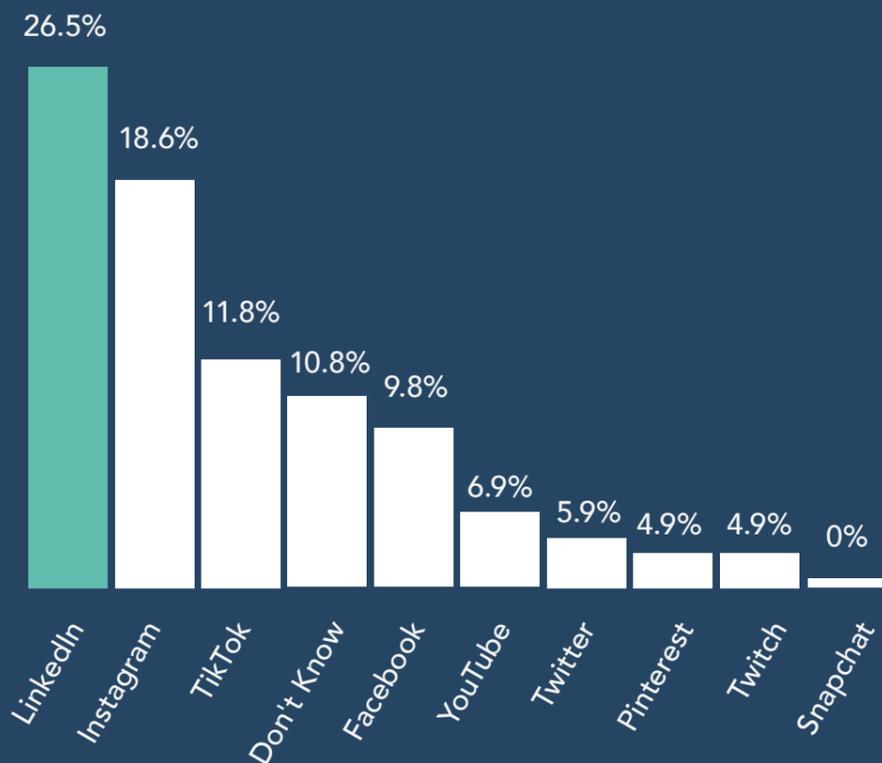
LinkedIn has become the de facto network for professionals, considering **26.5% of organizations plan to increase their activity next year on LinkedIn** – more than any other platform.

Moving forward, more brands will encourage their teams and execs to increase activity on LinkedIn to

establish their reputation as thought leaders within their space – which, if done right, can strengthen external contacts' perception of their brand.

Regardless of the platform – and with more people on social channels than ever before – organizations cannot afford to underinvest in this area.

Q: On which social platform does your organization plan to increase activity the most during 2021?



"Social media isn't as new as we make it seem; it's always evolving but we now have an understanding of how things work.

Working in social media is often a guessing game and I don't think it should be at this point; we need companies to start believing in what we do and invest more resources to getting teams equipped to do great work."



Joanna Rentería
Social Media Strategist
Social Lab @ Google
(Powered by Synergis)

Each distribution channel and social media platform requires its own strategy – audiences vary, ways of sharing and consuming content change, and what works on one platform doesn't always work on the other.

Giving social media managers a seat at the table – and listening to their feedback – will help brands avoid churning out tone-deaf content.



The Right Content for the Right Channel

Understanding the bigger picture and how each channel works is key. While platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter house thought leadership content and rely heavily on text, platforms like TikTok and Instagram exude a more visual experience.

