

# IS THE 'GRAM DOING IT FOR YOU?

Christopher S. Penn, Chief Data Scientist, TrustInsights.ai



# QUICK TERMINOLOGY & NOTES

**BRAND:** An Instagram account for a non-person.

**DECILE:** Imagine breaking a data set into 10% partitions, like a 10-layer cake. 1 layer of cake is a decile.

**INFLUENCER:** An Instagram account for a human individual person.

**SPONSORED:** An Instagram post that uses one or more of the following hashtags: **#sponsored, #ad, #partner, #paid, #sponsorship, #sponsor, #spon, #advertisement, #gifted**

Due to API restrictions, Stories and Reels are NOT included. IGTV, videos, photos, and albums/carousels are included.

# WHAT'S IN THE BOX

## Total brand posts:

- 1,289,690 posts
- 4,008 unique handles

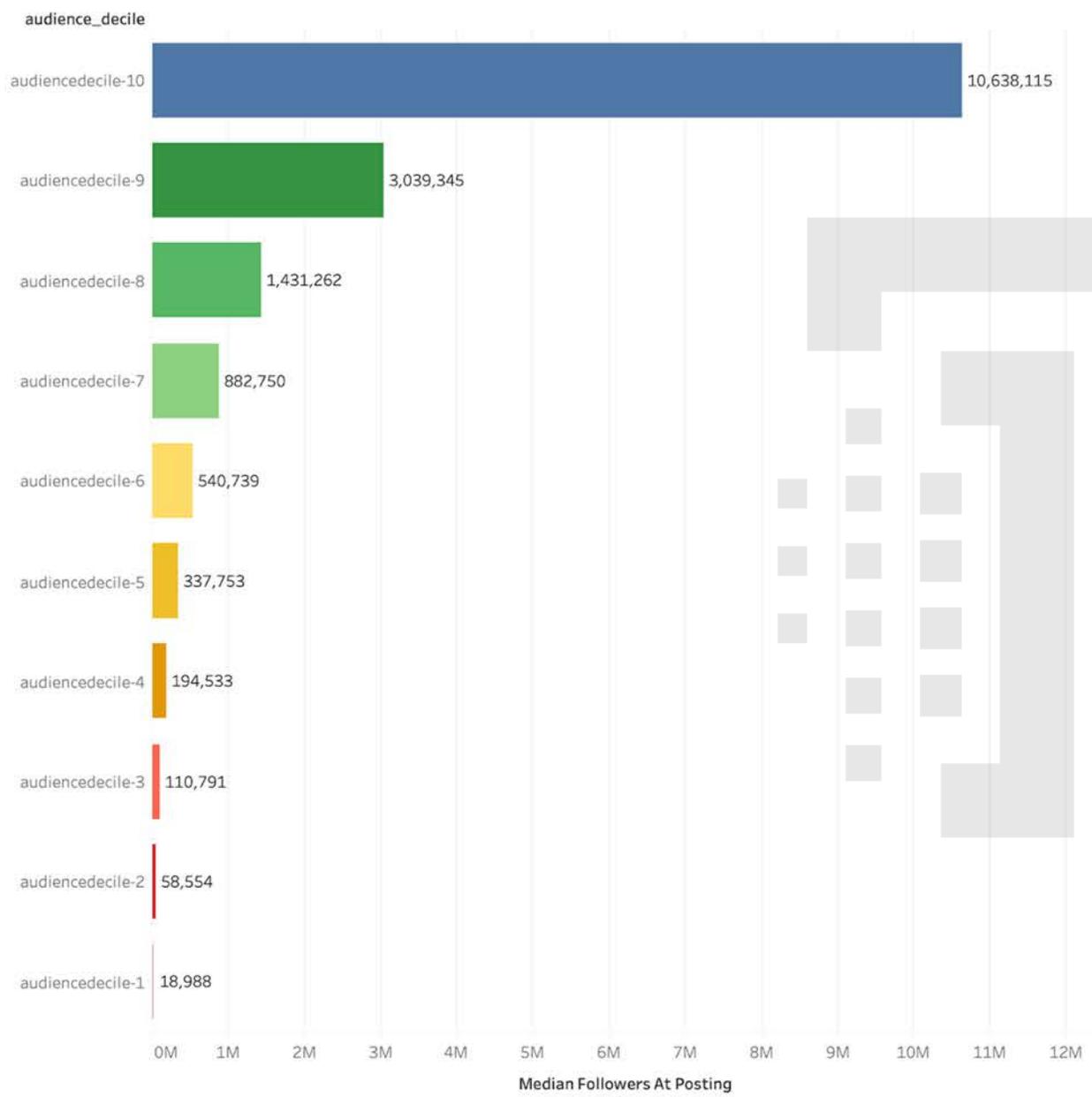
## Total influencer posts:

- 1,282,389 posts
- 9,735 unique handles

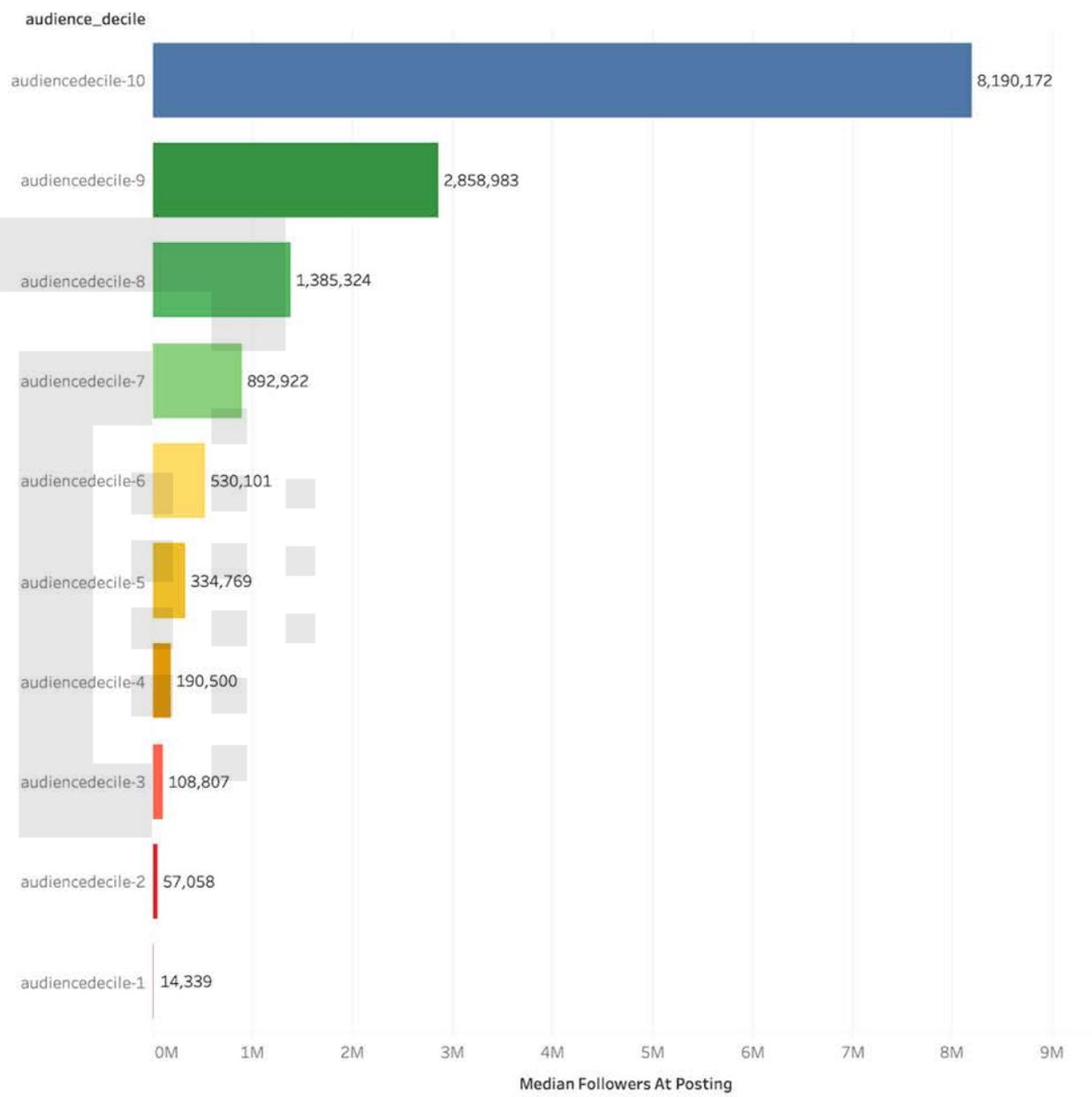


# AUDIENCE STRATA

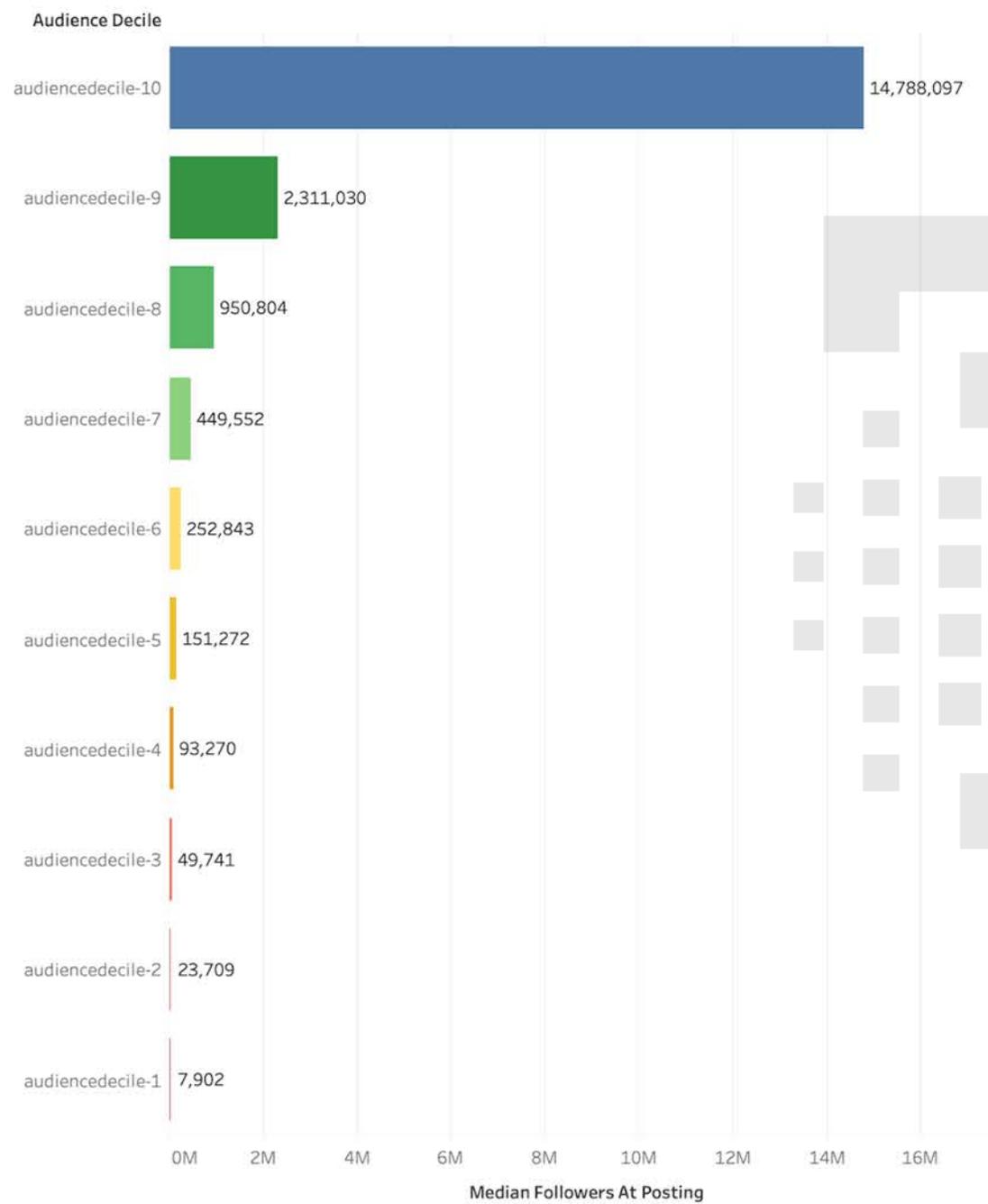
Brand Median Follower Counts by Audience Decile



