Social Media Audience Trends During the Pandemic

Executive Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic completely changed marketing's narrative. What was business as usual for the first couple months of the year became business unusual since, and with a timeframe measured in months and years, the impact of COVID-19 will continue to be felt for quite some time.

To help marketers like you understand where audiences are spending their time and how they've changed their behaviors, Talkwalker and Trust Insights teamed up to analyze day-by-day data for over 60 different social networks, from the biggest tech companies to niches you've probably never heard of.

In this report, you'll learn which networks grew the most in the early weeks of the pandemic, which networks are holding onto their audiences, and the three big trends to take advantage of as we navigate the ever-changing situation: **gaming, YouTube video, and home-based niches**. You'll see practical examples of brands and techniques, Action Steps and takeaways at each major trend, and ways to pivot your marketing.

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Methodology and Disclaimers

Trust Insights undertook a multi-part set of techniques to extract the information in this paper. We began by using Talkwalker's social media monitoring platform to find other social networks that are related to the primary networks most people are aware of (Instagram, Facebook, etc.) based on conversations over a 3 month period (February 28 - April 29, 2020). This provided a list of named social networks.

Twitter	995.4K	11.3M	921.6K
Facebook	4.3M	706.3K	268.1K
Animal Crossing (video ga...	0	56.8K	4.3M
Instagram	3.3M	439.8K	172.8K
YouTube	362.7K	296.7K	2.5M
Reddit	357.3K	1.2M	50.8K
Nintendo	0	0	1.4M
Nintendo Switch	0	0	1.1M
WhatsApp	87.6K	160.3K	774.8K
Snapchat	49.7K	866.3K	0
Google	182.5K	128.1K	126.4K
Fortnite	0	0	411.3K
LinkedIn	274.7K	54.4K	0
Minecraft	35.9K	0	256.7K
Horizon Zero Dawn	0	0	203.4K
Android (operating system)	79.6K	50.5K	68.7K
IOS	66.9K	31.5K	98.4K
Amazon.com	67K	40.9K	63K
Tumblr	0	169.3K	0
Netflix	37.4K	83.6K	28.6K
SoundCloud	0	148.1K	0
Emojipedia	0	141K	0
Spotify	45.3K	45K	45.5K
Pinterest	27.8K	94K	0
Skype	0	118.8K	0
Pornhub	0	116.4K	0
PayPal	35.5K	66.2K	0
GitHub	100.8K	0	0
Tinder (app)	0	81.1K	0
Animal Crossing: New Leaf	0	0	77.8K
Microsoft	36.2K	0	34.5K
WeChat	0	0	67.1K
Microsoft Office	49.9K	0	0
Xbox One	0	0	47.2K
Livestream	46.6K	0	0
GameStop	0	0	39.4K
NBC	0	0	39K
Google Play	36.9K	0	0
Patreon	36.9K	0	0
Super Nintendo Entertain...	35K	0	0

Figure 1. Talkwalker Quick Search topic scan, associated brands.

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Once we acquired the network names, using Talkwalker, we checked conversation volume around terms like "Delete Facebook" etc. to assemble a list of common terms for someone signing up for a social network, searching for the network in general, and someone quitting a social network. This provided a list of known terms for account creation, usage, and account quits.

We then crafted custom permutation software to create every possible variation of the account creation, usage, and quit words, along with the networks themselves and related words such as account, profile, app, etc., a list of over 1,000 combinations.

Using the Ahrefs SEO software, we scanned each combination for the number of searches per month, deleting search phrases with no search volume.

Using our custom time-series analysis software, AHREFs search volumes, and Google's 181-day historical search trends data, we analyzed the daily search volumes for the last 181 days for each search term.

A key point to note is that all the data in this report is based on these searches. We do not incorporate at any point the publicly-listed numbers found in SEC filings for publicly-traded companies because not all social networks are publicly traded, or are part of other, larger entities (for example, Microsoft owned LinkedIn and does not publish detailed metrics), making apples-to-apples comparisons impossible.

As such, do not use this data for investment purposes or other significant financial projections without consulting other data sources and qualified financial investment professionals.

Please note if you read our previous paper that this methodology differs substantially; by incorporating usage terms, we are looking for activity from not only new users, but existing users as well. It is not possible to compare the previous paper's results with this paper.

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Definitions

Account creation: search words and phrases dealing with account creation such as *install, set up, download, sign up, open, create, or new*. Examples: new Snapchat account, open Tiktok profile

Account quit: search words and phrases dealing with account deletion such as *delete, uninstall, deactivate, remove, quit, close, disable, cancel, remove, or leave*. Examples: Snapchat delete profile, Instagram close account

Decile: a ranking of a dataset in 10 partitions. The top 10% of a dataset would be the tenth decile. The bottom 10% of a dataset would be the first decile.

Search: a search is defined as a word or phrase (a query) an individual user types into a search engine such as Google, Bing, etc. for the purposes of obtaining more information about the search query.

Social network: a social network is defined as a digital platform or destination whose value is contingent upon the participation of individuals in the creation, engagement, and sharing of content. Social networks exhibit network effects as their primary source of value; the more people who use a network, the more valuable it becomes, and the majority of content or value comes from users.

Velvet rope social media: social media channels which are private, gated communities that the general public has no visibility into.

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Key Findings

Account Creation Search Volume

Account Creation Statistics

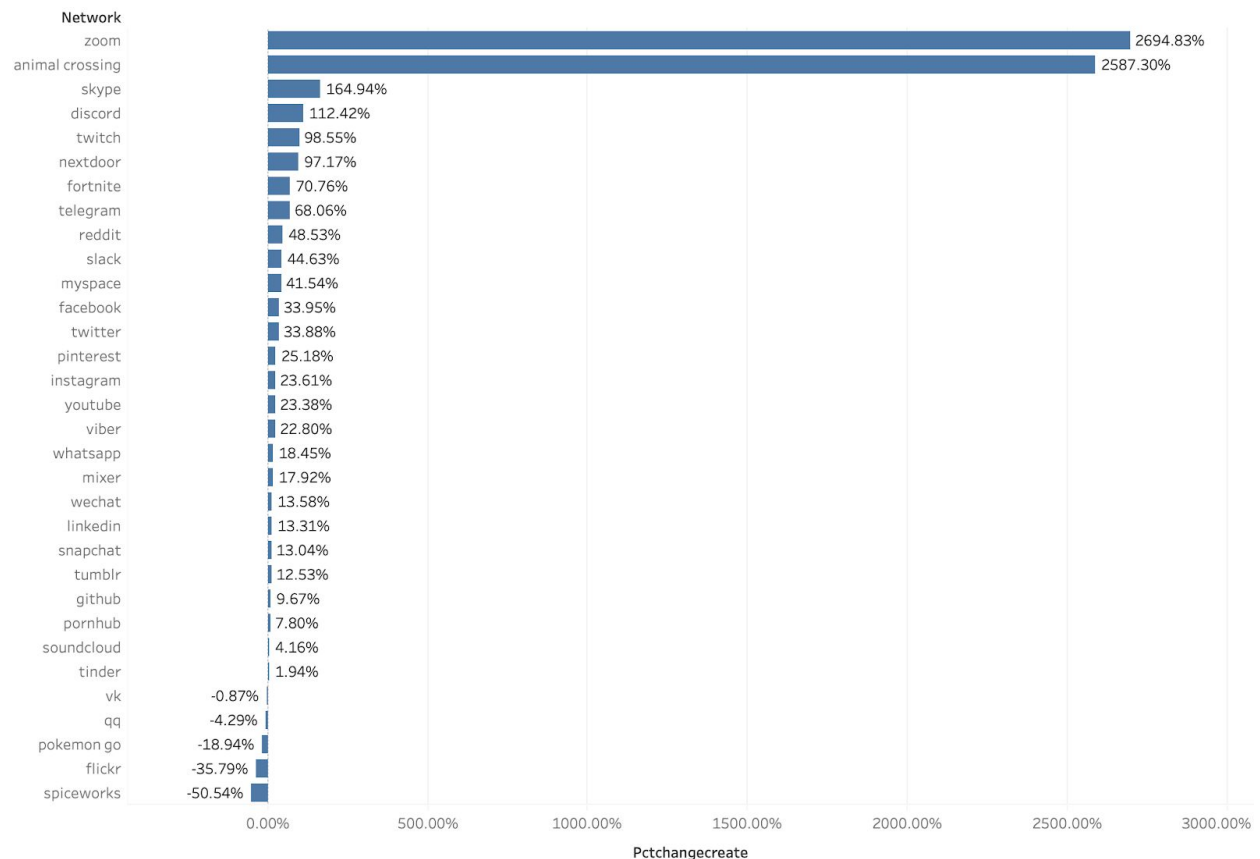| Network	Pctchangecreate
zoom	2694.83%
animal crossing	2587.30%
skype	164.94%
discord	112.42%
twitch	98.55%
nextdoor	97.17%
fortnite	70.76%
telegram	68.06%
reddit	48.53%
slack	44.63%
myspace	41.54%
facebook	33.95%
twitter	33.88%
pinterest	25.18%
instagram	23.61%
youtube	23.38%
viber	22.80%
whatsapp	18.45%
mixer	17.92%
wechat	13.58%
linkedin	13.31%
snapchat	13.04%
tumblr	12.53%
github	9.67%
pornhub	7.80%
soundcloud	4.16%
tinder	1.94%
vk	-0.87%
qq	-4.29%
pokemon go	-18.94%
flickr	-35.79%
spiceworks	-50.54%

Figure 2. Account creation statistics by average percentage change, pre-pandemic vs. pandemic period.

We begin by examining the number of average daily searches related to setting up or creating new accounts on the list of 86 social networking sites in the pre and post pandemic periods to determine which services have seen the greatest increase in average daily searches. Unsurprisingly, Zoom has experienced a massive surge in search volume related to account creation, with 2,695% increased interest period vs. period.

The second winner in this category, and the breakout star of the pandemic period, is the social video game Animal Crossing, with 2,587% increased interest period vs. period. We see other networks such as Skype, Discord, Twitch, and Nextdoor also showing respectable period vs. period increases.