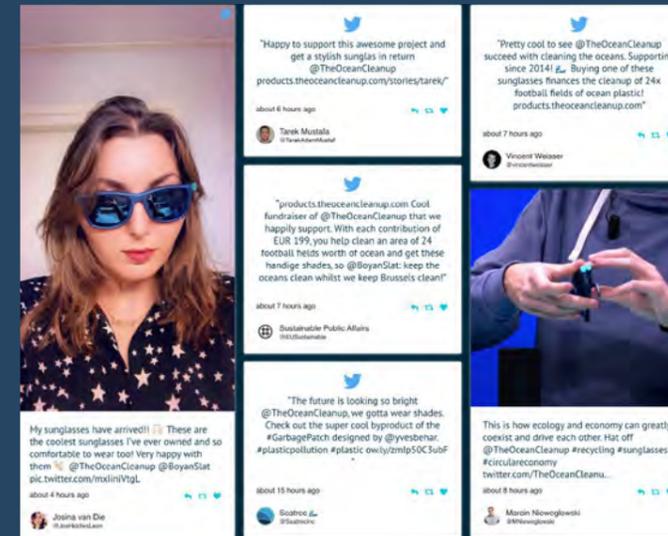
Customers, fans, and employees are constantly posting content within social media – which provides opportunities for brands to find, collect, and re-distribute authentic content across key channels to engage their audience.

"I'm counting down the days when marketers understand their strategies need to be optimized for [distribution] channels, as opposed to using social as a dumping ground."



Eunice Cancino
Marketing Manager
Tory Burch Foundation

The Ocean Clean Up Team Takes Sustainable Content Production to a New Level



- » The Ocean Clean Up (TOCU) created sunglasses made of 24 football fields' worth of Pacific Ocean garbage and promoted the campaign with UGC and omnichannel distribution.
- » Their founder told the story of the glasses via a live, virtual presentation.
- » They sourced UGC from social media and reshared it across multiple channels to bring the experience full-circle – from displaying fans' reactions as they unbox the sunglasses on screens behind the founder during the presentation to embedding a social wall on the website with real-time content their users are sharing across social media.

TIP: When your leadership team and customers participate in creating your brand's content – it not only establishes social proof and increases conversion rates – but it cuts down the time and resources needed to produce (and distribute) engaging content.



Listen To (and Empower) Your Social Media Managers

Successful omnichannel strategies require happy and productive teams – and increasingly, this means social media managers.

Overall, successful omnichannel strategies require happy and productive teams – and increasingly, this means social media managers. Based on qualitative data (and lots of our own social listening) from #MarketingTwitter and research combined – **social media managers want to feel heard.**

The 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer reports that trust in information is at record lows and news organizations are seen as biased. This adds pressure to highlight and share the most trustworthy content. A lot of that responsibility falls on Social Media Managers as they navigate changing trends and a global pandemic.

While they try to raise engagement and keep conversions in the pipeline, **social media managers have a massive responsibility to build and maintain a brand's reputation in real-time, across a number of rapidly-evolving platforms.**

What you share (and how, when, and where you share it) impacts people's perception of your brand. Social teams are at the frontlines listening, curating content, and responding to conversations. They understand what will resonate with your audience and what won't.

"Social media managers are beacons of light in the storm of public opinion. The smartest organizations don't just use them as a vehicle for pushing out reactive messaging, but as a trusted source of customer and cultural intelligence that can help strengthen campaigns from start to finish."



Sarah Dawley
Manager, Content
Hootsuite



Influencer Marketing Redefined

In this year's report, an astounding **93% of marketers agree that consumers trust content created by people more than content created by brands.**

So, how can you obtain and use more of this trusted content?

While influencer marketing certainly spans those who get paid to promote products to their audience, to say that this is the only type of influencer marketing is an extreme understatement.

It's important to draw a line between the parasocial interaction with digital celebrities collectively referred to as "influencers," and the true influencers who are creating trustworthy content just outside of the bright spotlight.

What is true influencer marketing?

Influencers are around us every single day – an industry leader on LinkedIn, a talented creator on Instagram, a close friend telling you about a product, a co-worker raving about their favorite tool.

Before the internet, marketers had fewer ways to encourage and amplify the type of word-of-mouth marketing that would help their brands take off. In the age of social media, **UGC has become the currency for word-of-mouth marketing**, and now everyone's an influencer with their own high-powered megaphone cranked to 11.

The difference is that when most people hear the word influencer, they think of highly visible celebrities with millions of followers who demand compensation for any cursory mention of your brand – while the average person, without an army of followers or a blue checkmark next to their name, doesn't have a package rate for their promotional services.

Better yet, they don't need it.

"Brands are realizing that overproduced content is always going to perform less than content that feels more organic, natural, and human-centered.