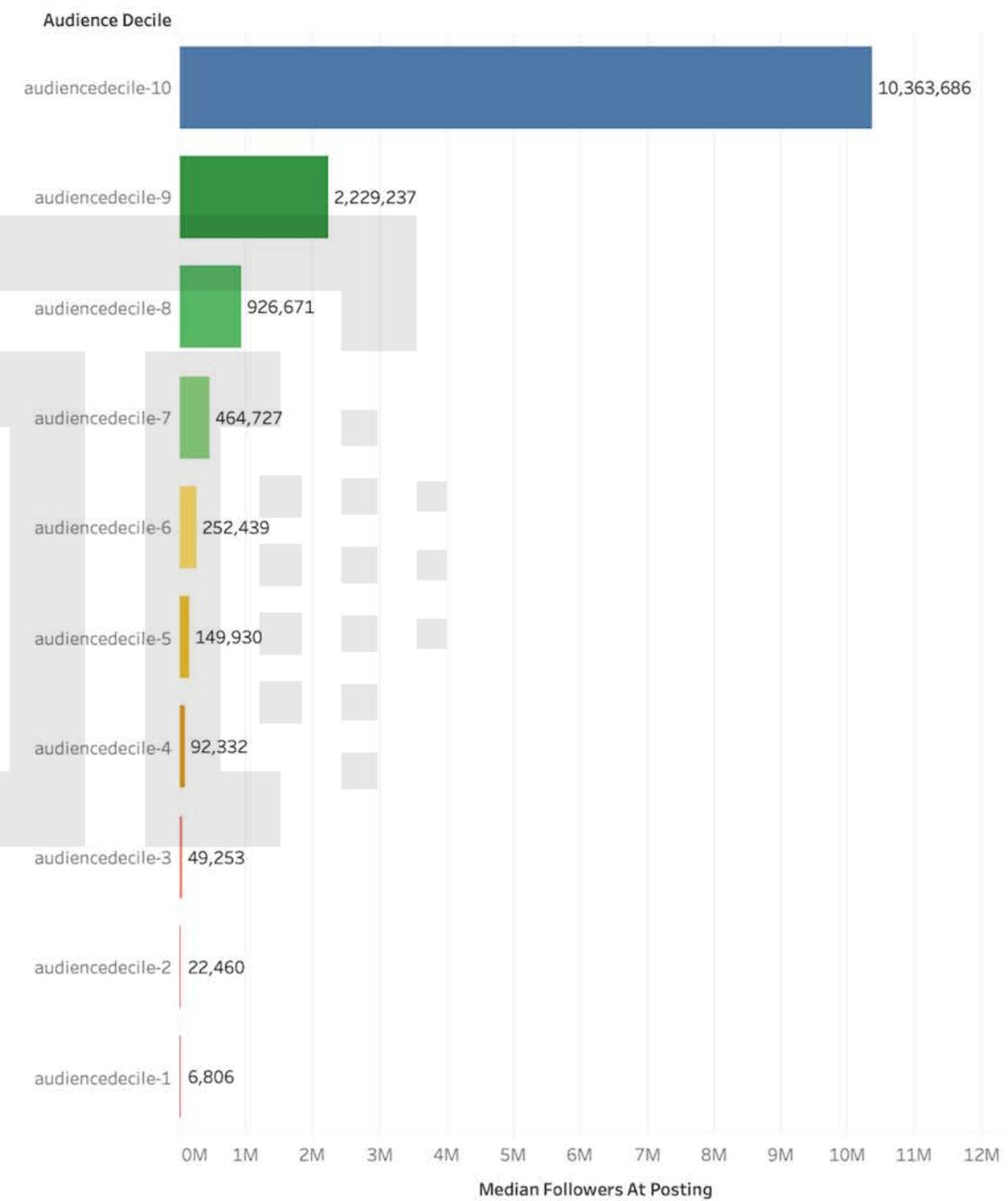
Brand Median Follower Counts by Top 10% Engagement Decile



Influencer Median Follower Counts by Audience Decile



Influencer Median Follower Counts by Top 10% Engagement Decile



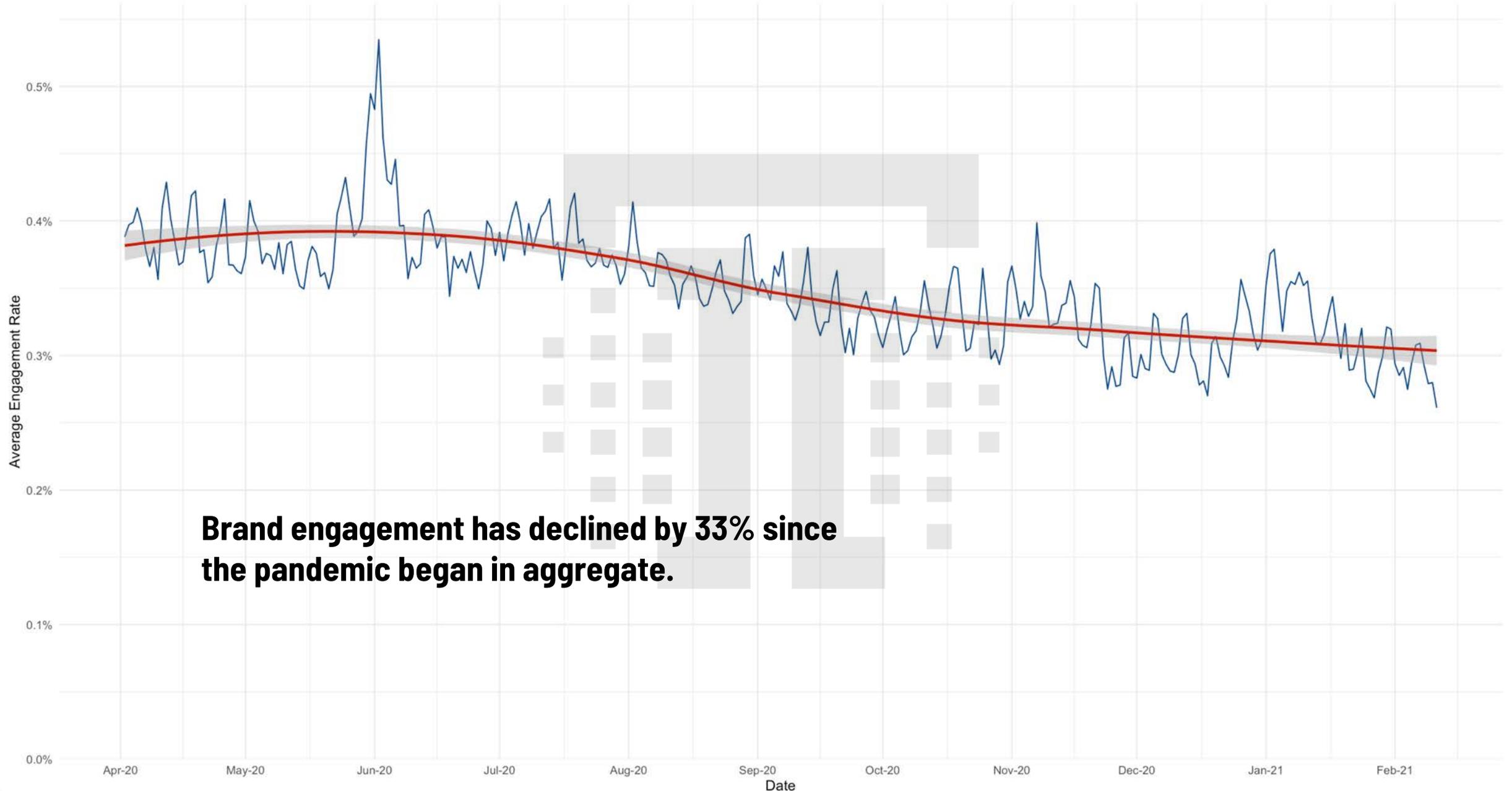
- Audience Decile**
- audiencedecile-1
  - audiencedecile-2
  - audiencedecile-3
  - audiencedecile-4
  - audiencedecile-5
  - audiencedecile-6
  - audiencedecile-7
  - audiencedecile-8
  - audiencedecile-9
  - audiencedecile-10