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When we examine absolute numbers rather than percentage increase, we see different networks accruing crowd interests:
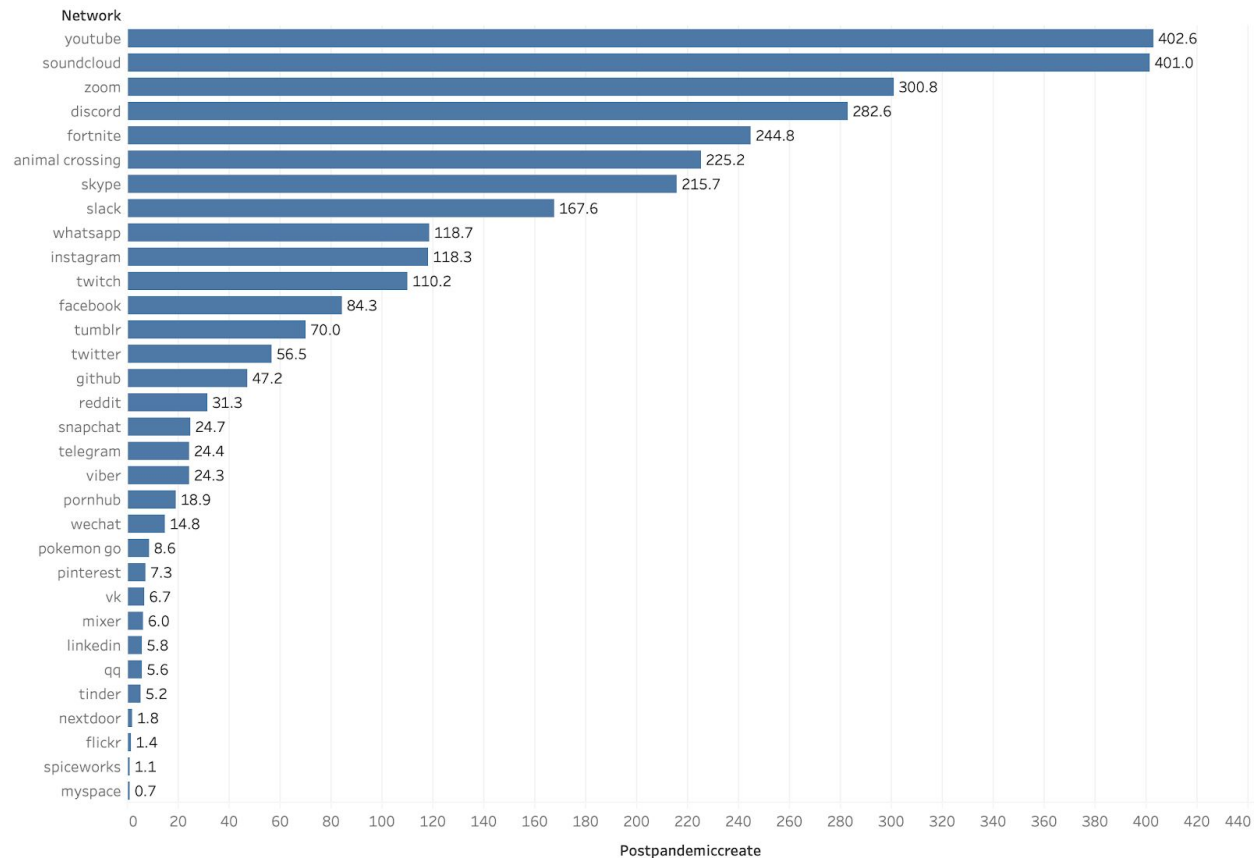
Daily Account Creation Statistics

Network	Postpandemiccreate
youtube	402.6
soundcloud	401.0
zoom	300.8
discord	282.6
fortnite	244.8
animal crossing	225.2
skype	215.7
slack	167.6
whatsapp	118.7
instagram	118.3
twitch	110.2
facebook	84.3
tumblr	70.0
twitter	56.5
github	47.2
reddit	31.3
snapchat	24.7
telegram	24.4
viber	24.3
pornhub	18.9
wechat	14.8
pokemon go	8.6
pinterest	7.3
vk	6.7
mixer	6.0
linkedin	5.8
qq	5.6
tinder	5.2
nextdoor	1.8
flickr	1.4
spiceworks	1.1
myspace	0.7

Figure 3. Account creation statistics by daily absolute numbers of searches during the pandemic period.

Audiences are looking for how to set up accounts on YouTube, SoundCloud, Zoom, Discord, and Fortnite, to the tune of several hundred searches per day. These networks are showing strong, large numbers of growth. That said, we note the glaring absence of Facebook near the top; this is likely in part because Facebook has reached close to total audience saturation, with 3 billion users worldwide.

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Social Network Usage Search Volume

More than account creation, when we look at searches about the networks themselves and how to use them, we see the impact of the pandemic very clearly. Searches relating to social network usage increased from a trough on March 3 of 85.9 million searches per day to a peak on March 29 of 108.8 million, a 26.7% increase. When we consider that this represents the usage of over 3 billion people, this is a massive change in the amount of time people spend social networking.

Total Daily Search Volume for All Social Networks
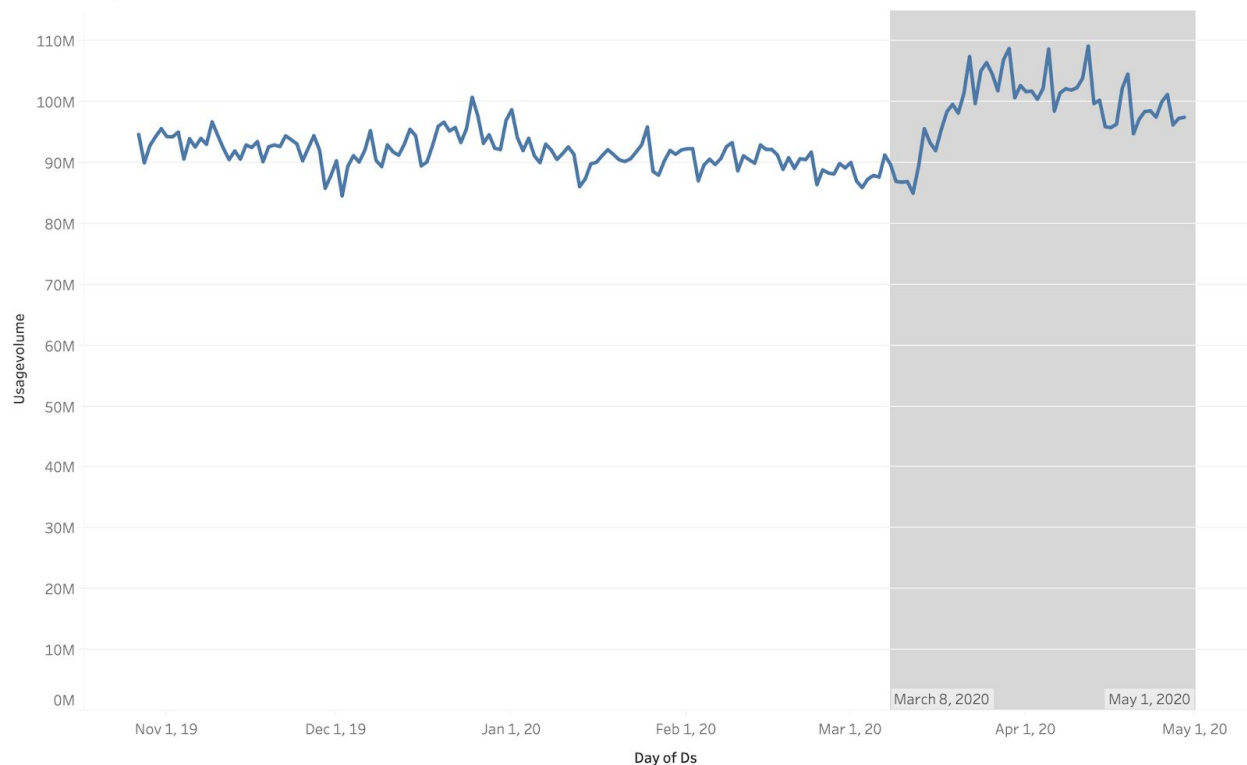
Figure 4. Social network search volume usage statistics by daily searches. The pandemic period is noted by the grey reference band.

What's driving the increase? In terms of absolute numbers of people, it's the two largest giants on the playing field - YouTube and Facebook. Both became more popular in the early days of the pandemic, but Facebook's popularity has waned below that of YouTube's:

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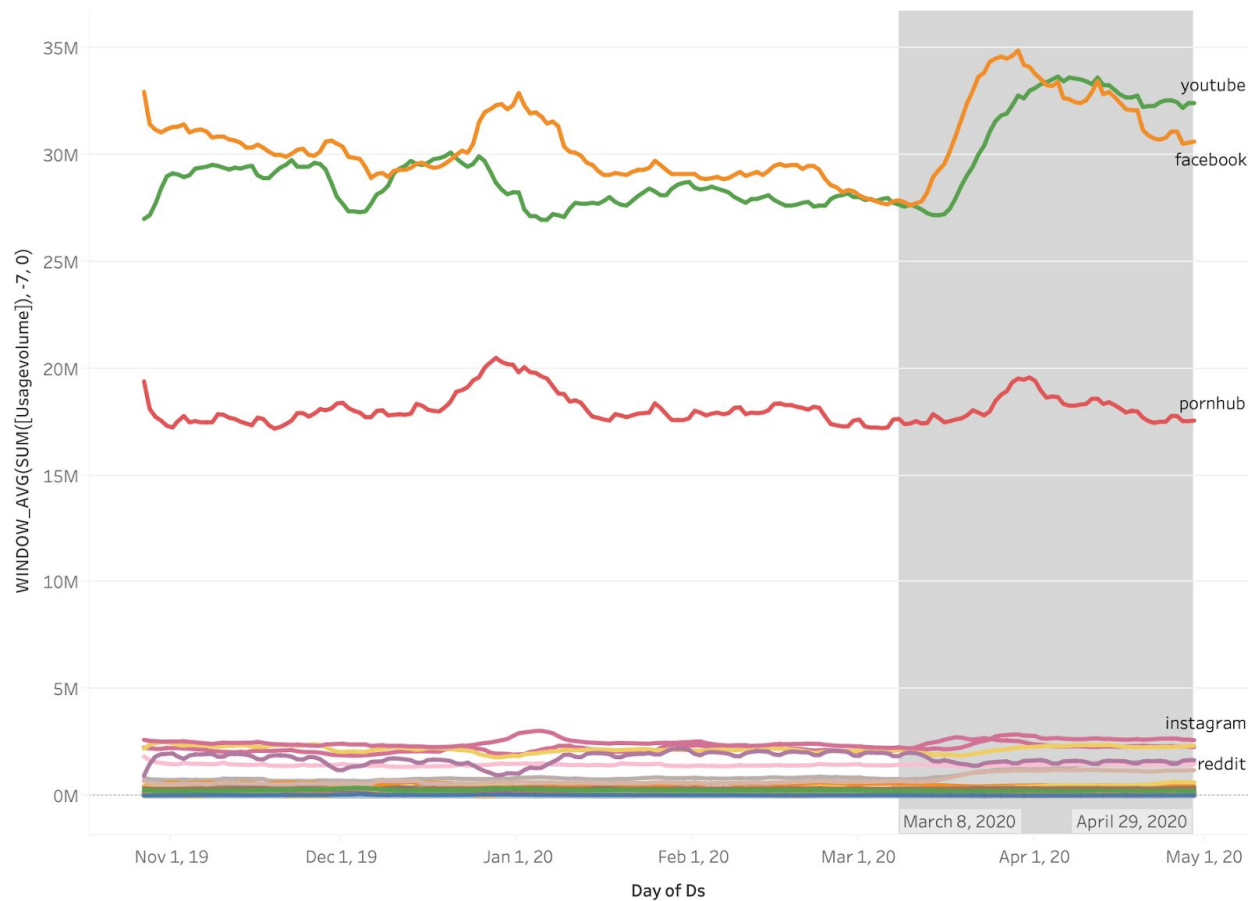## Daily Search Volume By Select Networks

Figure 5. Social network search volume usage statistics by daily searches, by individual networks. The pandemic period is noted by the grey reference band.