That's why you see platforms like TikTok working so well – because on TikTok, you might see an ad and not even know it's an ad."



Jayde Powell
Head of Social
Sunwink

By creating experiences that customers want to participate in and share, brands can inspire and benefit from true influencer marketing. This updated definition of influencer marketing moves from being designated only for those who have large amounts of followers and towards leveraging the masses of real people with authentic influence.

As a result, brands are increasing efforts and resources into collaborating with relatable influencers, their fans, customers, and employees to build trust and engagement.

In our research, we find that **75% of marketers are currently working with small (<1,000 followers), nano (1,000-10,000 followers), and micro-influencers (10,000-25,000 followers).**

Not only is this more cost-effective than hiring celebrities and established influencers, but these more accessible talents are trusted.



Employees are Influencers too

Our last study found that brand messages were reshared up to **24 times** more when distributed by employees versus the brand.

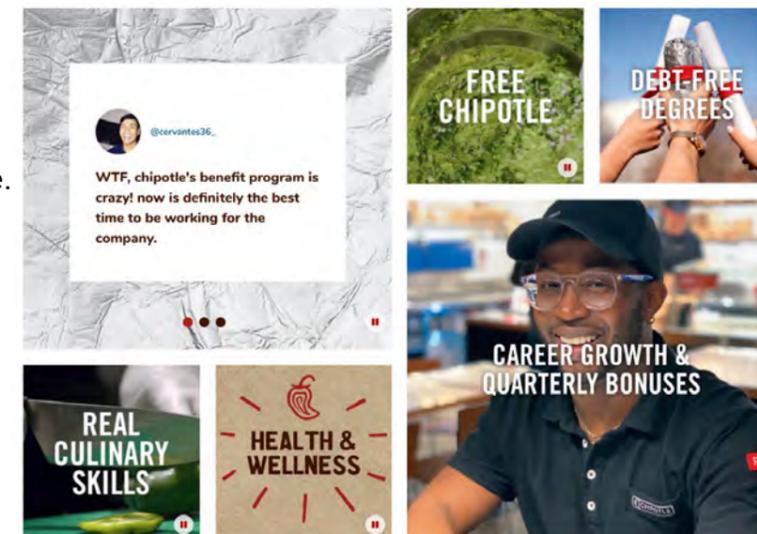
"Employee-generated content is what has put the @WeAreCisco team on its path to success, with the metrics to prove its value."



Carmen Collins
Social Media and Employee/
Employer-Brand Lead
Cisco

Brands like Cisco and Chipotle rely on this content created by employees to amplify recruiting efforts and build company culture.

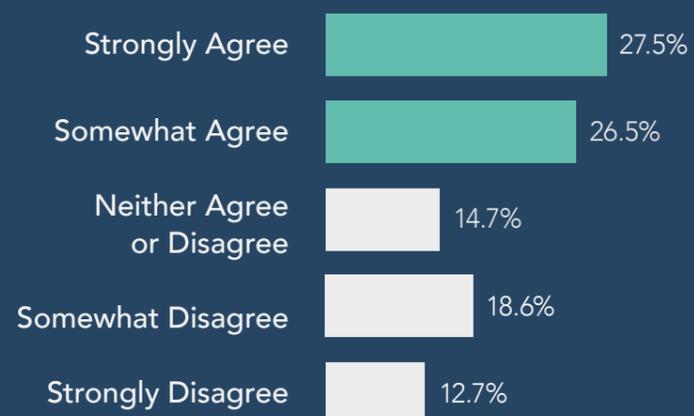
For example, Chipotle uses EGC on its careers page to recruit talent, highlight its culture, and showcase what it's like to work at Chipotle from an employee's perspective.