# CONTENT PERFORMANCE

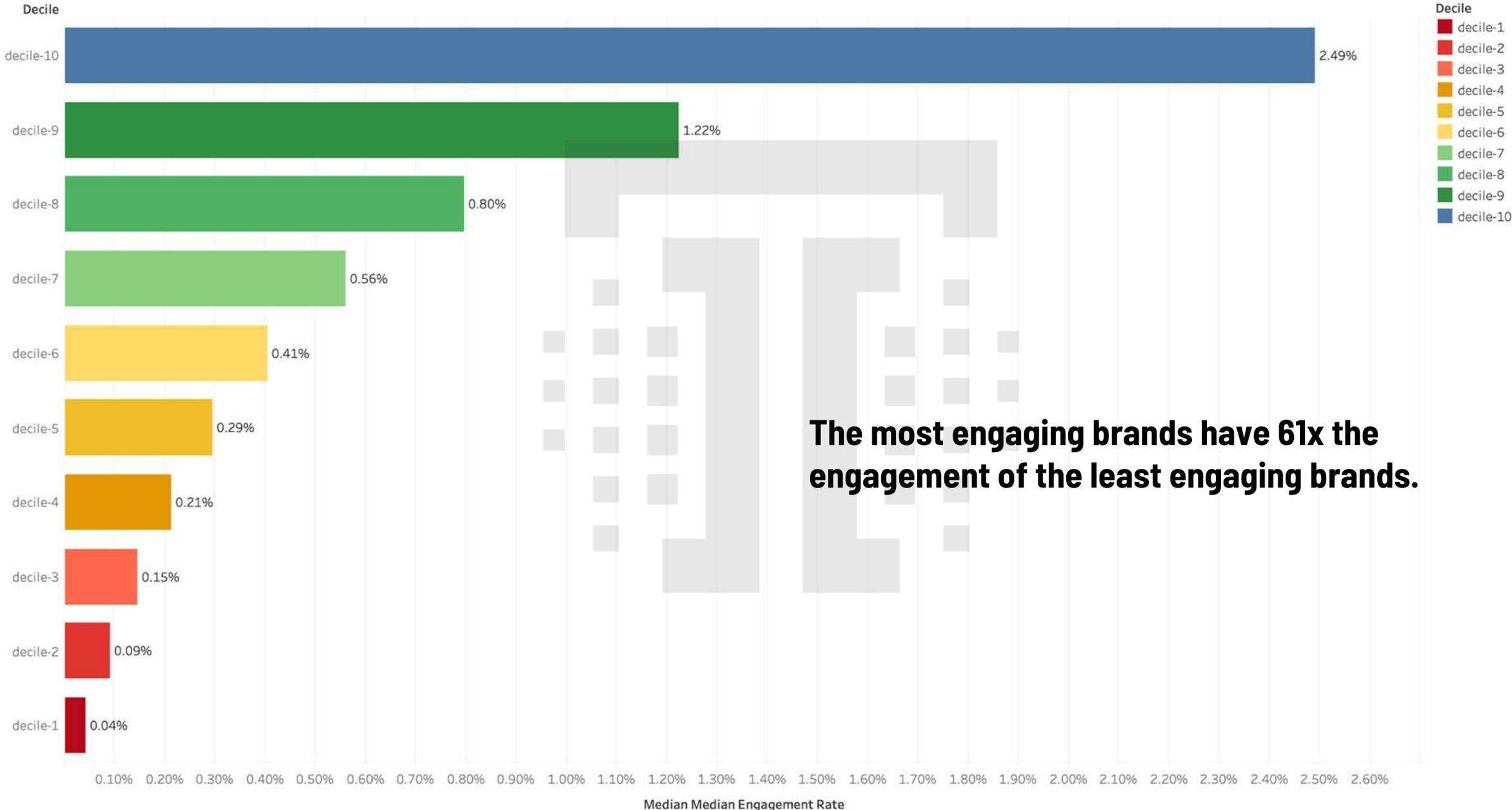


# THE BIG PICTURE



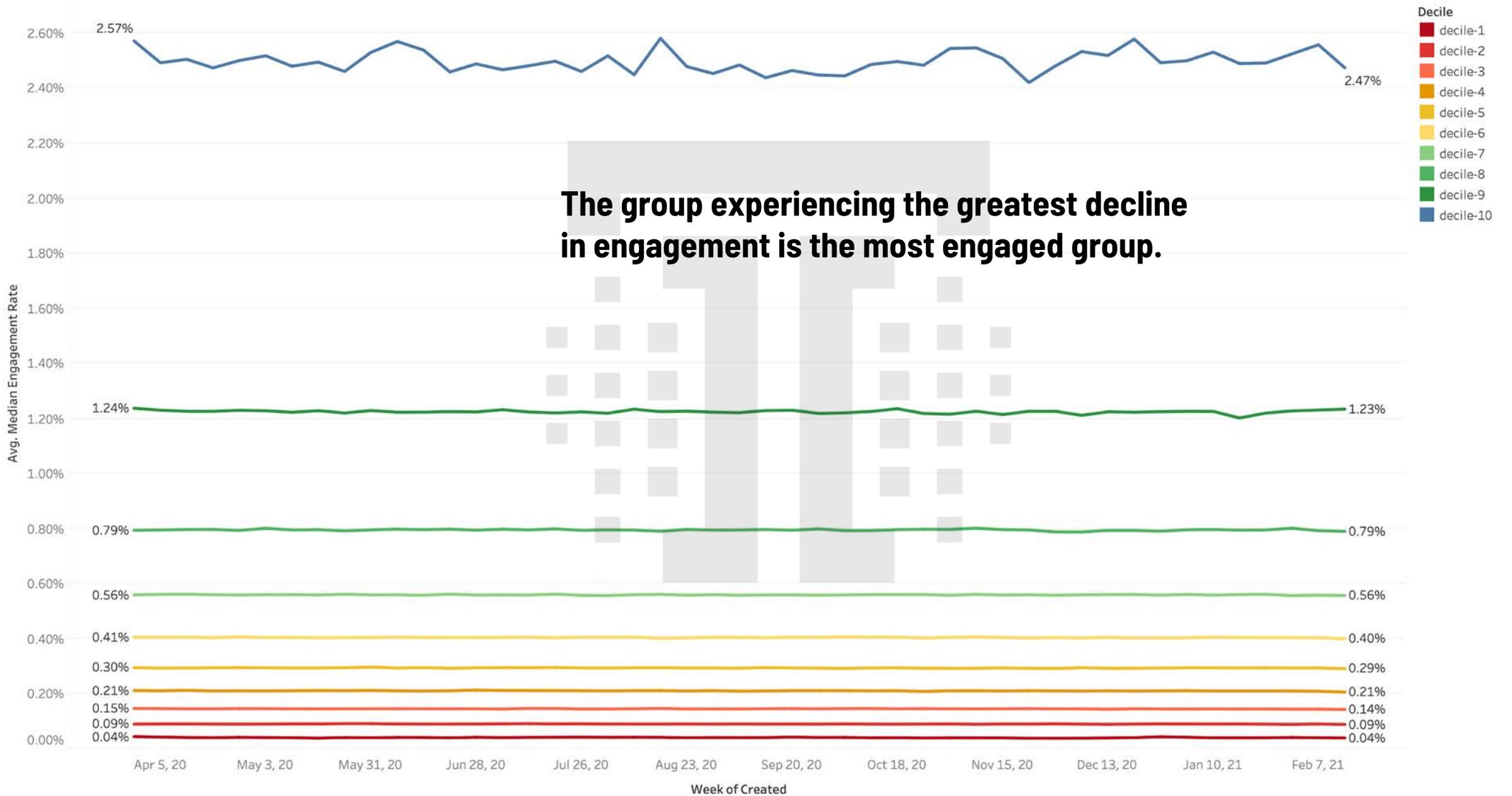
**Brand engagement has declined by 33% since the pandemic began in aggregate.**

# Brand Median Engagement Rates by Decile



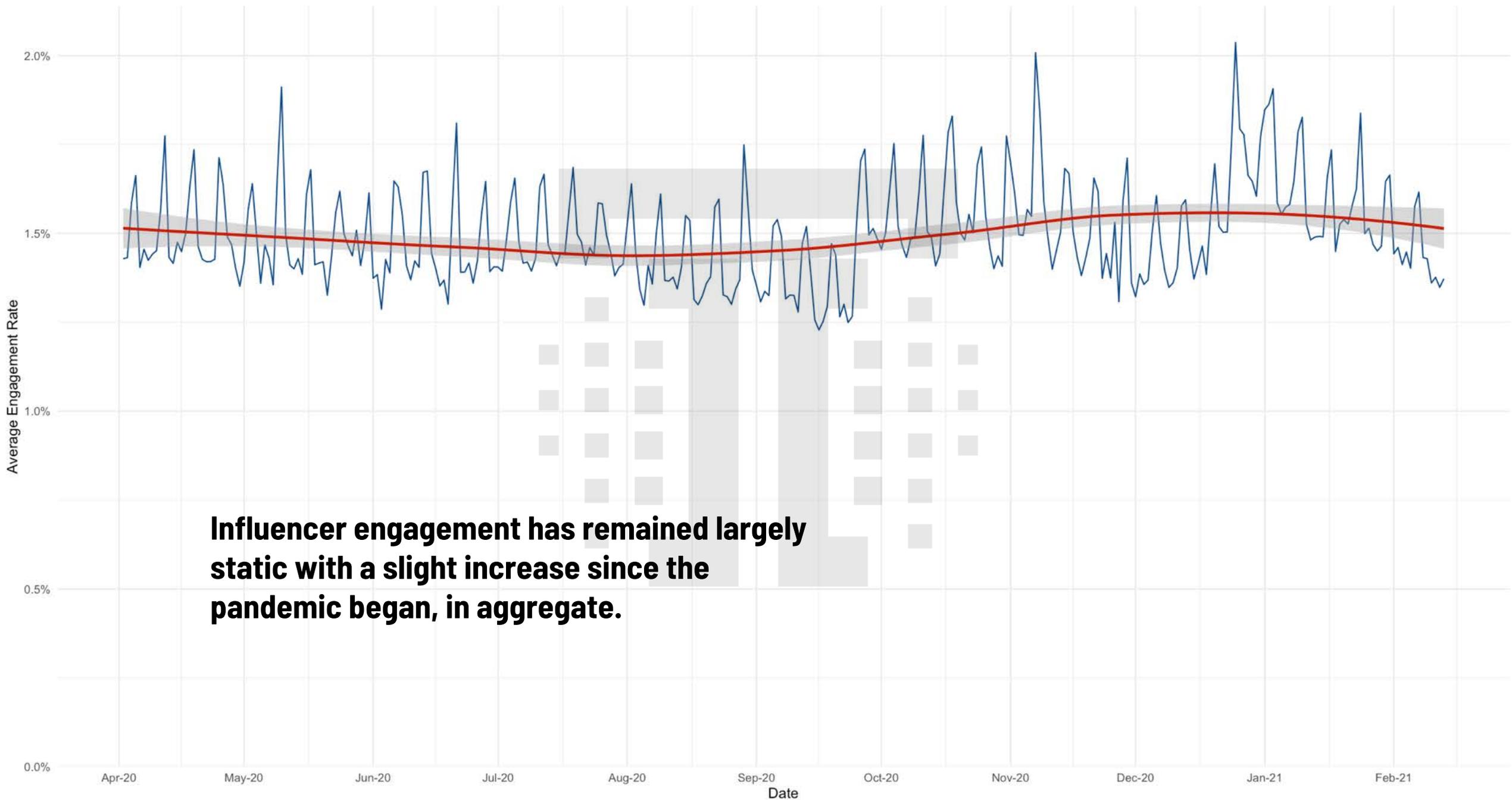
**The most engaging brands have 61x the engagement of the least engaging brands.**

# Median Brand Engagement Rates by Decile



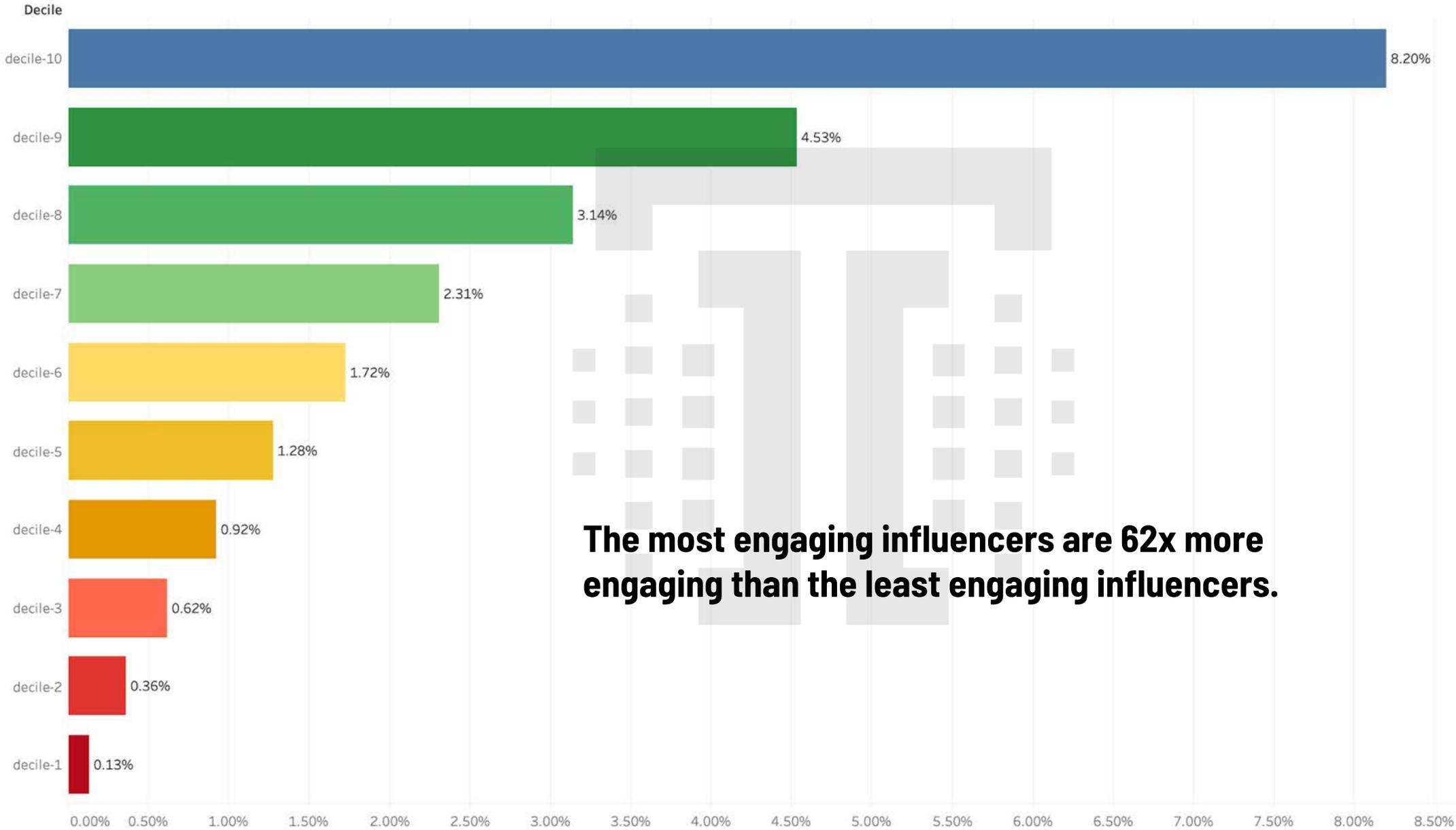


**Instagram  
continues its march  
towards pay-to-play  
for brands.**



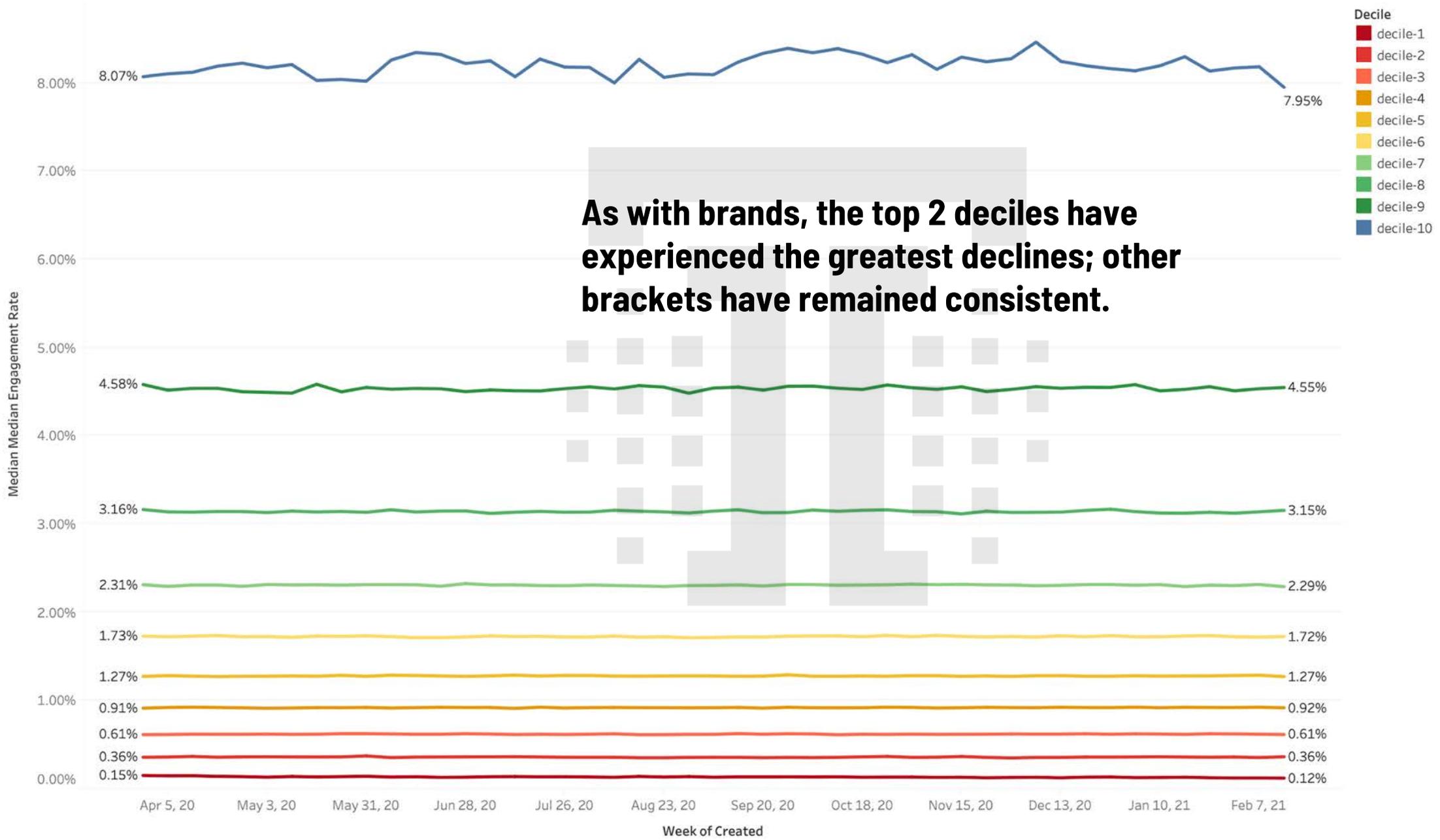
**Influencer engagement has remained largely static with a slight increase since the pandemic began, in aggregate.**