In a distant third place is Pornhub. When we remove the top 3 networks, we see a slew of other networks that have experienced substantial changes in the pre and post pandemic periods.

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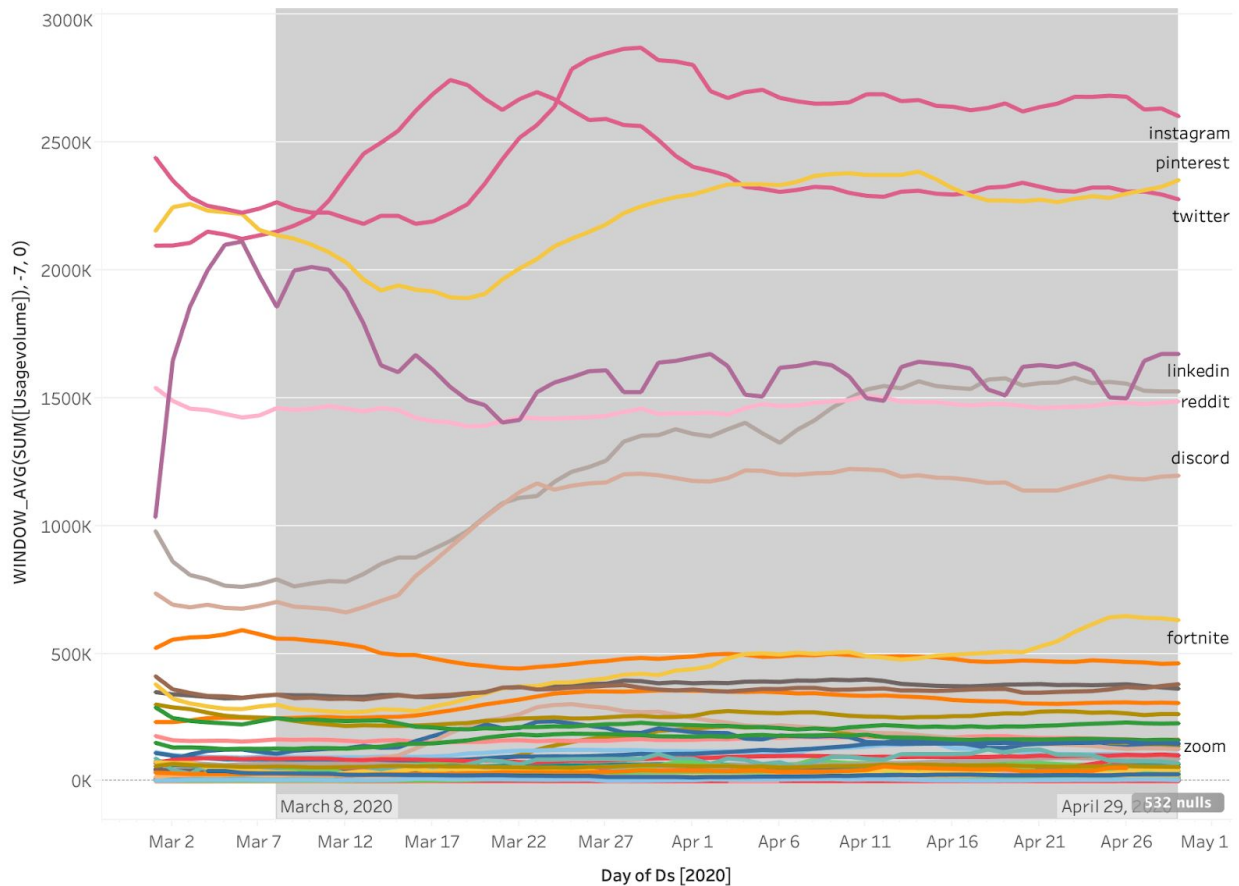Daily Search Volume By Select Networks, Minus Top 3
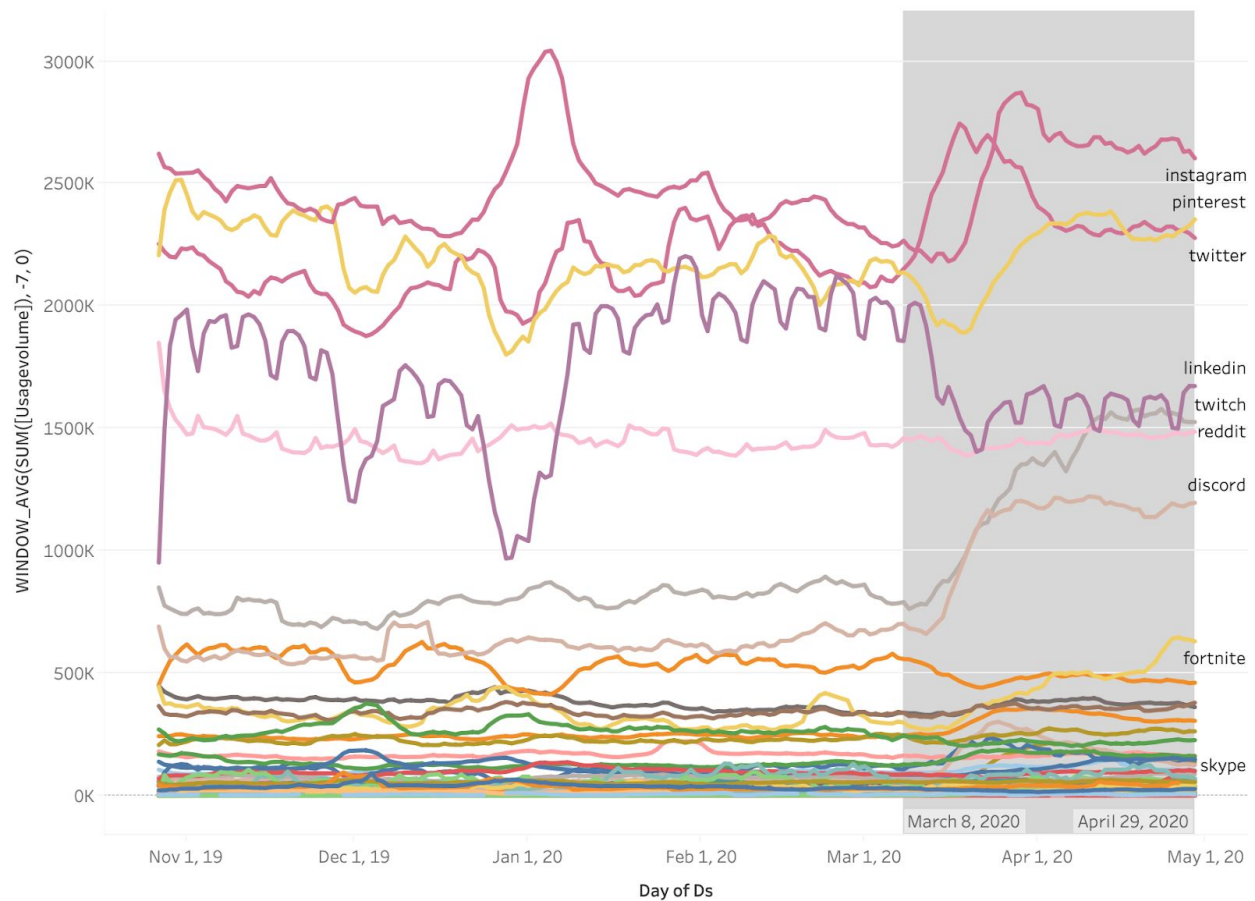
Figure 6. Social network search volume usage statistics by daily searches, by individual networks, excluding Facebook, YouTube, and PornHub. The pandemic period is noted by the grey reference band.

Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter each benefitted strongly from the pandemic, whereas LinkedIn saw a marked decline. Interestingly, Reddit saw no change.

One of the more interesting ways to look at this data is to see which networks have held onto their gains:

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Daily Search Volume By Select Networks, Minus Top 3

Figure 7. Social network search volume usage statistics by daily searches, by individual networks, excluding Facebook, YouTube, and PornHub. The pandemic period is noted by the grey reference band. The window of time is narrowed to the pandemic.

Above, we see that Twitter gained traction early on, but gave it up within a few weeks, whereas Instagram has held onto more of its audience for longer. Twitch and Discord have each given up almost no gains. From earlier, Facebook gave up many of its audience gains, as did Pornhub, while YouTube has held onto its audience.