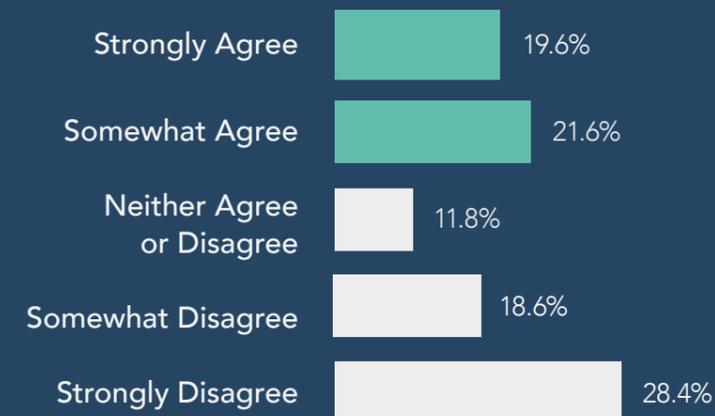
By creating internal influencers and distributing EGC internally and externally – brands can position their team as experts within their space and attract top talent as a desirable place to work.

Year after year, research demonstrates that UGC supports a winning marketing strategy. We found that there is a split between those that have a person or team dedicated to collecting and repurposing UGC – and those that do not.

Q: My organization often uses content created by employees (EGC) to communicate internally



Q: My organization has a person or team dedicated to collecting and repurposing content created by its fans, users, and customers (UGC)



How to Leverage *TRUE* Influencer Marketing



Just because you don't have a dedicated team doesn't mean you can't leverage UGC to increase engagement, brand awareness, and conversions.

In our research, 43.1% of marketers reported that it is challenging to find engaging UGC – but here are a few ways to make it easier.

Tell your Customers, Fans, and Employees What to Create

Most brands don't realize that their customers want companies to give them ways to share their products with friends and family.

We previously reported that fifty-percent (50%) of consumers wish brands would steer them to what content to create and share.

Brands that clearly define what content to create, when to create it, and how to share it are able to turn their customers into genuine brand advocates.

Encourage customers to create UGC by asking them to post on Instagram as they unbox their product, to share their new purchase as a Tweet, or show themselves using your product and, of course, use your custom hashtag strategy to tag it. Just make sure to always get the legal rights for UGC.

50%

of consumers wish brands would steer them to what content to create and share

Incentivize Customers to Create UGC

Another way teams can obtain more UGC is by running campaigns and contests that reward fans and customers to create and share their best content.

If you're just starting out and don't have any examples of UGC to show them, create your own so your customers know exactly what you're looking for.

By featuring UGC across your marketing channels, you'll inspire more of the user-generated content you're looking for by modeling the behavior you desire.

"If more marketers took the time to understand that people connect with people – and their contribution to culture will take them further – their outcomes would be completely different."



Siôn Rees
Brand Identity Designer
Pentagon

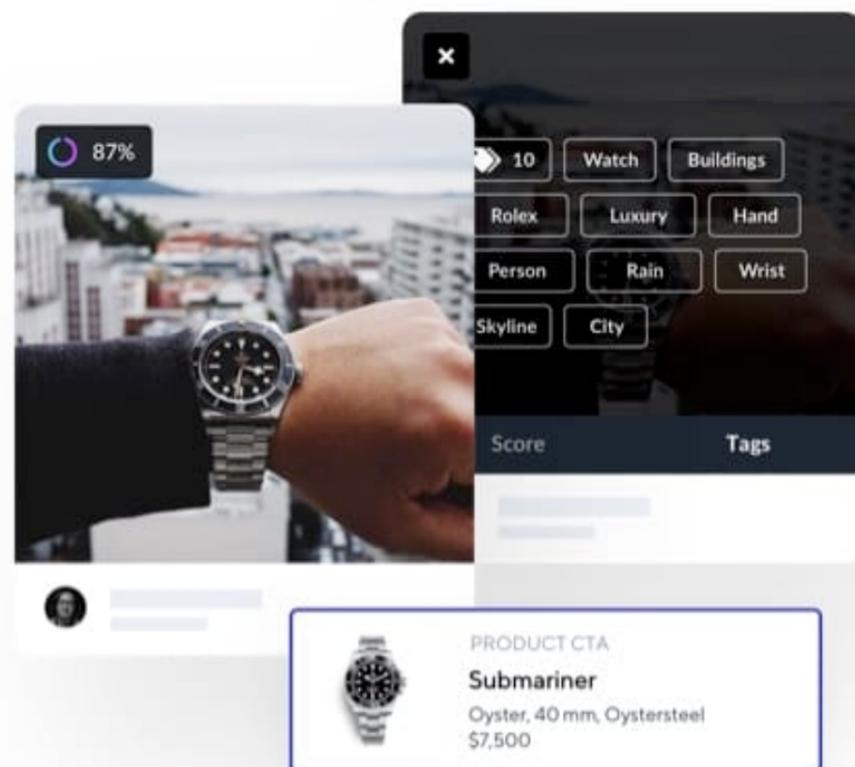


Social Meets eCommerce

People are increasingly shifting to social media to stay connected, 24/7 and everywhere they go. These shifts in consumer behavior coupled with the meteoric rise of online shopping are driving social commerce – intertwining the purchase experience with social content.