# Influencer Median Engagement Rates by Decile



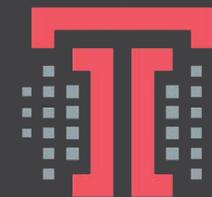
**The most engaging influencers are 62x more engaging than the least engaging influencers.**

# Median Influencer Engagement Rates by Decile



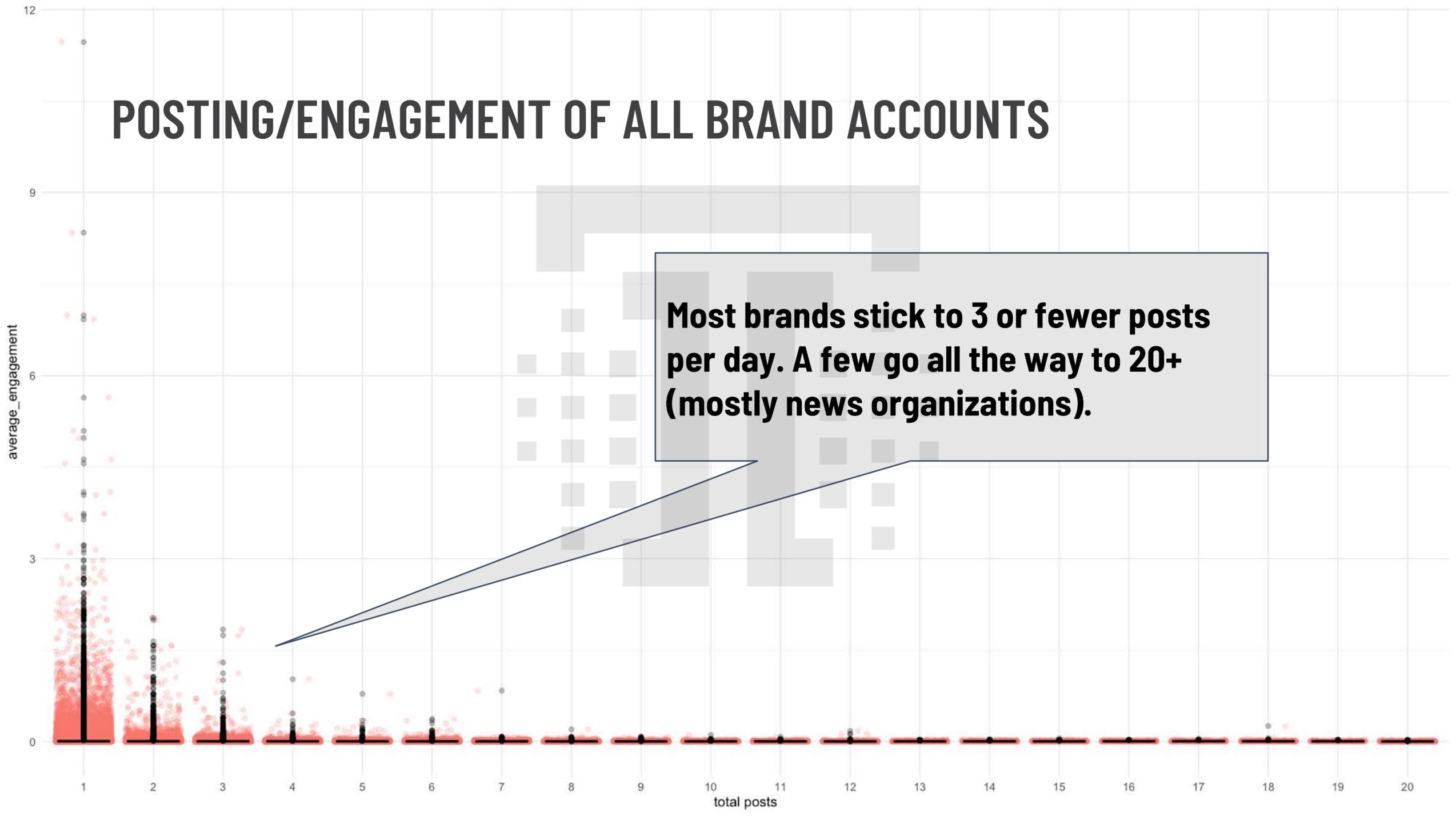


**In general,  
influencers have 4x  
the engagement of  
brands.**



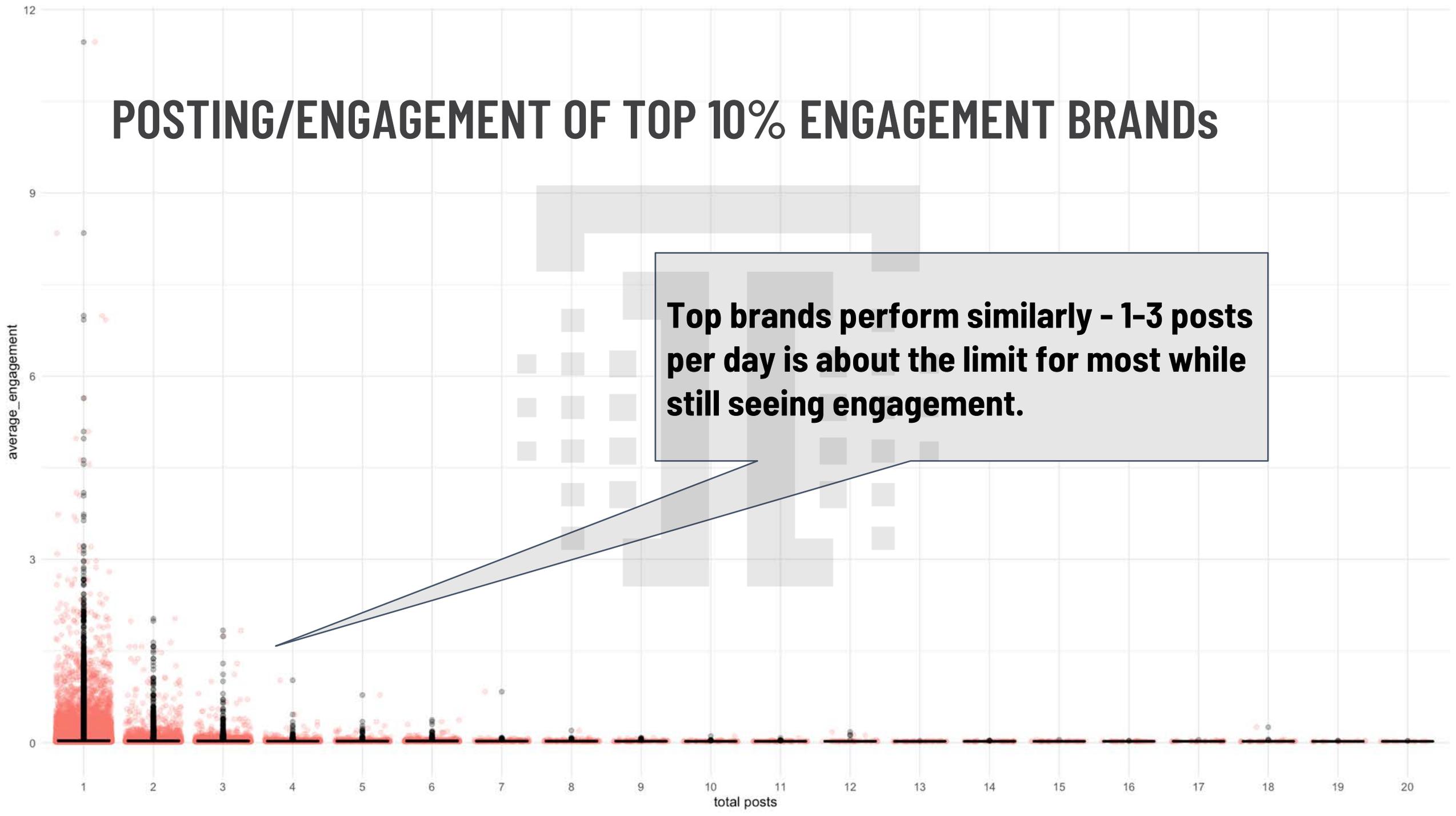
# FREQUENCIES OF BRAND POSTS

# POSTING/ENGAGEMENT OF ALL BRAND ACCOUNTS



**Most brands stick to 3 or fewer posts per day. A few go all the way to 20+ (mostly news organizations).**

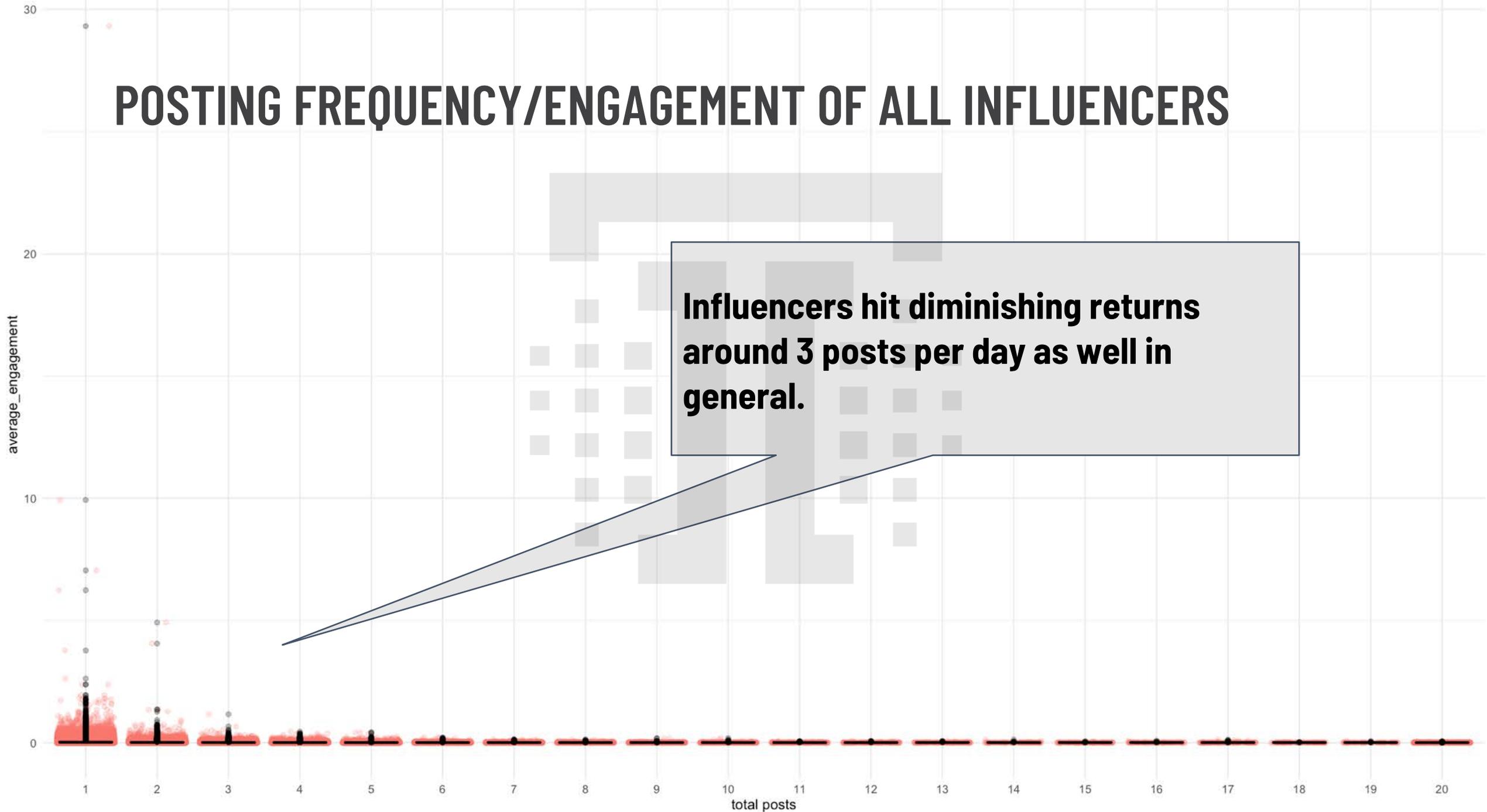