Let's dig deeper into those networks that showed substantial usage changes before and during the pandemic. First, by percentage growth:

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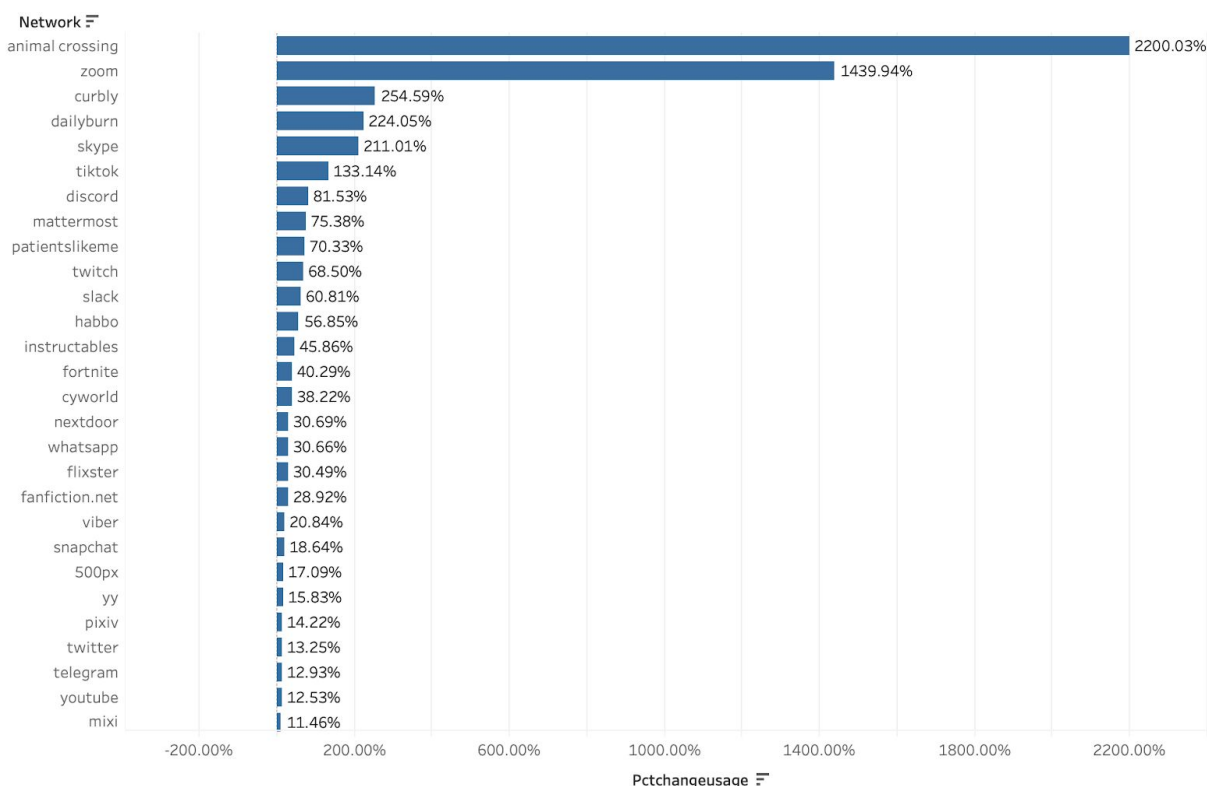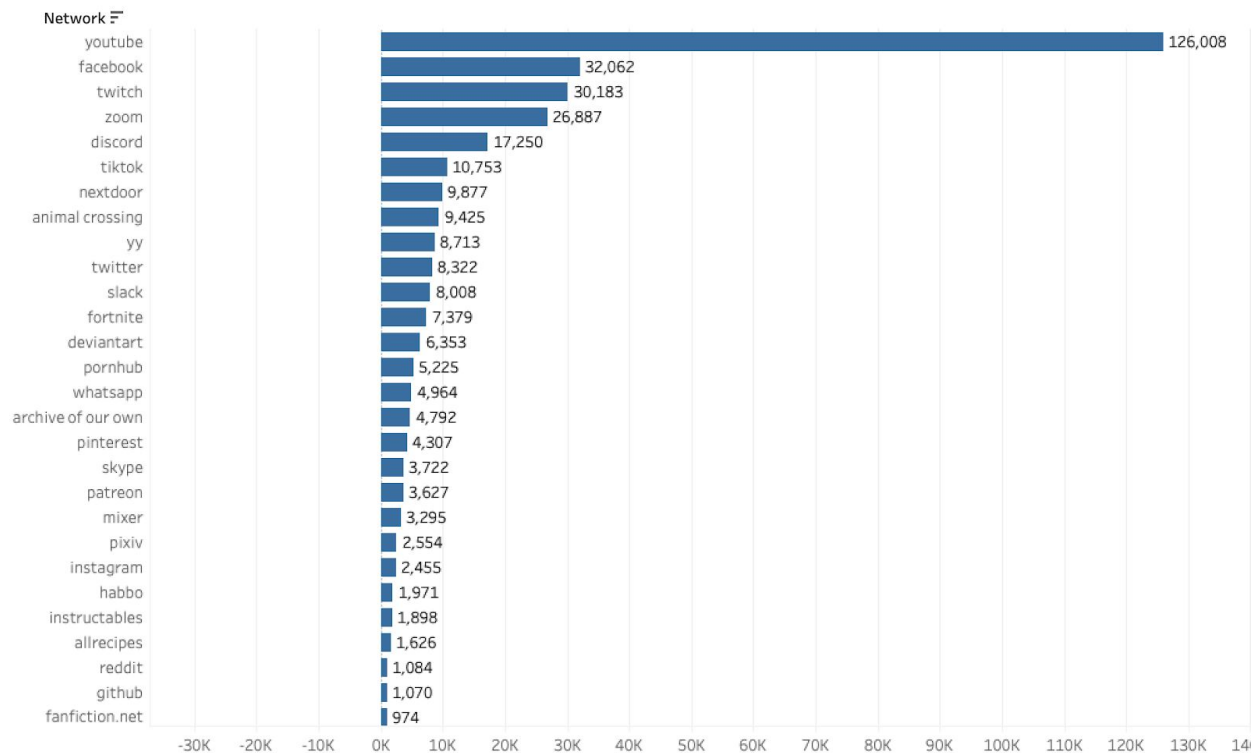
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Pre and Intra-Pandemic Network Changes

Figure 8. Social network search volume usage statistics by average percentage change, pre and pandemic period. See Appendix A for a full table.

Animal Crossing's average daily inferred usage is up 2,200% compared to the average daily inferred usage prior to the start of the pandemic. Zoom is up 1,440% for the same time. Curbly, DailyBurn, Skype, TikTok, and Discord round out the big winners.

When we examine the absolute values, we see that the major social networks are still garnering large numbers of daily searches for their properties:

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Pre and Intra-Pandemic Network Changes - Absolute

Network	Value
youtube	126,008
facebook	32,062
twitch	30,183
zoom	26,887
discord	17,250
tiktok	10,753
nextdoor	9,877
animal crossing	9,425
yy	8,713
twitter	8,322
slack	8,008
fortnite	7,379
deviantart	6,353
pornhub	5,225
whatsapp	4,964
archive of our own	4,792
pinterest	4,307
skype	3,722
patreon	3,627
mixer	3,295
pixiv	2,554
instagram	2,455
habbo	1,971
instructables	1,898
allrecipes	1,626
reddit	1,084
github	1,070
fanfiction.net	974

Figure 9. Social network search volume usage statistics by absolute daily search numbers, pre and pandemic period. See Appendix A for a full table.

YouTube, Facebook, Twitch, Zoom, and Discord form the top five most used social networks based on average daily search volumes for usage-related queries.

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Insights and Action Steps

What do the major changes show?

First, the nature of the audience has changed drastically in the past six weeks. The audience is in a state of lockdown to help meet public health objectives, and usage patterns reflect this.

More important, we see that while the major, large technology companies have continued their general dominance of social networking (particularly YouTube), platforms and franchises like Animal Crossing, Curbly, Daily Burn, and others have shown explosive growth in the pandemic period.

We can broadly classify the platforms that have shown growth and strength in three general categories: **gaming, video, and home-based niches.**

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Implications of Gaming Dominance

For as long as shelter-in-place and close-to-home initiatives remain in place, we expect to see continued strong interest in the gaming sector. With many public sports and entertainment gatherings closed likely until a vaccine is available, expect gaming of every kind to be far more time-consuming for consumers.

Brands - both B2B and B2C - should assess their audiences for what, if any, specific gaming franchises audiences are most interested in, and then develop appropriate integrations where possible in three category areas: tie-ins, influencers, and content.

Gaming Tie-Ins

For larger brands, working directly with gaming companies and platforms may be a way to increase loyalty and brand sentiment. Offering consumers rewards on their favorite gaming franchises is an easy way to integrate a game with your offering.

For example, as part of the Stay Home initiatives, Verizon offers consumers free credits to a few popular games.

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Figure 10. Verizon customer promotion of gaming incentives, free to customers.

These rewards likely cost Verizon relatively few hard dollars, but for avid players, these engender brand loyalty.

Even if you don't have deep enough pockets to afford giving away in-game credits to everyone in your audience, if you identify a gaming franchise that resonates strongly enough with your audience, you can do giveaways and other promotions.

Action Step: identify the gaming franchises your audience participates in, then match rewards/giveaways to that franchise if possible to engage your audience.

Find Gaming Media Influencers

Another approach to aligning your brand with the gaming community that's most relevant to your audience is the use of gaming influencers. Using tools such as Talkwalker, identify the top media producers in the gaming franchise you're investigating, and determine who might be appropriate for partnership.

For example, if we analyzed our audience and found a substantial portion of them played or had affinity with the Call of Duty video game franchise, we might use influencer identification software to see who in that community had prominence and engagement:
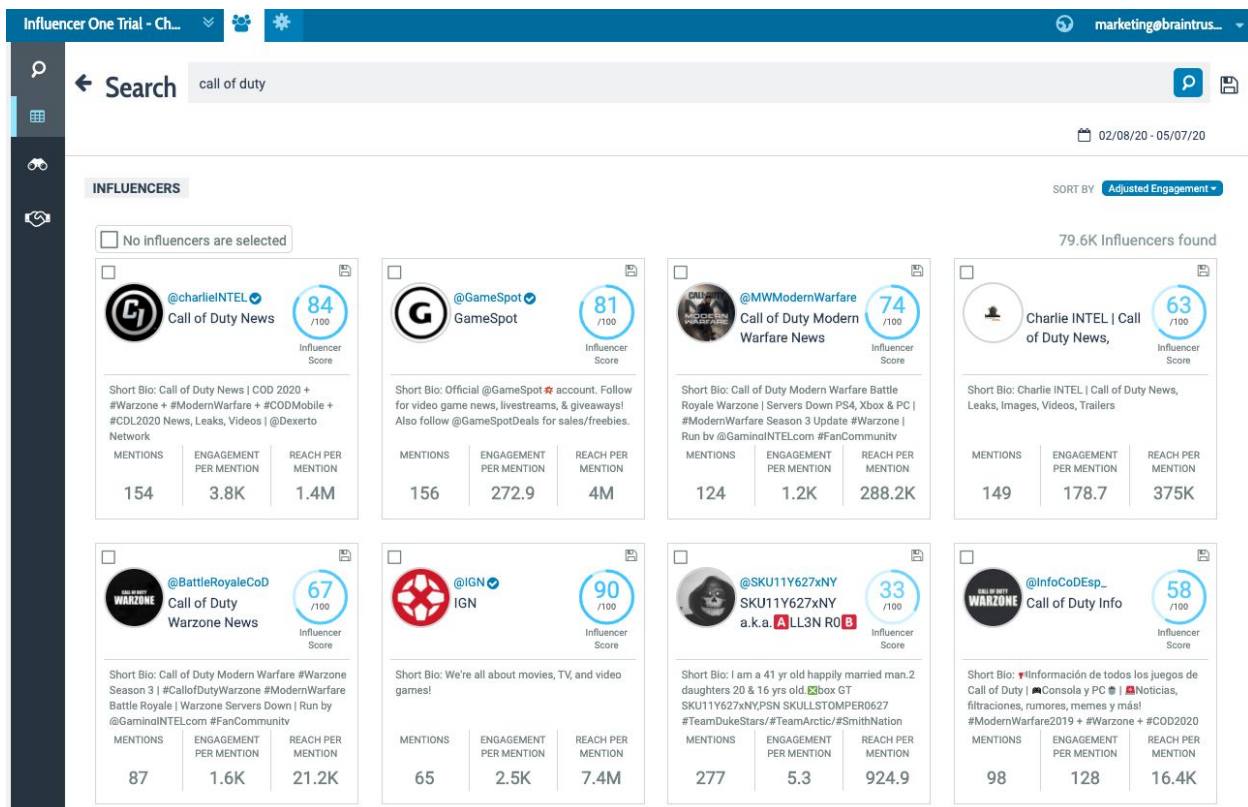

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Everything from sponsoring watch parties and live streams to having in-stream placement is available to brands; with the appropriate research in your own audience, you'll best determine who is a good fit to promote your messaging.