According to GroupM's eCommerce Forecast, global retail eCommerce will increase from 17% of global retail sales in 2020 to 25% of retail sales in 2024.

Social commerce is disrupting the marketing funnel, as social channels like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat pave the way for the future of shopping.



Instagram replaced the notifications button with a Shopping tab, Reels are now shoppable, and **TikTok** is experimenting with livestream shopping – shaping user behavior (and new buying habits). Additionally, **online shopping has never been more prominent** – particularly during a major global health pandemic when many felt unsafe venturing indoors to stores and malls.

In 2020:

- » Black Friday was the second-largest online spending day in U.S. history
- » Chains that offered curbside, drive-thru, and in-store pickup options in the U.S. increased digital sales at a 26% higher rate
- » Shopify reported \$5.1 billion in Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales in 2020 – compared to \$2.9 billion in 2019.
- » Alibaba made **\$35 billion within the first 30 minutes** of Singles Day

As people increasingly shop online, behaviors and expectations around the buying journey will continue to shift – where assurance for a **safe, convenient, and hyper-personalized** experience will increase.



Hyper-Personalization

Hyper-personalization is the act of collecting and using consumer insights to improve the experience you provide.

75%

of marketers claim
UGC makes content
more authentic

Hyper-personalization is more than the usual "Hi, [Insert Name Here]" in an email – it's the special experience you provide your audience that shows them that you understand and care about them.

Why is hyper-personalization important?

Consumers trust reviews from other people (including strangers) more than brands, so UGC is key to creating balanced content that your audience will resonate with. But there's still significant opportunity for growth in this area considering that:

- » Thirty-nine percent (39%) of TINT respondents are focusing on balancing brand and community voice
- » More than half of marketers (59.8%) agree that authenticity and quality of content are equally important
- » Three-quarters of marketers (75%) claim that UGC makes content more authentic

"Successful brands have their own content, aren't afraid to do things differently, and they leverage their audience's content to make people feel like they can speak and are being heard."



Charles Etoroma
Sr. Social Media Strategist
EXPRESS

59.8%

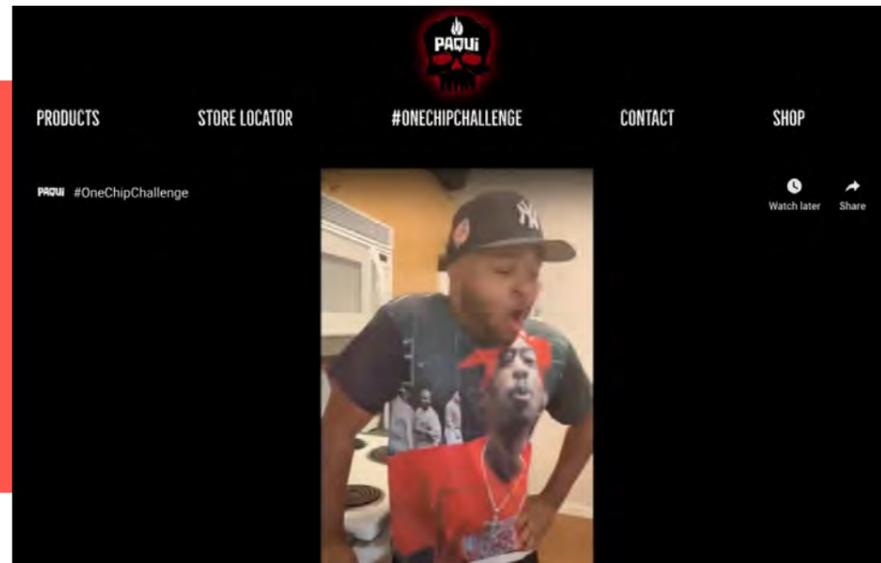
of marketers agree
that authenticity and
quality of content are
equally important

39%

of respondents are
focusing on balancing
brand and community
voice



Case Study: Paqui Chips #OneChipChallenge



To boost brand awareness and sales, Paqui engineered a social experience and tapped the broader cultural trend around “challenges” with their notoriously deathly spicy Carolina Reaper chip. With its #OneChipChallenge, Paqui elevates the voice of *real* influencers to drive the campaign.