# POSTING/ENGAGEMENT OF TOP 10% ENGAGEMENT BRANDS





# FREQUENCIES OF INFLUENCER POSTS

# POSTING FREQUENCY/ENGAGEMENT OF ALL INFLUENCERS



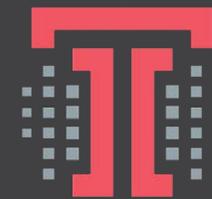




**1-3 posts per day is  
about the maximum  
you can post  
without losing  
engagement.**

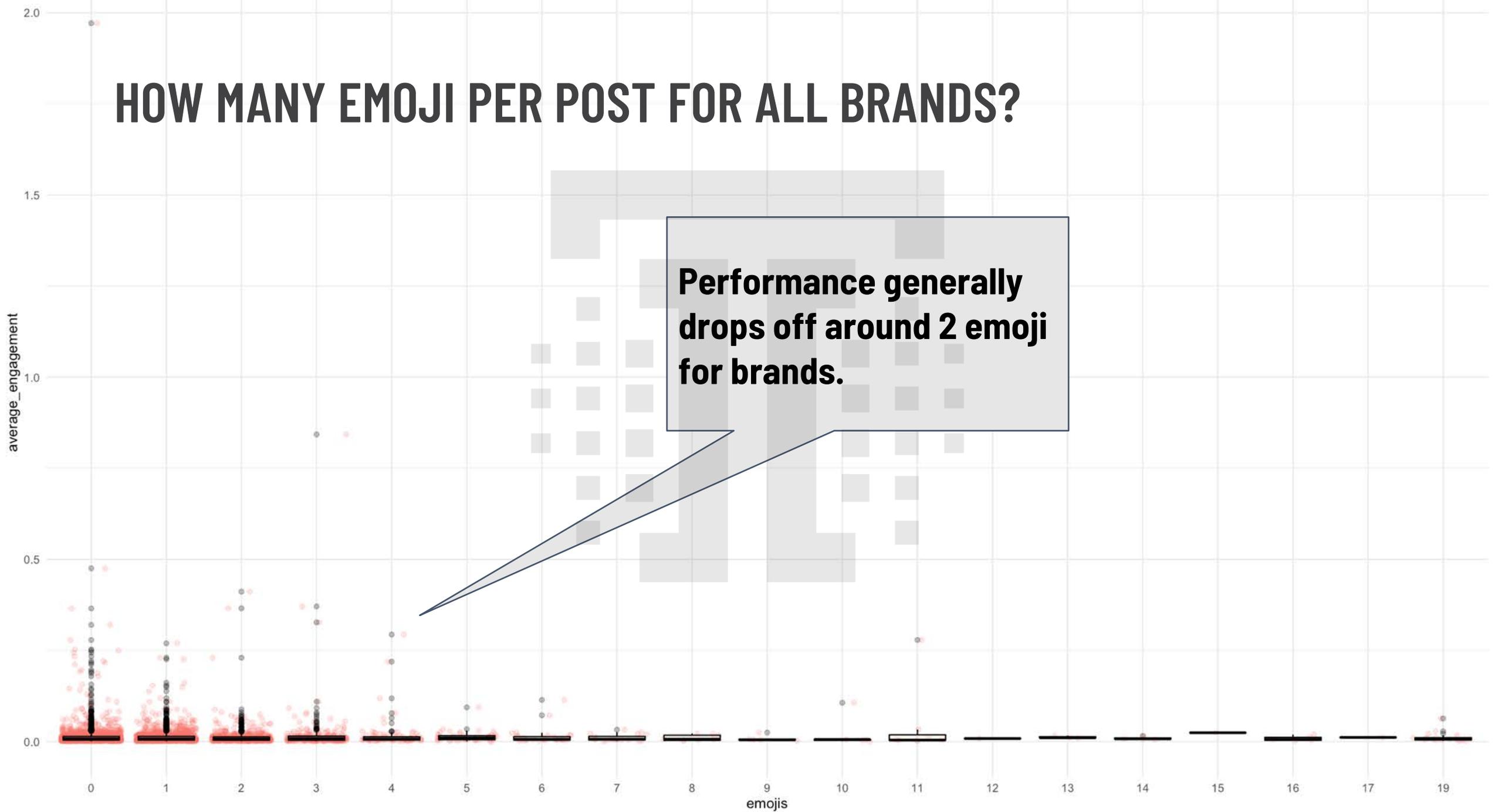


# CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS

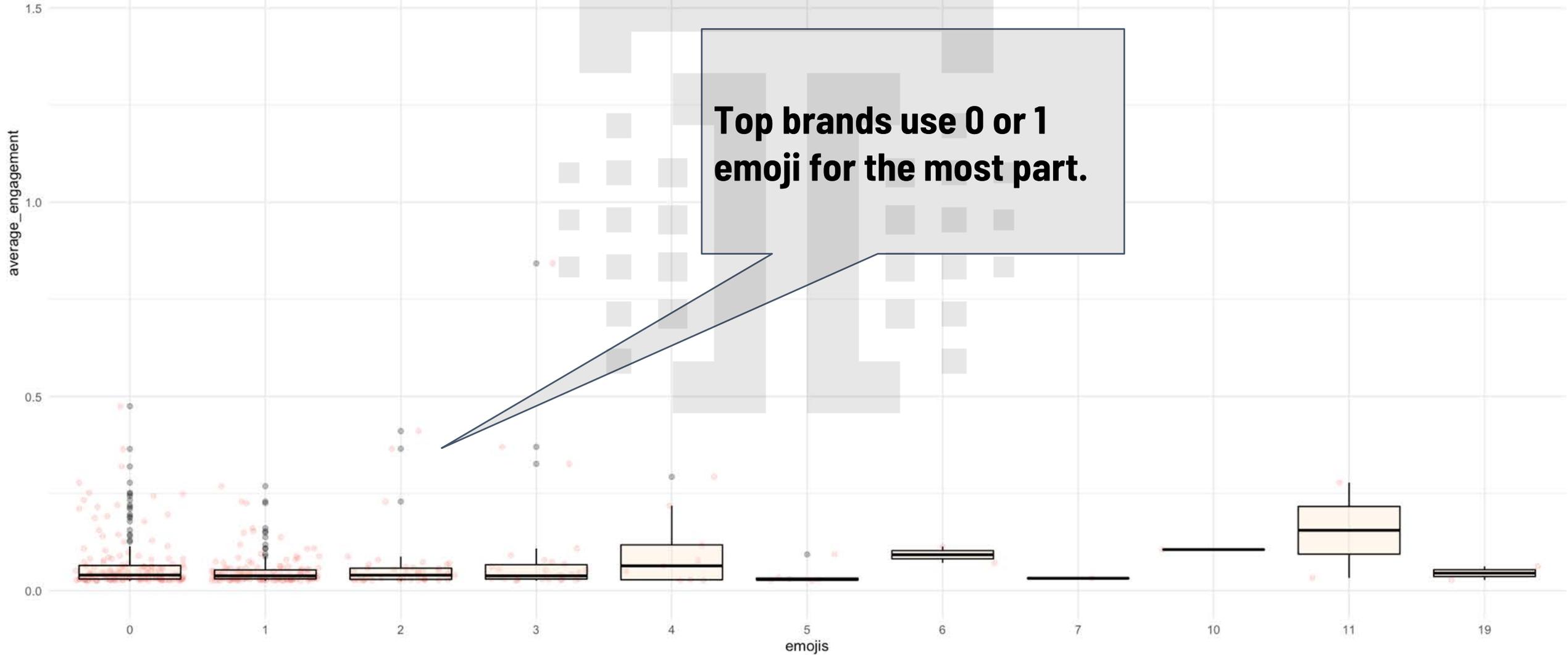


# EMOJI FOR BRANDS

# HOW MANY EMOJI PER POST FOR ALL BRANDS?

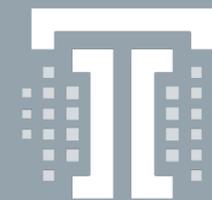


# HOW MANY EMOJI PER POST FOR TOP 10% ENGAGEMENT BRANDS?



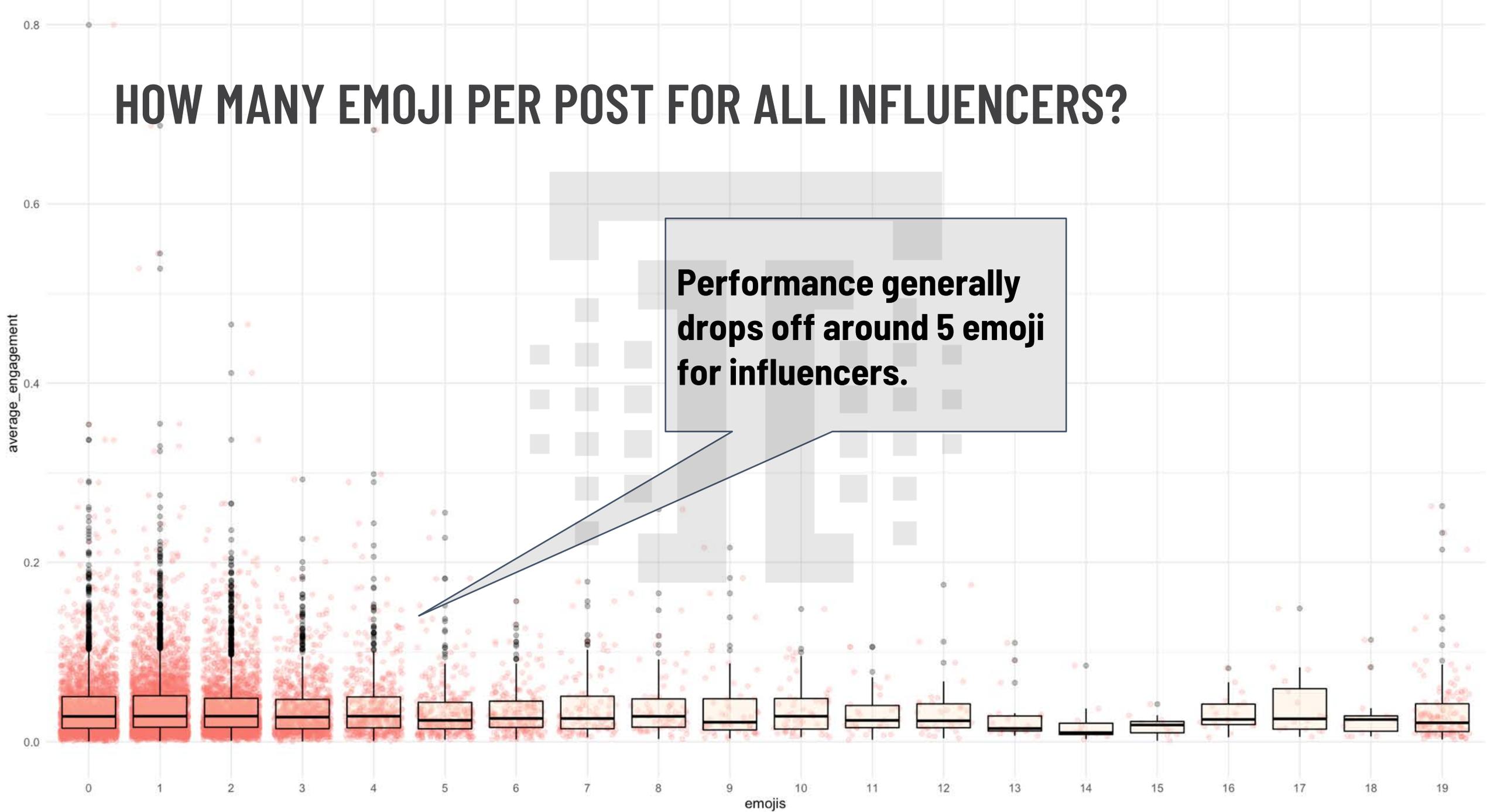


**Brands starting out  
should test emoji, 1-2  