One of the key considerations for working with influencers is to ensure they're brand-appropriate. This is an example of mining the Charlie Intel gaming community, one of the influencers in the Call of Duty franchise. Using Talkwalker Quick Search, we can quickly assess whether the major points of discussion and language are appropriate for our brand:
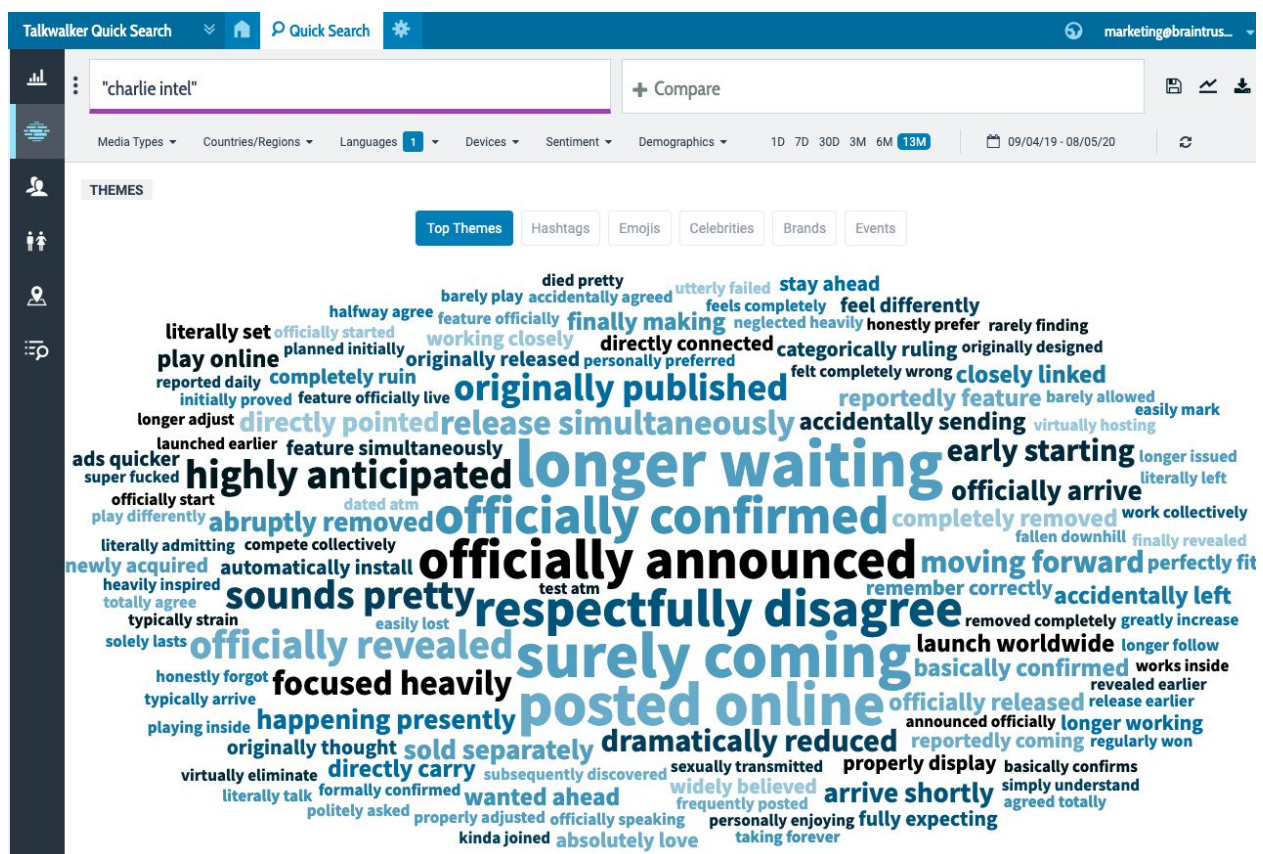
Figure 12. Talkwalker Quick Search utility, analyzing the content of the Charlie Intel community in the Call of Duty gaming franchise for verb ngrams.

Consider using text mining tools and other natural language processing techniques to validate that an influencer isn't saying or doing things which might be damaging to your brand. Even simple measures like keyword lists of words you'd prefer not to associate with your brand or broad sentiment measures would be good starting points for determining the qualitative fit of a gaming influencer to your brand.

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Action Step: identify influencers for your gaming franchise of choice based on audience feedback, and cross match them to your existing influencers and brand guidelines.

Create Gaming Content

Finally, the easiest gaming initiative brands can take is to produce gaming-related content, either internally or with user-generated content. If you know a gaming franchise resonates strongly with your audience, what useful, helpful content can you either create or sponsor which provides value to that audience?

Consider partnering with content creators on content like gaming guides, tips and tricks, walkthroughs of particularly challenging parts of the gaming franchise in question, and other related content.

For example, Minecraft, a virtual world where players create everything with Lego™-like virtual blocks, has entire channels on live-streaming services like Twitch where people can drop in and watch. Creating content has a very low barrier to entry.
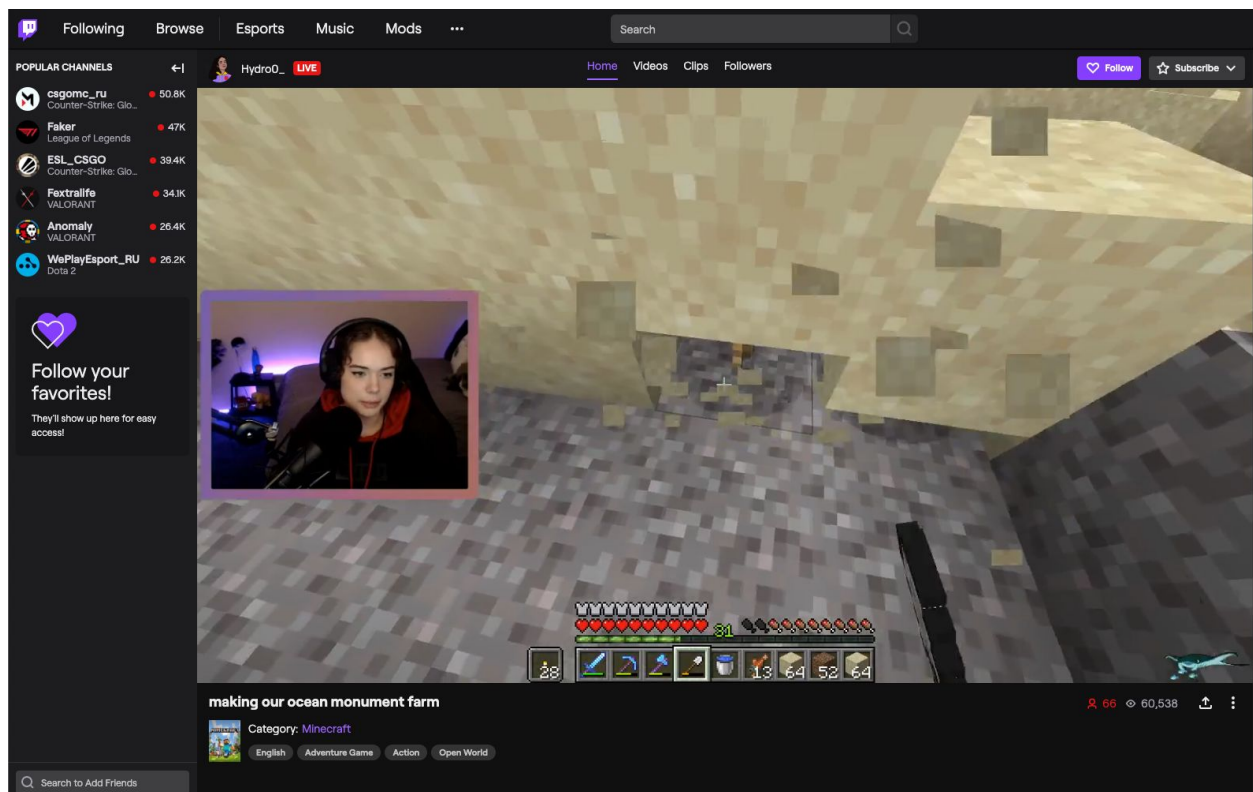
Figure 13. An example of live gameplay on the Twitch platform in the Minecraft community.

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Even if your brand isn't an entertainment brand, creating such content - such as "play along with our employees/team" events shows the eroding boundaries between work and play that the pandemic has ushered in.

Action Step: if you've identified a gaming franchise that works well with your brand and audience, consider having employees participate in content creation, from live streams and play alongs to video walkthroughs.

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Implications of YouTube Video Dominance

Video is the dominant form of entertainment, and YouTube is the king of the hill in the pandemic. Initially in second place behind Facebook, as time has passed, YouTube is the most popular social network and video platform among the audience.

Using the Talkwalker platform and an analysis of a sample of 227,000 top videos shared on YouTube across categories in March 2020, we see engagement rates per video (dark blue bars) hovering between 2.8% and 7% - substantially higher than other platforms:

March 2020 Top-Performing YouTube Content

Analysis by TrustInsights.ai

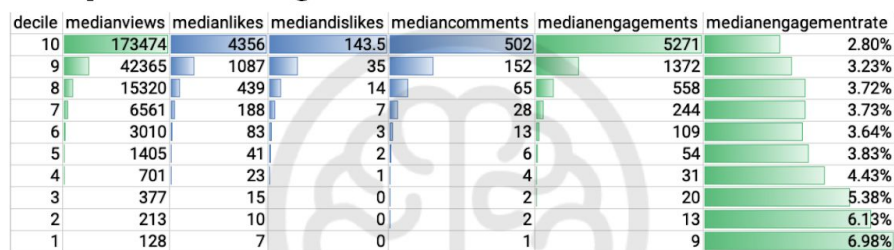| decile	medianviews	medianlikes	mediandislikes	mediancomments	medianengagements	medianengagementrate
10	173474	4356	143.5	502	5271	2.80%
9	42365	1087	35	152	1372	3.23%
8	15320	439	14	65	558	3.72%
7	6561	188	7	28	244	3.73%
6	3010	83	3	13	109	3.64%
5	1405	41	2	6	54	3.83%
4	701	23	1	4	31	4.43%
3	377	15	0	2	20	5.38%
2	213	10	0	2	13	6.13%
1	128	7	0	1	9	6.98%

Figure 14. YouTube video statistics for March 2020. All figures are median numbers. Green bars are key metrics such as views and engagements; blue bars represent drilldowns into engagement. Chart split out by deciles ranked in descending order, from largest to smallest.