Paqui takes the social experience full-circle on its landing page – from starting with a promo video compiled with UGC that leads into the Wall of Infamy – a social wall that dares people to

eat the chip and submit their agonizing reactions. UGC-inspiring experiences are found at every turn including coffin-shaped packaging, and shoppable merchandise like t-shirts and party packs to challenge friends.

In essence, Paqui uses UGC as social bait to tempt people to participate and share their own #OneChipChallenge. UGC is the content, but Paqui strategically places it throughout their buying journey to increase engagement and conversions.



At TINT, some of our (willing) employees took the #OneChipChallenge together. Creating an internal experience for our team to bond over will be hard to forget (and, frankly, so will that chip!) – and sharing this experience with our audience personalizes the TINT brand.

As eCommerce, drive-thrus, and curbside pickups continue to grow – brands will turn to UGC to collect feedback, share social proof, and build trust throughout the journey. Machine learning boosts the impact and efficiency of these efforts. In the near future, marketing activations will look like curbside ads, website galleries with real-time social media content, digital out-of-home (DOOH) ads, and promoted ads featuring customer testimonials.

Shoppable social is only the beginning of how brands should be leveraging the conversion-boosting power of UGC. Look beyond single social channels to implement a creative social commerce strategy that considers multiple touch points.

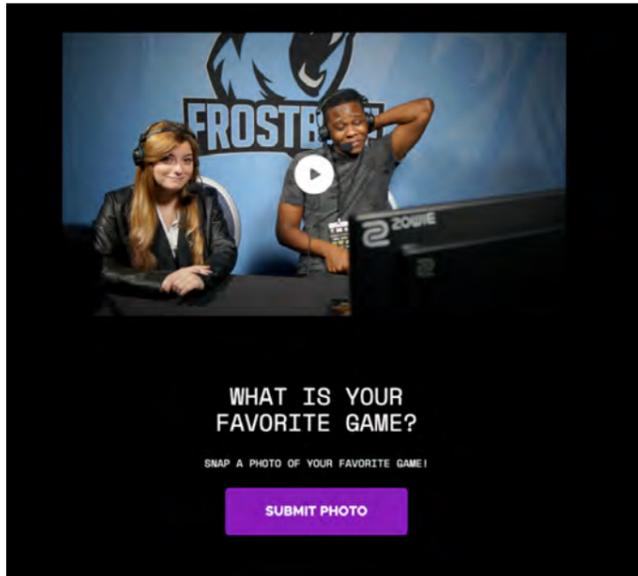
"No matter what innovations are in our future, we will always be marketing to people. There will be tons of new trends, but no matter what's next, empathy, authenticity, and a genuine interest in helping others will propel your brand forward."



Brianne Fleming
Marketing Professor
University of Florida



The Rise of Virtual and Hybrid Events



The pandemic brought events, conferences, and tourism to a crash halt. Field marketers, destinations, and venues had to make harsh pivots to a new future – where events had to be translated into new digital environments for consumers to attend safely from home.

The learning curve that followed included crisis communications, negotiations, new tools and platforms, social distancing regulations, and more with a change in event marketing to fit virtual-first events.

The in-person elements allow "locals" to connect while the digital elements expand the audience to anyone with an internet connection.