in their content.**



# EMOJI FOR INFLUENCERS

# HOW MANY EMOJI PER POST FOR ALL INFLUENCERS?



# HOW MANY EMOJI PER POST FOR TOP 10% ENGAGEMENT INFLUENCERS?

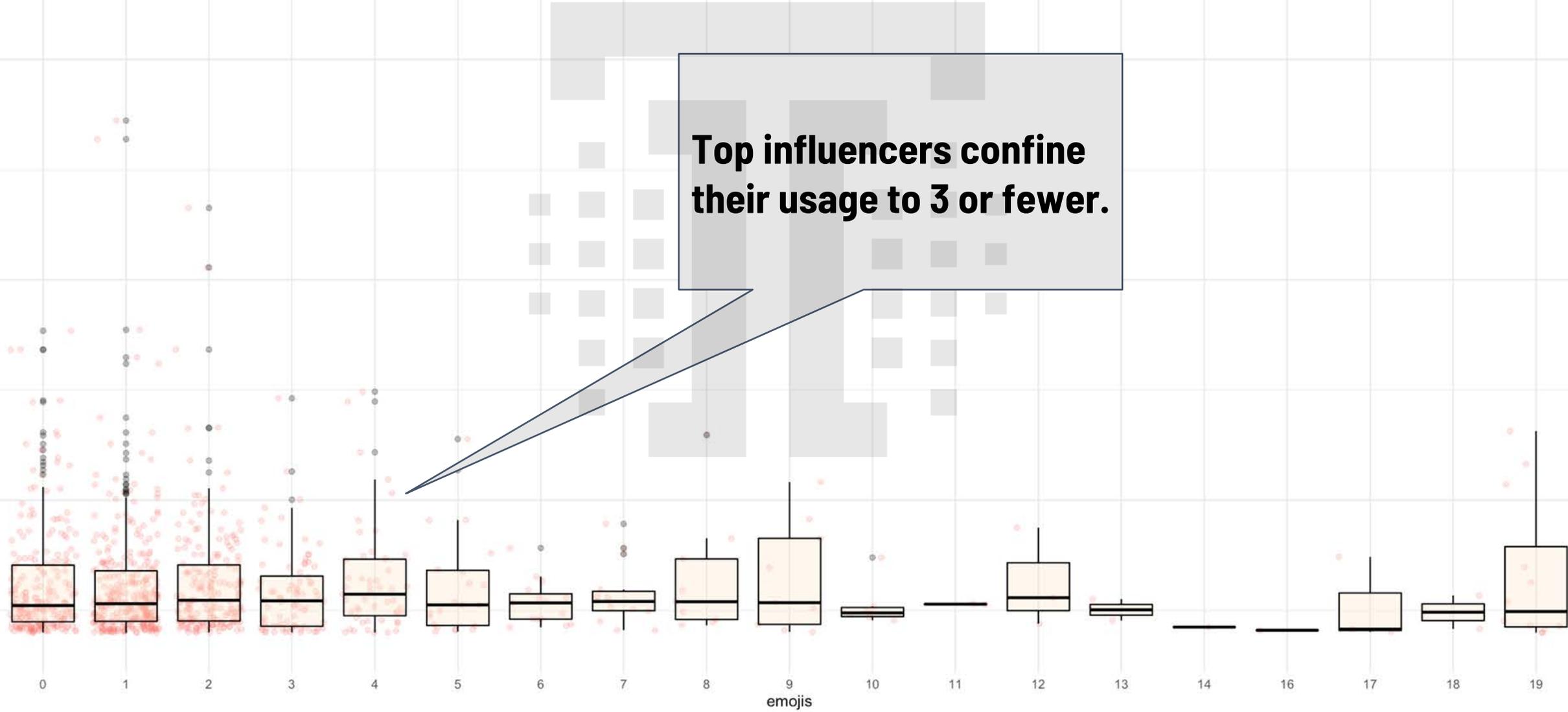
average\_engagement

0.8

0.6

0.4

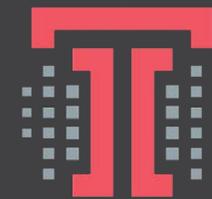
0.2



**Top influencers confine their usage to 3 or fewer.**

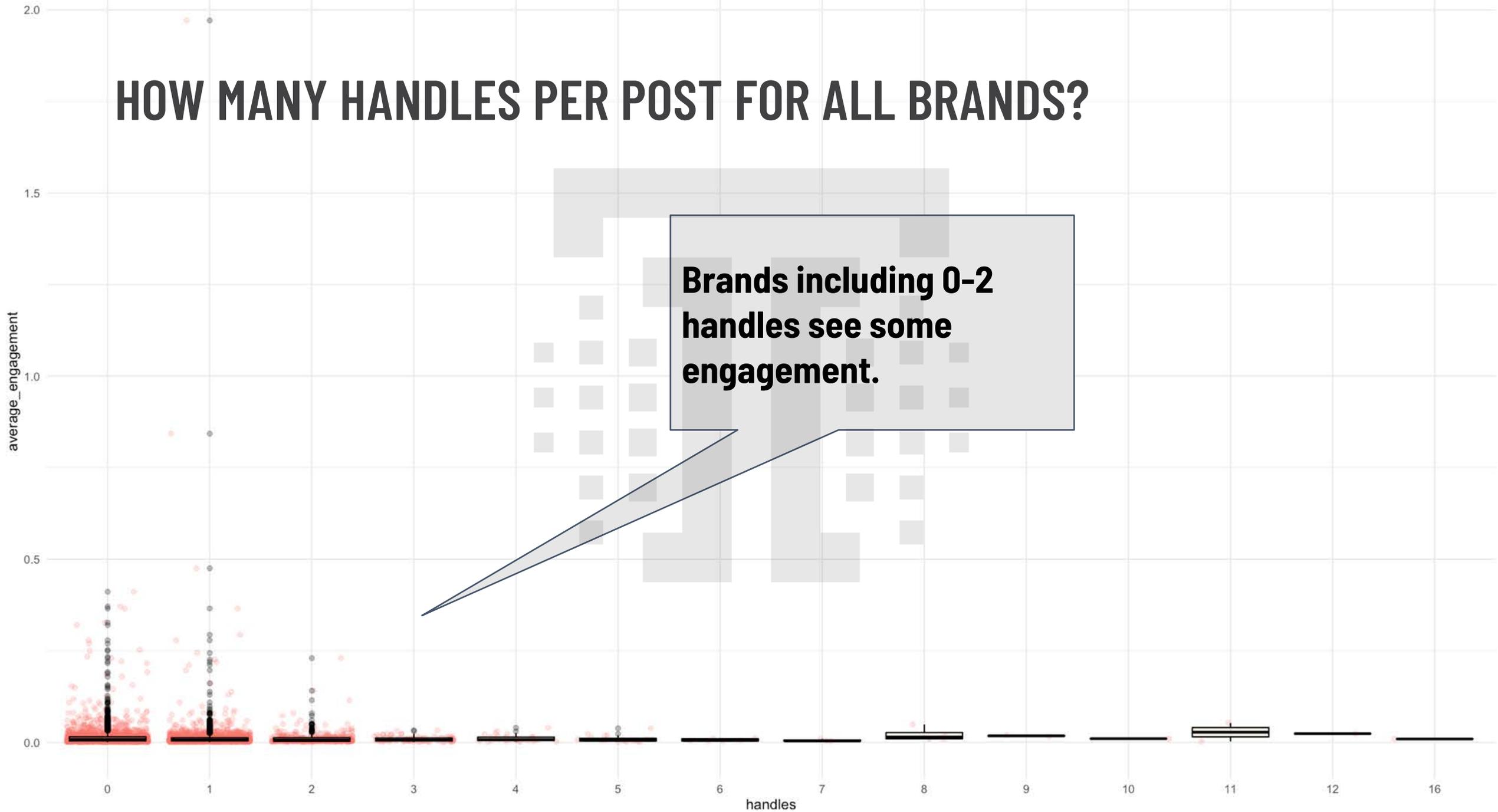


**Influencers can add  
3-5 emoji to make  
more engaging  
content.**

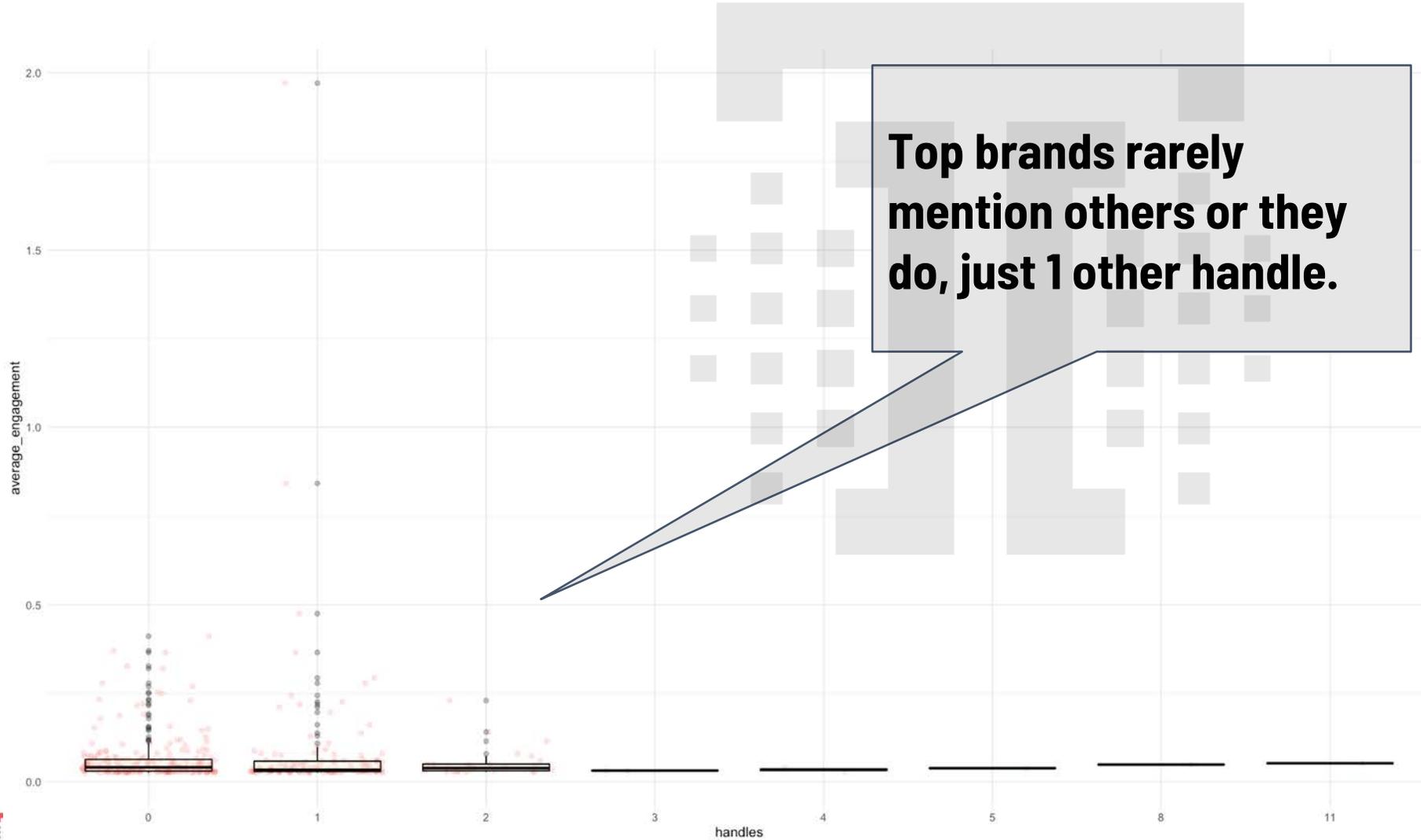


# HANDLES FOR BRANDS

# HOW MANY HANDLES PER POST FOR ALL BRANDS?



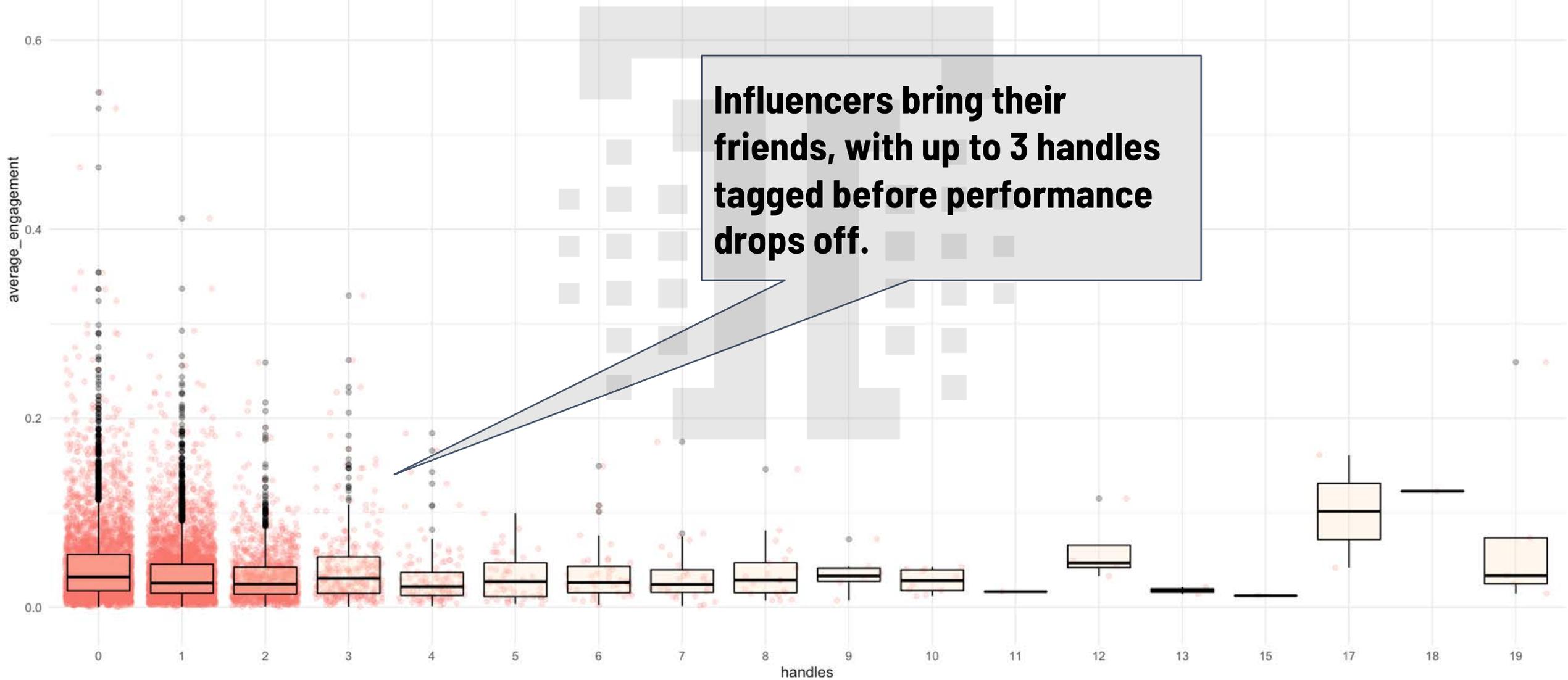
# HOW MANY HANDLES PER POST FOR TOP 10% BRANDS?