However, unlike other social channels, YouTube's power celebrities and influencers are very much concentrated in a power law curve; the top elite hold most of the views and engagements.

Action Step: benchmark your current YouTube performance, if available, based on the engagements/views ratio above. If your videos are underperforming, consider changing YouTube content strategies.

Find Your YouTube Micro-Celebrities

One of the most important tasks for marketers to do will be to find the YouTube micro-celebrities in their vertical and focus on outreach to those channels for placed content, as well as growing their own YouTube channels. It's important to remember that YouTube is three major channels rolled into one - a video platform, a social network, and a search engine.

As an example, let's look at the overall top 20 YouTube producers by median video views for the month of March 2020:

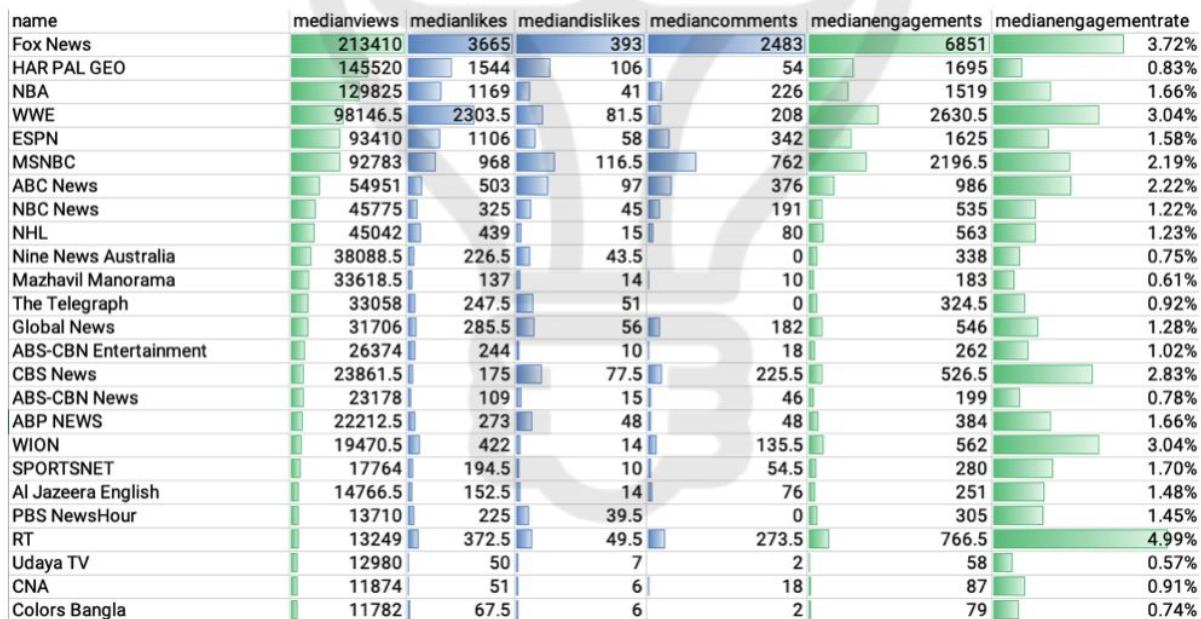| name	medianviews	medianlikes	mediandislikes	mediancomments	medianengagements	medianengagementrate
Fox News	213410	3665	393	2483	6851	3.72%
HAR PAL GEO	145520	1544	106	54	1695	0.83%
NBA	129825	1169	41	226	1519	1.66%
WWE	98146.5	2303.5	81.5	208	2630.5	3.04%
ESPN	93410	1106	58	342	1625	1.58%
MSNBC	92783	968	116.5	762	2196.5	2.19%
ABC News	54951	503	97	376	986	2.22%
NBC News	45775	325	45	191	535	1.22%
NHL	45042	439	15	80	563	1.23%
Nine News Australia	38088.5	226.5	43.5	0	338	0.75%
Mazhavil Manorama	33618.5	137	14	10	183	0.61%
The Telegraph	33058	247.5	51	0	324.5	0.92%
Global News	31706	285.5	56	182	546	1.28%
ABS-CBN Entertainment	26374	244	10	18	262	1.02%
CBS News	23861.5	175	77.5	225.5	526.5	2.83%
ABS-CBN News	23178	109	15	46	199	0.78%
ABP NEWS	22212.5	273	48	48	384	1.66%
WION	19470.5	422	14	135.5	562	3.04%
SPORTSNET	17764	194.5	10	54.5	280	1.70%
Al Jazeera English	14766.5	152.5	14	76	251	1.48%
PBS NewsHour	13710	225	39.5	0	305	1.45%
RT	13249	372.5	49.5	273.5	766.5	4.99%
Udaya TV	12980	50	7	2	58	0.57%
CNA	11874	51	6	18	87	0.91%
Colors Bangla	11782	67.5	6	2	79	0.74%

Figure 15. YouTube creator statistics for the top 20 creators by median views. Green bars are key metrics such as views and engagements; blue bars represent drilldowns into engagement.

Note how many of the channels are mainstream media properties. Working with any of them, even if they were on-topic/relevant to a specific industry, would likely be incredibly costly.

On the other hand, examine this list of top 20 YouTube producers specifically on the topic of analytics, by average views for the month of March 2020:

YouTube Analytics Influencers, March 2020

name	medianviews	medianlikes	mediandislikes	mediancomments	medianengagements	medianengagementrate
The Lallantop	447912.0	8824	682.5	1049	10555.5	2.50%
DataDash	15303.5	812	22	102	936	6.12%
ET NOW	7402.0	109.5	9.5	34	153	2.10%
CNBC Television	6744.0	54	22	77	187	1.81%
Great Learning	5340.0	149.5	6	6	161.5	2.95%
eNCA	4285.0	15.5	5	0	20.5	0.59%
NDTV	3670.5	41	7	16	64	1.89%
BloombergQuint	2472.5	31	1.5	4.5	37	1.51%
Imite	1396.0	55.5	4.5	19.5	79.5	5.70%
Amazon Web Services	1132.5	6	0	0	6	0.58%
Associated Press	1073.0	16	6	5	27	2.61%
Spectro Net	785.5	0	0	0	0	0.00%
World Auto Evolution	547.0	9	1	1	10	1.49%
Newsy	508.5	11.5	5.5	13.5	30.5	4.80%
Blackwar	479.0	30	1	8.5	39.5	8.15%
Vishal Bedwal	416.0	12	10.5	3.5	26	6.85%
Maxis	332.5	5	1	1	7	2.15%
Cisco	146.5	2	0	2	4	2.92%
Roche	118.0	1	0	0.5	1.5	1.32%

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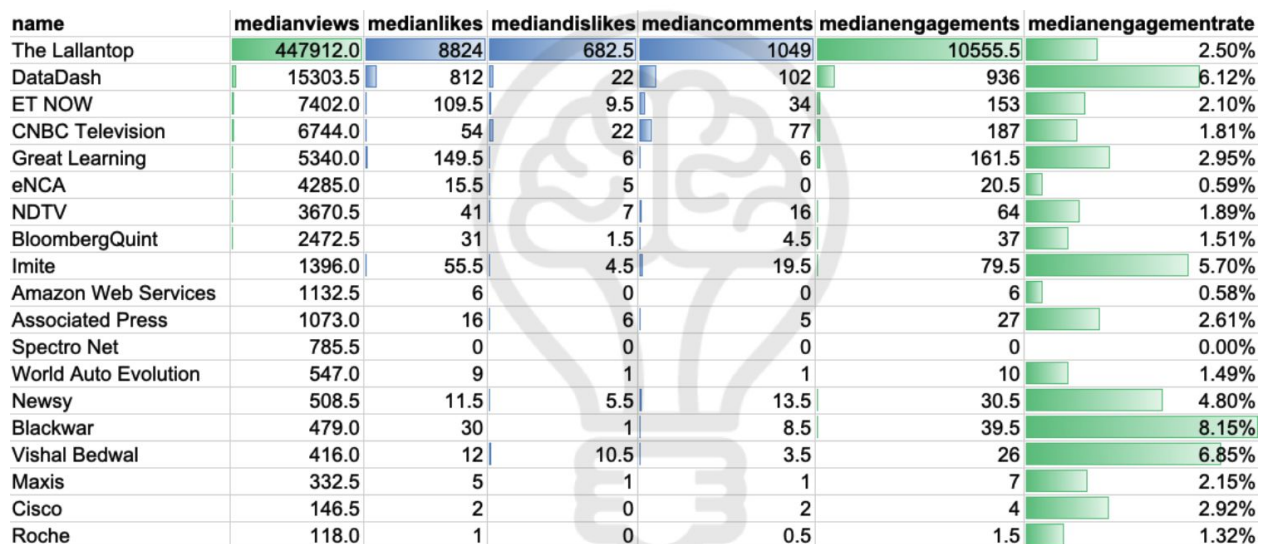
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Figure 16. YouTube creator statistics for the top 20 creators in the analytics niche by median views. Green bars are key metrics such as views and engagements; blue bars represent drilldowns into engagement.

These numbers are much more down to earth and it's likely you'd be able to build a relationship much more easily with some of these producers. In terms of goals for your own channel, these numbers are also much more achievable and practical than the millions of views of the overall top 20.

Action Step: identify, using a media monitoring tool like Talkwalker, who the top creators in your industry or niche are, and start building relationships with them.

Skill Up On YouTube Ads

As YouTube's reach and power grows, so too grows its capabilities to deliver audiences with well-targeted video ads. Be certain you and your team have the appropriate skills and budget to make the most of YouTube as an advertising channel, and master the different ways consumers work with YouTube ads.

Traditional ad strategies may not apply to your company's YouTube audience; for example, bumper ads are a powerful branding tool but an ineffective lead generation tool. Other methods, such as search retargeting for YouTube ads, are novel concepts for traditional advertising marketers, blending multiple channels and techniques together and requiring new ways of thinking about advertising.

Action Step: skill up on YouTube advertising by taking Google's free YouTube advertising courses as part of Google Ads Academy. https://www.youtube.com/ads/agency/

Invest In Your Channel Growth

While we often advocate that you should never build on rented land, YouTube's ecosystem makes it especially challenging to follow that advice for video marketing. Video hosting requires enormous amounts of disk space and bandwidth; most marketers will be better off hosting content on YouTube and keeping local backups of video.