75.5%

of respondents said they were considering virtual events in 2021

70.1%

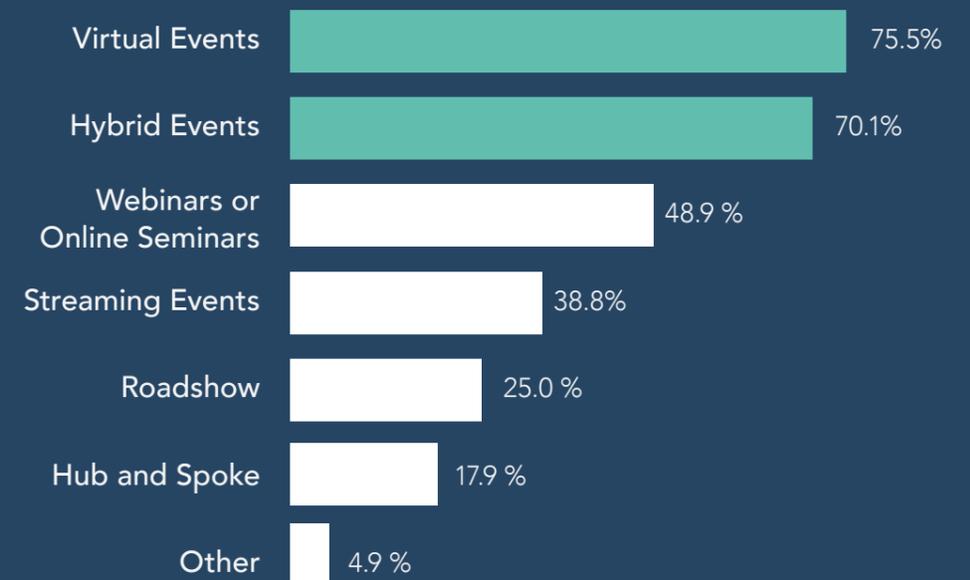
of respondents are also considering hybrid events

“Virtual events are here to stay and with travel restricted around the world, hybrid events will be local-first. People want to buy from brands that care and are present in their communities. They want to see a local impact. They want to eat at local establishments.”



S. David Ramirez
Event Marketing Manager
TINT

Q: What event formats are you considering for 2021?





The mega-conventions of yesteryear may be gone for the immediate future especially when organizers can deliver record-size audiences by eliminating geographic, budget, and travel restraints on the web.

Event and field marketers are turning to focus on unique event structures that can capture the attendance of a major trade show without sacrificing the safety of intimate gatherings.

A potential forerunner is Hub and Spoke, a model where multiple smaller activations simultaneously share content, speakers, and ideas across

geographies. Previously the model was unpopular because it required the same amount of logistical lift to produce as a major conference.

But attendee sentiments may find Hub and Spoke to be the savior of in-person business events.

Marketers are certainly interested in hosting events – and with a new

hybrid event model, we'll be seeing new expectations from attendees, a need for maximizing digital engagement, and a way to turn that digital experience into brand content.

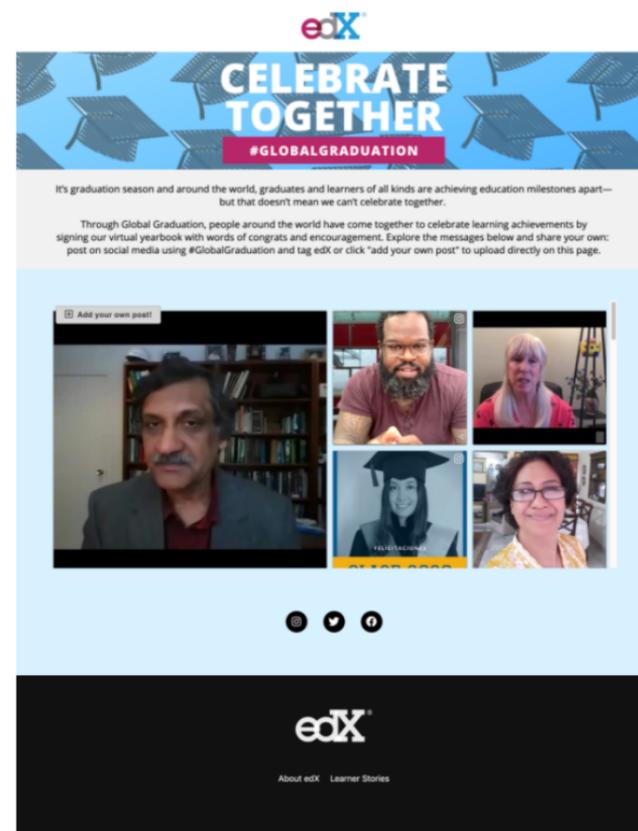
Understand New Expectations for Events

With hybrid and virtual events, attendees will expect a new experience that is able to compete with the pre-COVID-19 in-person events. Companies will continue to rely on **video and live streaming** on social media to host conferences, webinars, virtual roundtables, etc., but without attendees walking around venues, events must find ways to fuel digital engagement.