# HANDLES FOR INFLUENCERS

# HOW MANY HANDLES PER POST FOR ALL INFLUENCERS?



**Influencers bring their friends, with up to 3 handles tagged before performance drops off.**

# HOW MANY HANDLES PER POST FOR TOP 10% INFLUENCERS?

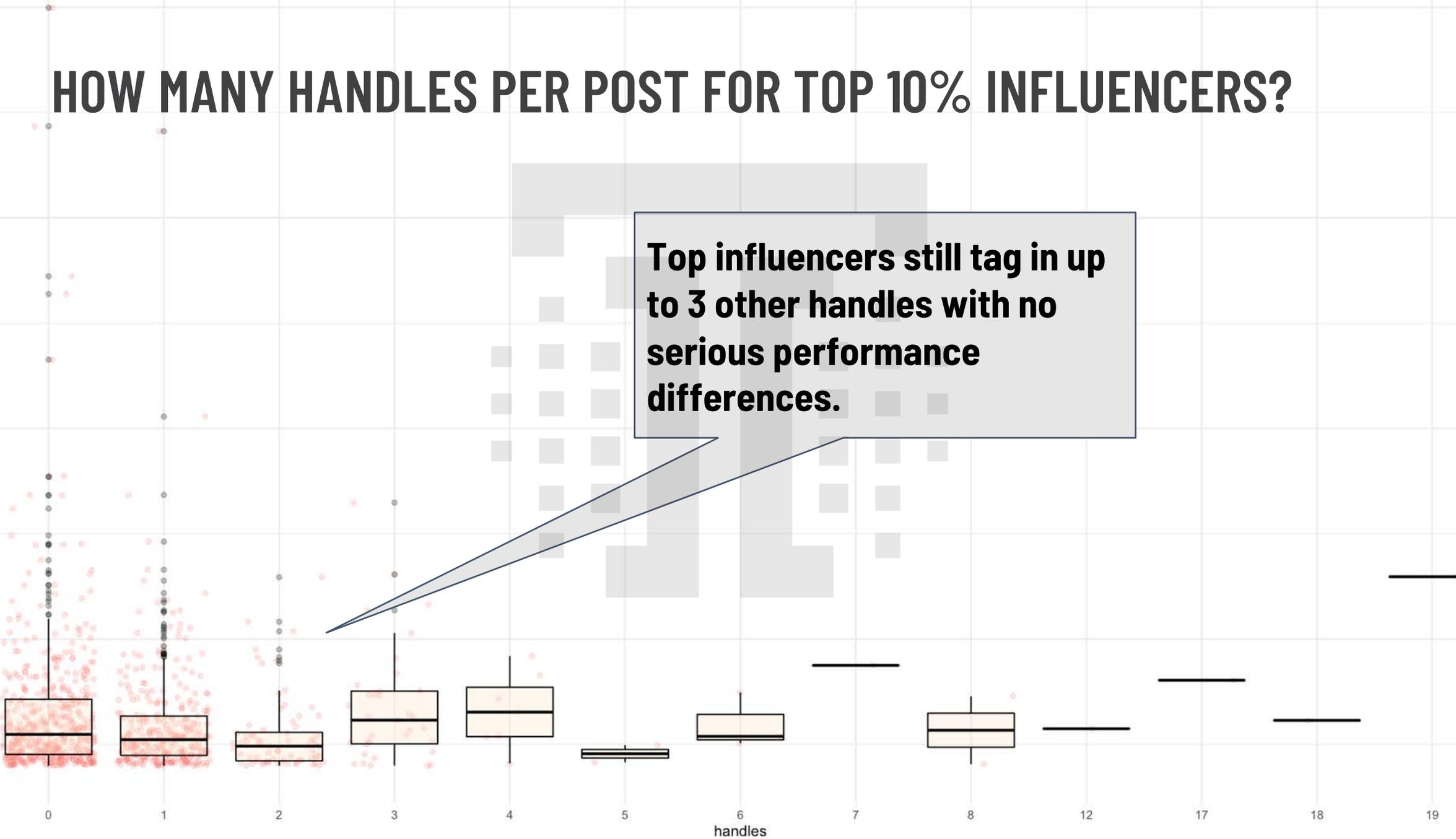
average\_engagement

0.8

0.6

0.4

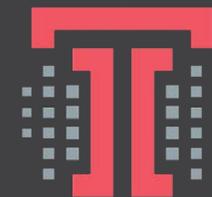
0.2



**Top influencers still tag in up to 3 other handles with no serious performance differences.**

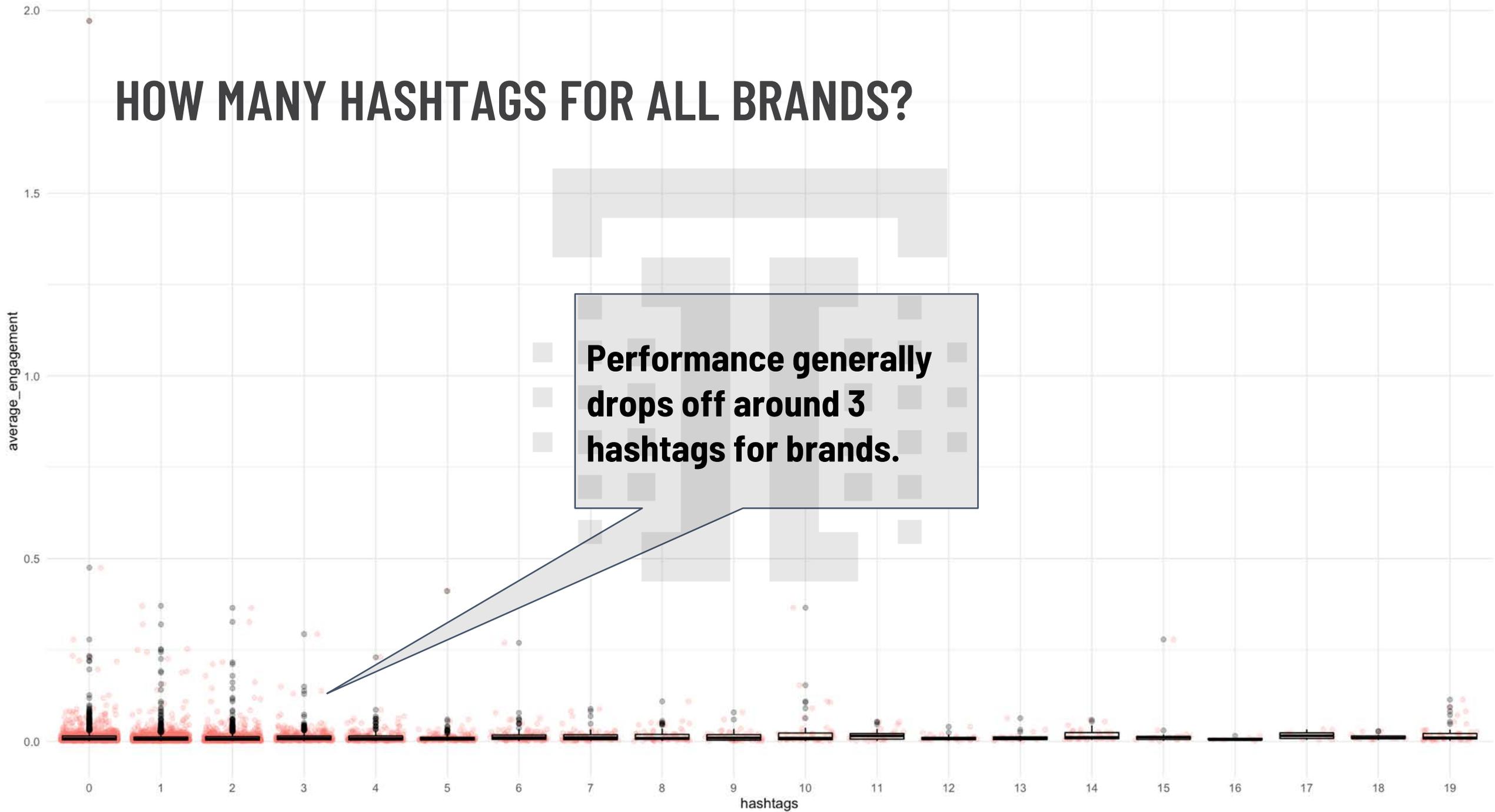


**Brands: take a lesson  
from influencers  