The real advantage of YouTube is the combined powers of its built-in social network and search engine. Marketers should be intensively optimizing every video they post to YouTube, following the most current best practices published by Google/YouTube, and then building a loyal community on top of great video content.

Action Step: take Google's free YouTube courses at its Creator Academy. https://creatoracademy.youtube.com/

Implications of Home-Based Niches

Our third area of focus is the home-based niche. These are social networks which focus on activities and interests around the home, things to do while under social distancing guidelines. We see networks like Curbly, DailyBurn, and Instructables showing substantial growth during the pandemic.
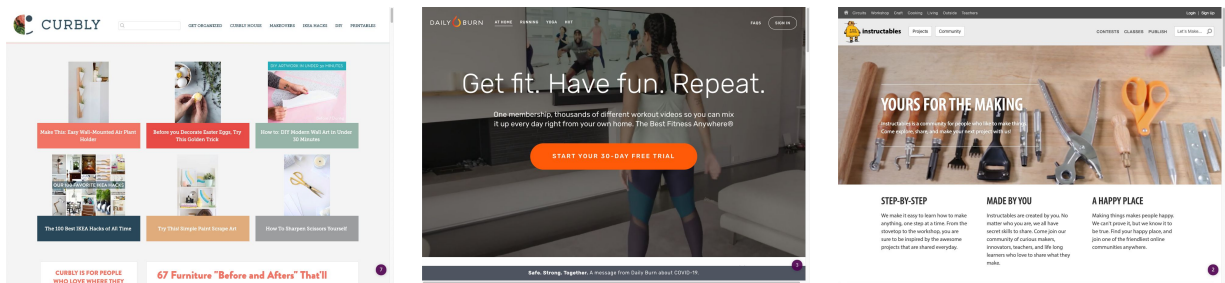

Figure 17. Three home-based niche communities - Curbly, DailyBurn, Instructables.

As with gaming, one of the key tasks is to identify, through surveying or market research, which of the home-based niches resonates most strongly with your audience.

Identify Content Trends

Unlike gaming, where the topic in a game is clear and rarely varies, many of these home-based niches have substantial variation in their topics. Identify topics that are trending within these communities and consider whether they are appropriate to build custom content for that leverages your brand.

For example, in Curbly, since the pandemic began, it's no surprise that home office design became a substantial part of the conversation trends:

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Figure 18. A noun-based n gram analysis of conversations about the Curbly network in Talkwalker Quick Search.

What content could your brand create about making office space at home, especially for people with small spaces and small budgets? Among your team, you've likely come up with some useful workarounds that you could create great content for - then submit it and help promote it to your audiences.

In a consumer example, the team at Disney recognized the explosion of Zoom as a trend and created a gallery of Zoom virtual backgrounds from its Star Wars franchise.

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Figure 19. An example of a Star Wars virtual background in Zoom with the author and the bridge of an Imperial Super Star Destroyer, the Executor.

By recognizing and adapting the trend immediately, they were able to generate massive awareness, traffic, and engagement from their audience - and create a persistent mental reminder that the brand is still relevant and powerful.

Action Step: With the home-based niche network you've identified as resonant with your audience, scan content trends and start creating appropriate content to share with your audience and the network at large.

Empower Communities

With content trends, another powerful use case for your trend data is to nurture and empower your communities. In the last Social Networks 2020 report, we advised creating and maintaining private, velvet-rope communities on networks like Slack, Discord, and the groups features of major social networks to keep in touch with your audience.

For those of you who've tried this, one of the most challenging aspects of community management is keeping conversations going.

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Using the insights gleaned from home-based niche networks, you have a rich panoply of topics to choose from that will resonate with your audience.

Here's an example, using the topic of home office decoration and configuration, in the [Analytics for Marketers Slack community](#).
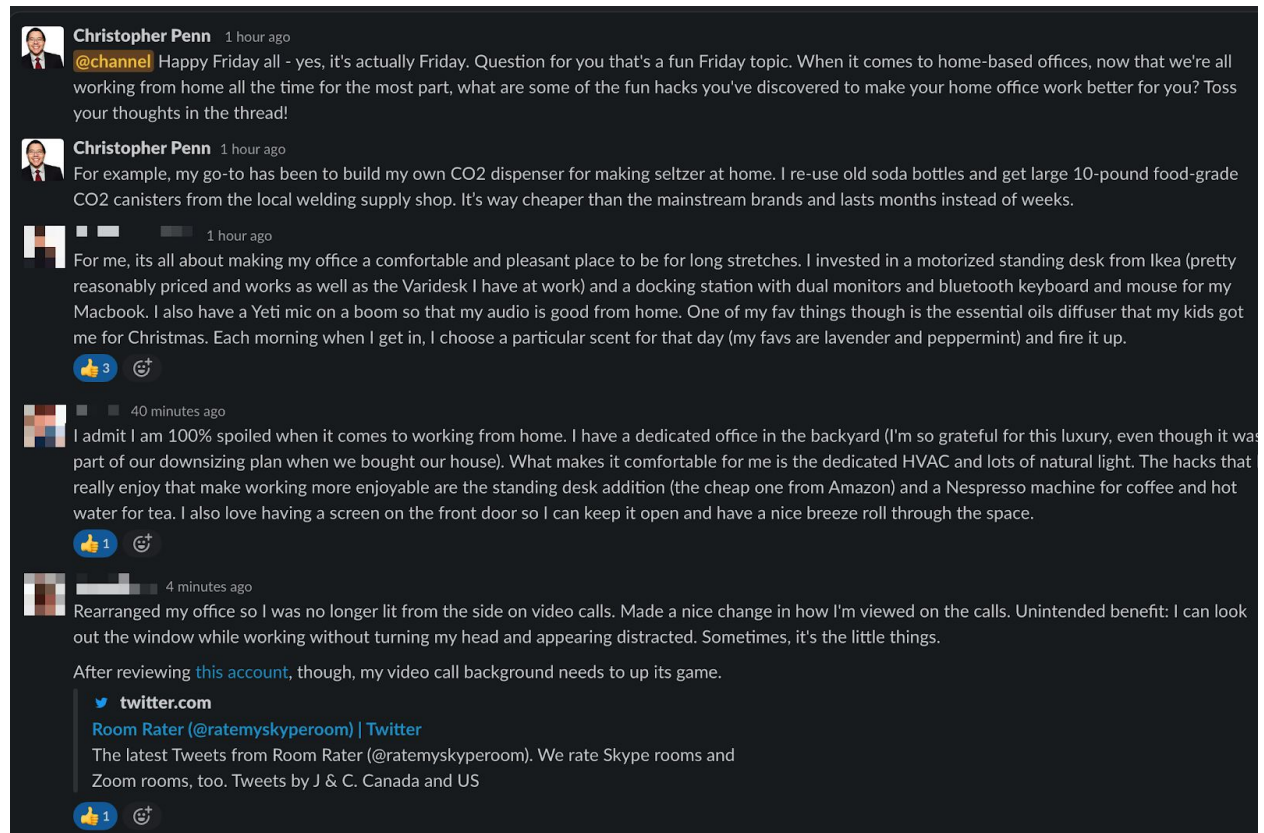
Figure 20. An example of using a topic from Curbly - the home office - to stimulate discussion in a Slack community.

With the diversity of topics available in the home-based niche networks, you'll also find trends that aren't limited to one interest group, giving you the ability to stimulate wide-ranging, highly engaging conversations.

Action Step: Stimulate community discussions with known relevant topics based on niche social network conversations.

Find Content Advertising Targets

Third and finally, if you know the content trends and audiences on these niche networks, you can work with many of the digital advertising platforms available to target those audiences with unique, relevant ad content.

For example, based on our Curbly dive, knowing that people are working from home, we could target the working from home ad segment and run ads promoting a piece of content about ways to optimize our office (from our community discussions):

Figure 21. An example of using a topic from Curbly - the home office - for advertising targeting in the display advertising platform StackAdapt.

Action Step: use content trends from niche social networks to create relevant, highly-focused ads and run ads on the specific communities that the niche networks serve, based on ad targeting data.

Implications for Agencies

Agencies in particular will face great challenges from the way audiences have changed their behaviors. With so many consumers now operating digitally, both B2B and B2C focused agencies must redouble their efforts to understand and activate their analytical capabilities.

Key agency Action Steps specific to our pandemic trends include:

- Ensuring you have the latest, most modern analytics tools (such as Talkwalker and Ahrefs) to analyze the content and conversations in your verticals.
- Ensuring your team has the latest skills in techniques such as YouTube organic and paid campaigns so as to maximize the impact of every video you publish on YouTube on behalf of clients.
- Ensuring your team has the latest skills in techniques such as data science, text mining, natural language processing, and artificial intelligence to take advantage of the glut of data available.
- Ensuring your existing influencer marketing techniques can better analyze influencers for fit and appropriateness of conversation and community. Some influencers have been flagged as "tone-deaf" during the pandemic, either for defying government orders or posting insensitive content. Be sure your social media monitoring capabilities are well suited to dealing with these challenges and you have the appropriate people and processes in place to handle them.