Case Study: #GlobalGraduation by edX

edX found its solution to virtually connecting their global community through an omnichannel strategy highlighting UGC to promote #GlobalGraduation.

They launched the #GlobalGraduation campaign across their email, blog, website, and social media channels.



The result

More than 500 well wishes submitted during the week-long campaign, 7,000+ clicks to the #GlobalGraduation page, and high engagement on email and social media.

500+

wishes submitted
in one week

7000+

clicks to the
#GlobalGraduation page

"When we used messages of celebrating learners in our email marketing efforts – we saw 2x's more clicks than our average blog clicks. This is an indicator to us that there is a future in utilizing UGC more."



Sree Lenhart

Senior Director of Brand Marketing
edX



Turn UGC into Content

Events can use incoming UGC for their brand and marketing channels. We've seen this within in-person events and on social walls and screens displaying tweets or Instagram posts curated from a specific hashtag.

As the event industry finds its balance, marketing will be a lot more community-oriented – from niche Slack Groups to Zoom

Group Chats and eventually, hyper-personalized physical experiences.

In the post-COVID-19 event space, marketers can use UGC to engage attendees, answer questions, and promote future installments, showing future attendees that despite the event being virtual or a hybrid model, attendees had a great experience.

Social and Community Engagement

Events are opportunities for people, connected by a common interest, to share their hopes and plans for the future. The best virtual and hybrid events will find ways to capture this and celebrate it.

Ways to incorporate community engagement

Encourage attendees, presenters, and staff to submit content using a hashtag

Ask attendees to create micro-videos of their event moments and share them on TikTok

Allow community members and local people of influence to submit their own content and include it as part of pre-roll or cutaways

Highlight this content on the event website, repost on social, and use it in future event promotions



About TINT

TINT is the enterprise User Generated Content platform trusted by over 5,000 leading brands around the world to incorporate authentic user content, engage consumers, convert sales, and inspire action. Weave the power of UGC and authentic influencer marketing into every step of the customer journey.

From UGC influencers to hybrid events and social commerce, marketing continues to expand and become more complex. We're here to help you navigate social and visual content strategy – schedule time to consult with an expert today.

www.tintup.com



Thank You

We'd like to thank everyone who contributed to this report.

Brianne Fleming – University of Florida

Carmen Collins – Cisco

Charles Etoroma – EXPRESS

Eunice Cancino – Tory Burch Foundation

Jayde Powell – Sunwink

Joanna Rentería – Social Lab @ Google (Powered by Synergis)

Neal Schaffer – www.nealschaffer.com

Rachel Truair – Confluent

S. David Ramirez – TINT

Sarah Dawley – Hootsuite

Simon Kopec – Hospitality

Siôn Rees – Pentagon

Sree Lenhard – edX

Yazmin Slim – Universal Pictures



Methodology

The State of User-Generated Content is a report compiled and released by TINT. The purpose of this report is to understand the opportunities and challenges facing marketers to help customers benchmark, plan, and prioritize. This report is based on an online UGC survey of 102 marketers conducted in November 2020, as well as extensive research with 184 event marketers conducted in August 2020.

Additional data were compiled from the Hootsuite Social Transformation report, Hootsuite Social Trends 2021 report, Edelman Trust Barometer 2021, Group M eCommerce Forecast, Shopify Future of eCommerce 2021, TINT articles and enterprise case studies. We've supplemented these results with insights from primary interviews with leaders on the Future of Marketing.

We wish to thank all respondents for their time and invaluable input. This research would not be possible without their attention to detail and thoughtful contributions. Individual survey data and participants are held in strict confidence.





TINT
BY FILESTACK

www.tintup.com