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Promotional Event

Want to dig into the research in greater detail? Have follow up questions you want to ask? Tune into a webinar on May 19, 2020 at 1 PM Eastern Time as Trust Insights and Talkwalker dive deep into the paper, answer questions, and help you set strategy based on the results of this paper. Register now for the webinar:

https://www.talkwalker.com/webinar-signup

Social Networks Glossary/Reference

- 23andMe: a genetic testing service and network that allows users to find genetically-related people
- 500px: a social network for the sharing of user-generated photographs and videos.
- AllRecipes: a community content network which permits users to upload and share recipes for cooking
- Amino: a community-based app that allows users to join or create communities dedicated to specific topic areas
- Ancestry: a genetic testing service and genealogy network that allows users to find genetically-related people
- Animal Crossing: a social video game in which users collaborate to perform animal-related tasks such as fishing, hunting, and bug catching
- Archive of our Own: a fiction sharing community that allows users to write and share published original or fan-fiction works (fiction written in other intellectual properties)
- Badoo: a social network that allows you to match and find a partner, or chat with people and find friends
- Baidu Tieba: the largest Chinese communication platform that is structured into topic-based forums
- Behance: an Adobe owned platform that allows many people with web design careers to showcase their portfolios of visual work such as graphic design, fashion, illustration, photography, etc
- Blackplanet: a free African-American online community used for networking, matching making, and job posting
- Cafemom: an informational site for parents in the form of blogs, articles, and message boards
- care2: a social networking site focused on activism and connecting activists with organizations
- Catster: a social networking site focused on cat owners and lovers
- Classmates: a networking site with the goal of reuniting users with other alumni
- Curbly: a photo, video, and media sharing platform with public and private groups focused around DIY and home improvement
- Cyworld: a South Korean social networking services where users form friendship through the creation of avatars and mini-rooms
- DailyBurn: a social network that allows users to compete and cooperate in sharing video workout experiences
- DeviantArt: a niche art community which allows users to share content such as images, video, illustrations, etc. with far fewer content restrictions
- Discord: a private chat system, used heavily by the gaming community, that features chat rooms and individual instances called servers with no public feed

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- Dogster: a social network focused on dog owners and lovers
- Dribbble: a site where designers can upload templates for social media and post open jobs
- Facebook: the largest overall social network, which feature both public and private news feeds/groups
- FanFiction.net: a fiction sharing community that allows users to write and share published original or fan-fiction works (fiction written in other intellectual properties)
- Fishbowl: a social app that allows users to have anonymous conversations within professional industries "bowls"
- Flickr: a social network for the sharing of user-generated photographs and videos.
- Fortnite: a video game network in which users compete against other users in a free-for-all first-person shooter environment with live voice chat
- Foursquare:an app that allows users to check-in and rate businesses
- Github: a code-sharing social network which allows developers to share source code and data, as well as collaborate on each others' projects
- Goodreads: a social network that allows users to share books, including commentary about books they're reading and recommendations
- Habbo: a social gaming platform in which users build and share virtual hotel rooms, organize parties, and manage virtual pets
- hi5: a social networking app targeted at people who are interested in flirting, dating, and making new friends
- Houzz: a platform for home renovation and design, that connects homeowners with home professionals
- Instagram: a photo and video sharing platform where updates are publicly shared for the most part, owned by Facebook
- Instructables: a tutorial and instructional site which allows users to contribute how-to instructions for virtually any task
- LinkedIn: a professional publishing and career platform which feature both public and private news feeds/groups
- Livejournal: a Russian social networking service where users can keep a blog, journal, or diary
- Mattermost: a self-hosted private chat system, used heavily by businesses focusing on compliance and records retention, that features chat rooms and individual instances with no public feed
- Medium: a blogging platform with social network integration, known for its longform text content
- Minecraft: a virtual world environment which allows users to build using pixelated blocks similar to Lego™ blocks
- Mixer: a video streaming platform used heavily by gamers to livestream their game play, owned by Microsoft and used heavily by Xbox players
- Mixi: Japan's largest social networking site that includes friend lists, blogs, and photos in your newsfeed

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- MyHeritage: a genetic testing service and genealogy network that allows users to find genetically-related people
- Myspace: an American social networking platform that predates Facebook
- Nextdoor: a local social network that encourages conversations and discussions among users located within close real-world proximity.
- Patientslikeme: the world's largest personalized health network that helps people find new treatments, connect with others and take action to improve their outcomes
- Patreon: a sponsorship platform for artists and creators to collect fees from their audience in exchange for memberships and exclusive content
- Pinterest: a photo, video, and media sharing platform with public and private groups called boards
- Pixiv: a niche art community which allows users to share content such as images, video, illustrations, etc. with far fewer content restrictions
- Pokemon Go: an augmented reality mobile game that allows for collaboration between users to find Pokemon
- Pornhub: a pornographic content network that allows users to upload, share, and monetize adult entertainment content, along with content banned on other video platforms
- QQ: a messaging, sharing, and web portal (also known as Tencent QQ) that provides access to media, music, and other entertainment in China
- Quora: a social network for users to ask and answer questions in a variety of popular topics and themes
- Qzone: a Chinese based social platform that allows users to write blogs, keep diaries, send photos, listen to music, and watch videos
- Ravelry: a social network focusing on crafting with textiles, such as knitting
- Reddit: a threaded discussion platform which feature both public and private news feeds/groups called subreddits
- Renren: a Chinese social networking services similar to Facebook
- Reverbnation: a community for bands and fans to collaborate and communicate about music
- Sina Weibo: a Chinese microblogging website
- Skype: a video conferencing and calling platform that allows users to chat, voice call, and video call each other
- Slack: a private chat system, used heavily by businesses, that features chat rooms and individual instances with no public feed
- Snapchat: a photo and video sharing platform where updates vanish after a certain period of time, featuring both public and private messaging
- Soundcloud: a social network that allows users to share audio files
- Spiceworks: a professional network for the information technology industry where users can find chat, post to forums, and share resources
- Spreely: a social network designed to allow users to "speak freely" with no censorship
- Stack Exchange: a network of question-and-answer websites where users can crowdsource answers to questions that they post

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- Stack Overflow: a question and answer site for professional and enthusiast programmers
- Taringa: an Argentine-based social networking site geared toward Hispanophone users
- Telegram: a private messaging app with no public feed and strong cryptography, used heavily by startups, cryptocurrencies, and Silicon Valley folks
- Tiktok: a video sharing platform where short updates, typically accompanied by music, are shared publicly
- Tinder: a geosocial networking and online dating application that allows users to anonymously swipe to like or dislike other profiles based on their photos, a small bio, and common interests
- Tumblr: an American microblogging and social networking website
- Twitch: a video streaming platform used heavily by gamers to livestream their game play
- Twitter: a microblogging/news platform where updates are publicly shared in 280-character posts
- Vero: a social networking site that touts itself as "free of ads, data-mining, and algorithms" that allows users to share content
- Viadeo: a professional networking site similar to LinkedIn, predominantly used in France
- Viber: a private messaging and voice over IP telephone and text messaging platform with no public feed, heavily used in Japan
- Vk: a Russian social media network that allows users to to live chat and make free calls
- WeChat: a massive, all-in-one messaging, shopping, commerce, and sharing platform based in China that does pretty much everything
- WhatsApp: a private messaging and voice over IP telephone and text messaging platform with no public feed, owned by Facebook
- Xing: a Hamburg-based career-oriented social networking site, similar to LinkedIn
- YY: a social network with a virtual currency which users trade in activities such as karaoke or instructional videos
- Zoom: a video conferencing platform that permits dozens of users to interact together in real-time

Action Step: if you see a platform in this list you aren't familiar with, but seems like it might be relevant to your business, sign up for it and get to know it.

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Appendix A: Data Tables

Average Daily Percentage Change by Network, Pre and Intra-Pandemic

Network	Percentage Change
animal crossing	2200.03%
zoom	1439.94%
curbly	254.59%
dailyburn	224.05%
skype	211.01%
tiktok	133.14%
discord	81.53%
mattermost	75.38%
patientslikeme	70.33%
twitch	68.50%
slack	60.81%
habbo	56.85%
instructables	45.86%
fortnite	40.29%
cyworld	38.22%
nextdoor	30.69%
whatsapp	30.66%
flixster	30.49%
fanfiction.net	28.92%
viber	20.84%
snapchat	18.64%
500px	17.09%

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yy	15.83%
pixiv	14.22%
twitter	13.25%
telegram	12.93%
youtube	12.53%
mixi	11.46%
patreon	11.14%
github	8.82%
archive of our own	8.81%
mixer	8.80%
wechat	8.79%
facebook	7.43%
stumbleupon	6.91%
classmates	5.73%
deviantart	5.63%
instagram	5.61%
quora	5.29%
cafemom	4.67%
allrecipes	4.38%
pinterest	2.18%
medium	1.85%
amino	1.43%
reddit	1.13%
qq	1.12%
pornhub	0.20%
weibo	-0.02%
vk	-0.28%
tinder	-1.89%

tumblr	-2.17%
foursquare	-2.18%
stack overflow	-2.57%
livejournal	-3.49%
houzz	-4.19%
dribbble	-4.46%
hi5	-5.40%
goodreads	-7.14%
myspace	-8.45%
xing	-8.68%
renren	-9.05%
linkedin	-10.24%
stack exchange	-10.42%
behance	-10.51%
myheritage	-11.09%
pokemon go	-11.80%
badoo	-12.25%
qzone	-12.54%
ravelry	-12.55%
soundcloud	-12.65%
flickr	-12.90%
care2	-16.30%
catster	-17.72%
reverbnation	-17.76%
ancestry	-19.86%
wayn	-20.88%
blackplanet	-21.30%
fishbowl	-21.94%

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vero	-22.78%
dogster	-23.38%
taringa	-28.49%
spiceworks	-29.32%
sina weibo	-44.47%
23andme	-45.43%
viadeo	-57.47%
spreely	-59.03%
baidu tieba	-64.63%

Absolute Changes by Network, Pre and Intra-Pandemic

Network	Searches Per Day Difference
youtube	126007.799
facebook	32062.0998
twitch	30182.7032
zoom	26886.9869
discord	17249.9839
tiktok	10752.79
nextdoor	9876.78183
animal crossing	9425.3997
yy	8712.52022
twitter	8322.49
slack	8007.96957
fortnite	7379.09452
deviantart	6353.13416
pornhub	5224.63685
whatsapp	4964.10453
archive of our own	4791.60306

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pinterest	4307.43398
skype	3722.04085
patreon	3626.84082
mixer	3295.08559
pixiv	2554.37113
instagram	2455.22327
habbo	1971.15903
instructables	1898.49057
allrecipes	1625.86892
reddit	1083.53058
github	1069.90965
fanfiction.net	973.684211
telegram	802.531041
500px	777.728401
viber	763.83104
snapchat	644.025464
flixster	586.333168
quora	526.249481
dailyburn	485.024472
wechat	437.403958
mattermost	420.690878
stumbleupon	325.109945
medium	267.454249
classmates	210.674327
amino	154.598968
patientslikeme	27.2518797
cyworld	26.9672294
qq	26.8497446

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mixi	19.0676337
curbly	7.70481629
cafemom	3.20215633
weibo	-2.1545609
catster	-6.726557
baidu tieba	-14.229181
care2	-18.251986
dogster	-20.79639
viadeo	-25.567031
renren	-32.432153
wayn	-37.179103
vk	-41.717673
qzone	-59.702724
sina weibo	-69.536353
spreely	-99.923535
foursquare	-125.48163
dribbble	-127.49255
livejournal	-127.81778
tinder	-152.05942
xing	-165.44474
stack exchange	-179.71698
taringa	-186.39878
spiceworks	-203.94152
stack overflow	-229.1591
myspace	-353.5591
fishbowl	-370.53199
hi5	-387.96992
blackplanet	-504.07008

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pokemon go	-619.23283
vero	-791.2328
tumblr	-824.55214
myheritage	-972.59576
behance	-1181.2637
houzz	-1539.805
reverbnation	-1629.3559
badoo	-1791.79
goodreads	-2370.6834
flickr	-3054.147
ravelry	-6084.0226
linkedin	-6097.0078
soundcloud	-6275.03
ancestry	-9050.1432
23andme	-18891.816

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