and work together.**

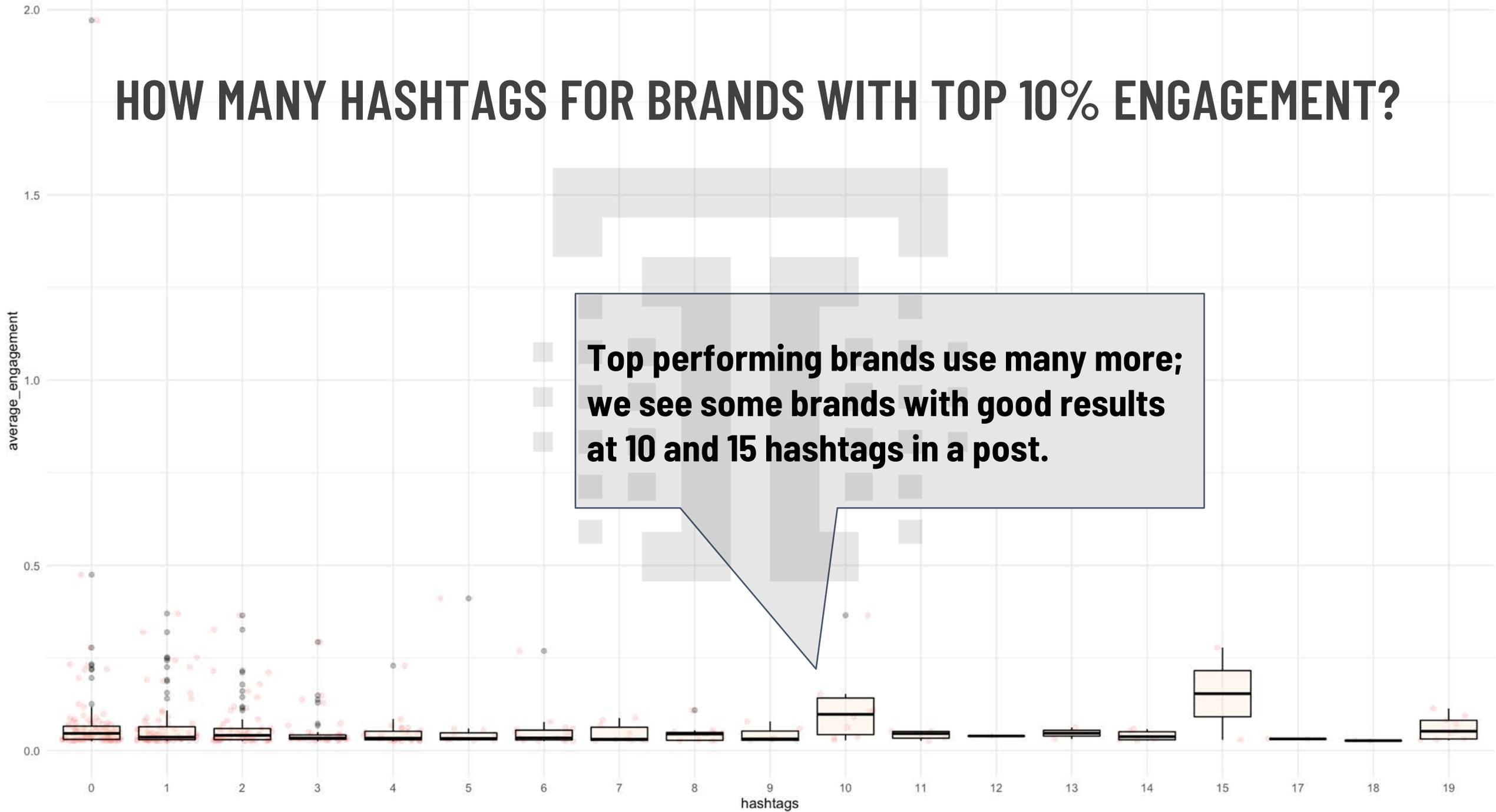


# HASHTAGS FOR BRANDS

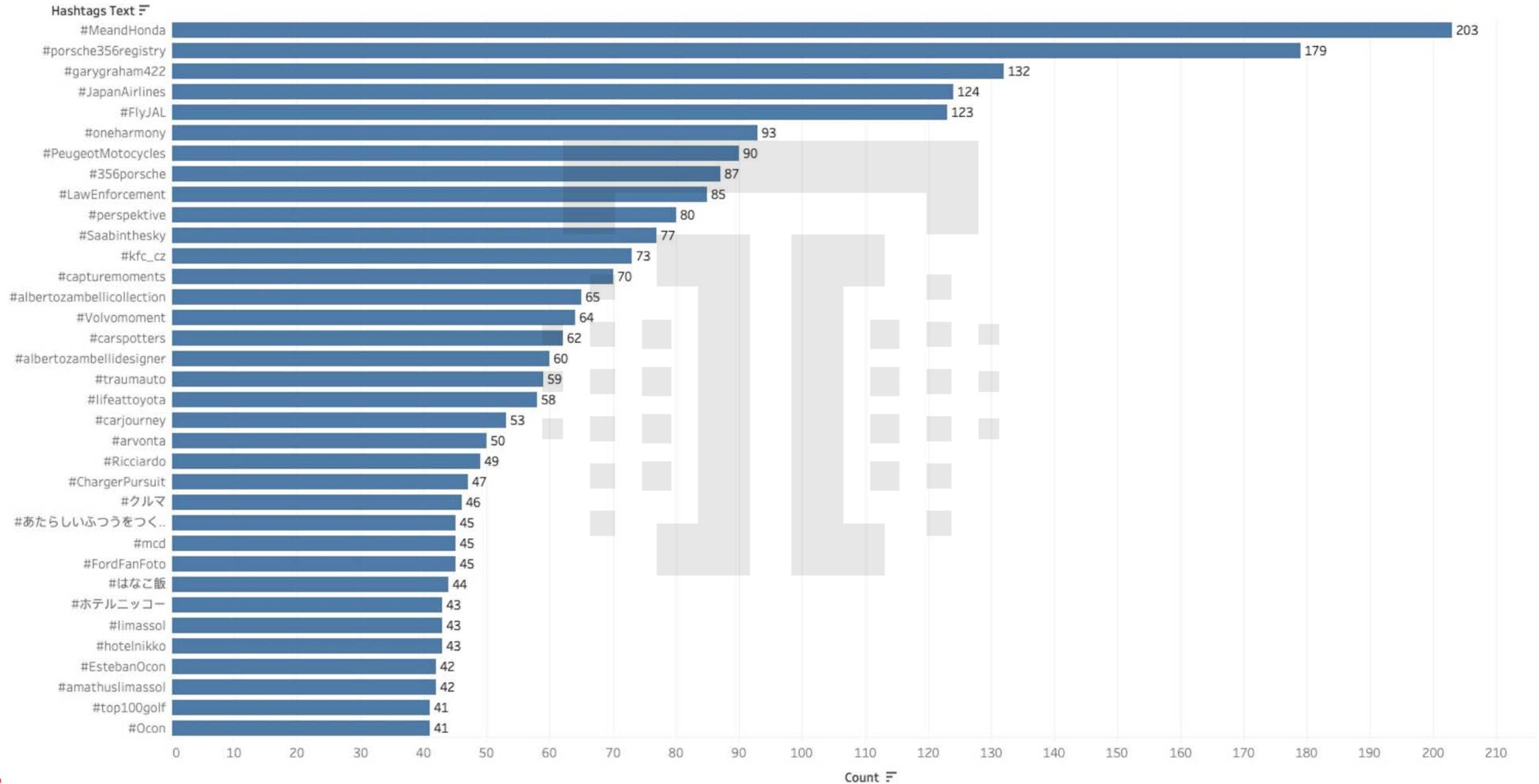
# HOW MANY HASHTAGS FOR ALL BRANDS?



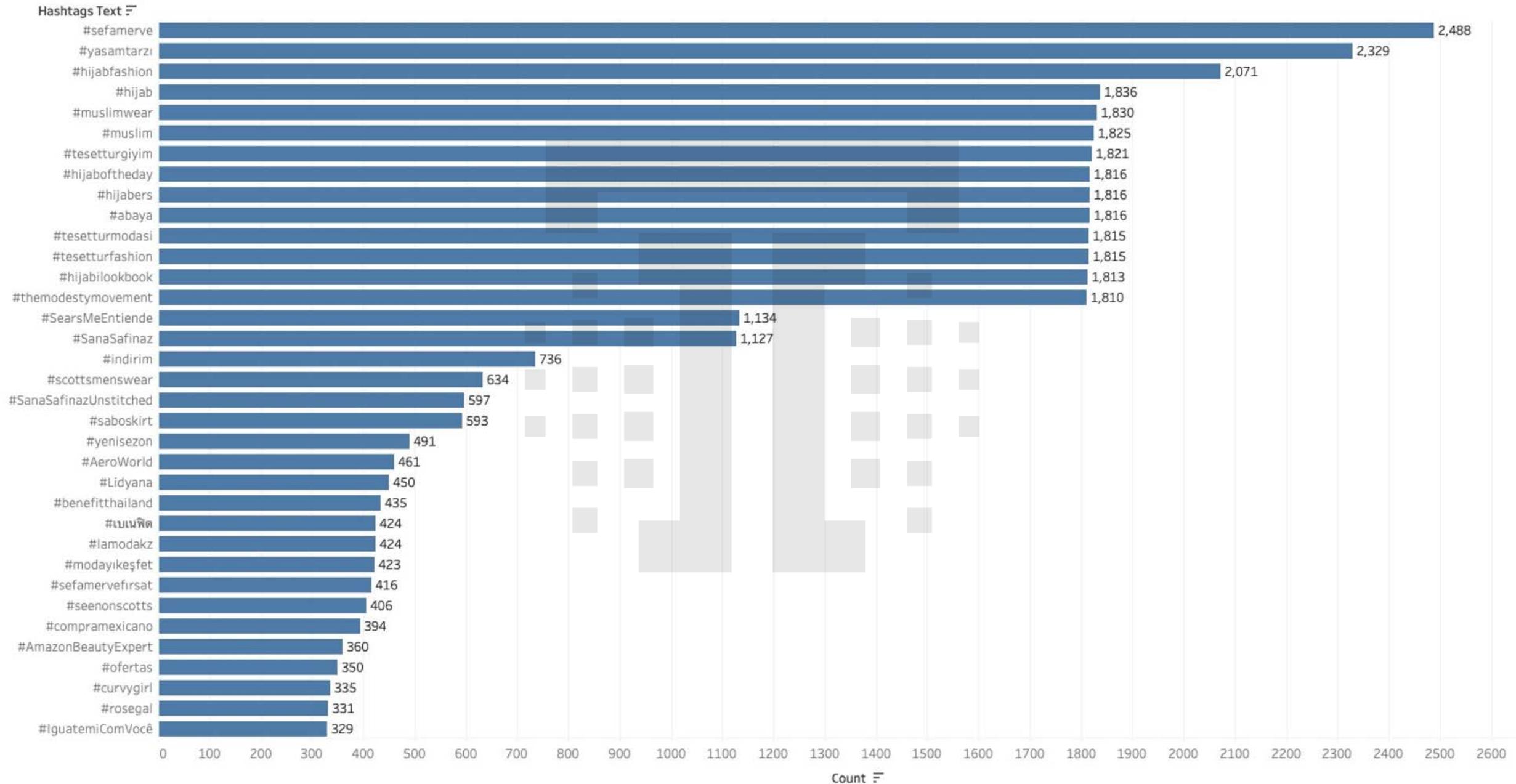
# HOW MANY HASHTAGS FOR BRANDS WITH TOP 10% ENGAGEMENT?



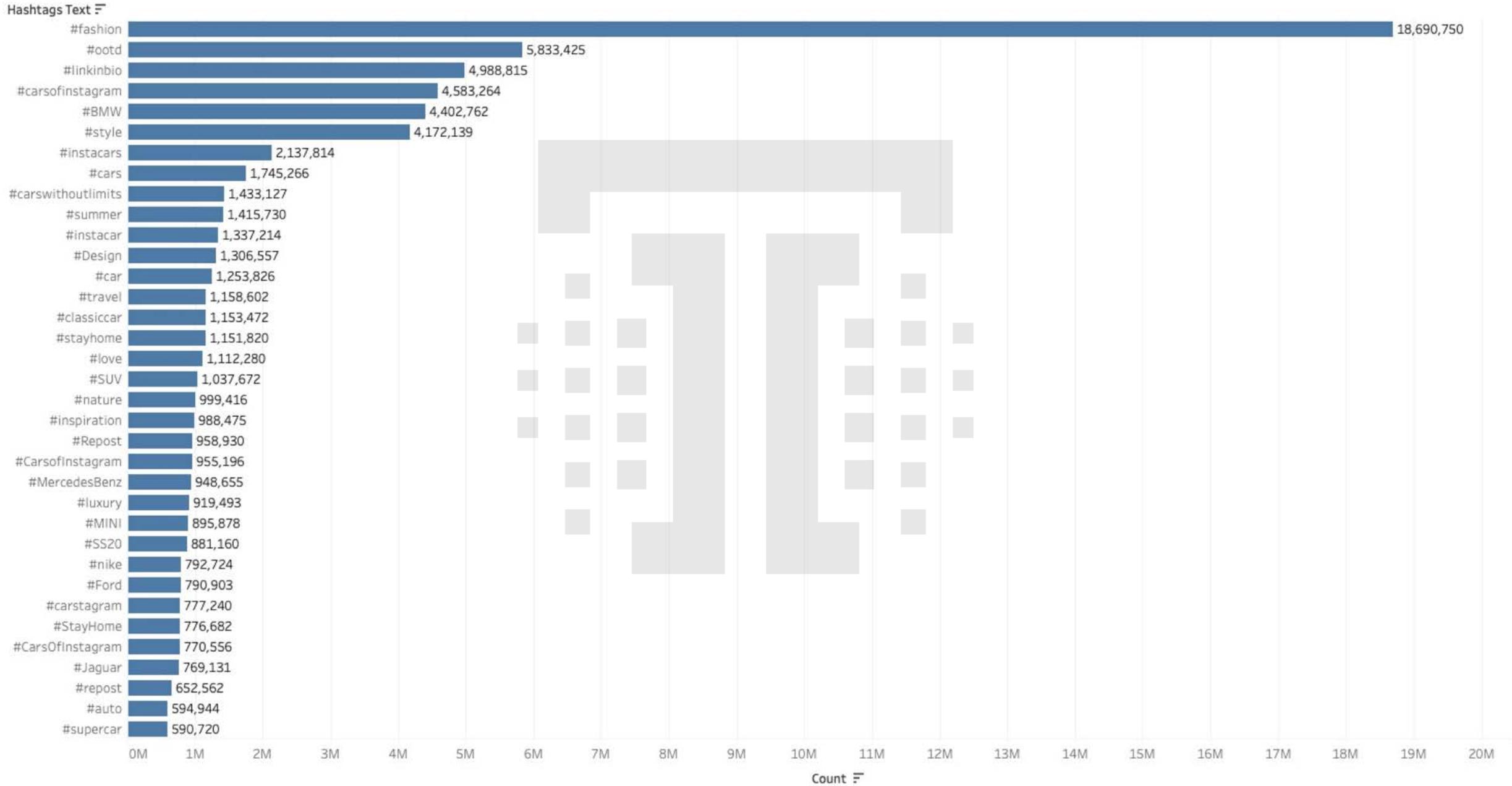
# Hashtags UNIQUE To the Top 10% of Instagram Brand Posts



# Hashtags UNIQUE To the BOTTOM 10% of Instagram Brand Posts



# Hashtags in COMMON To All Instagram Brand Posts





**Brands starting out should aim for 1-3 popular hashtags.**

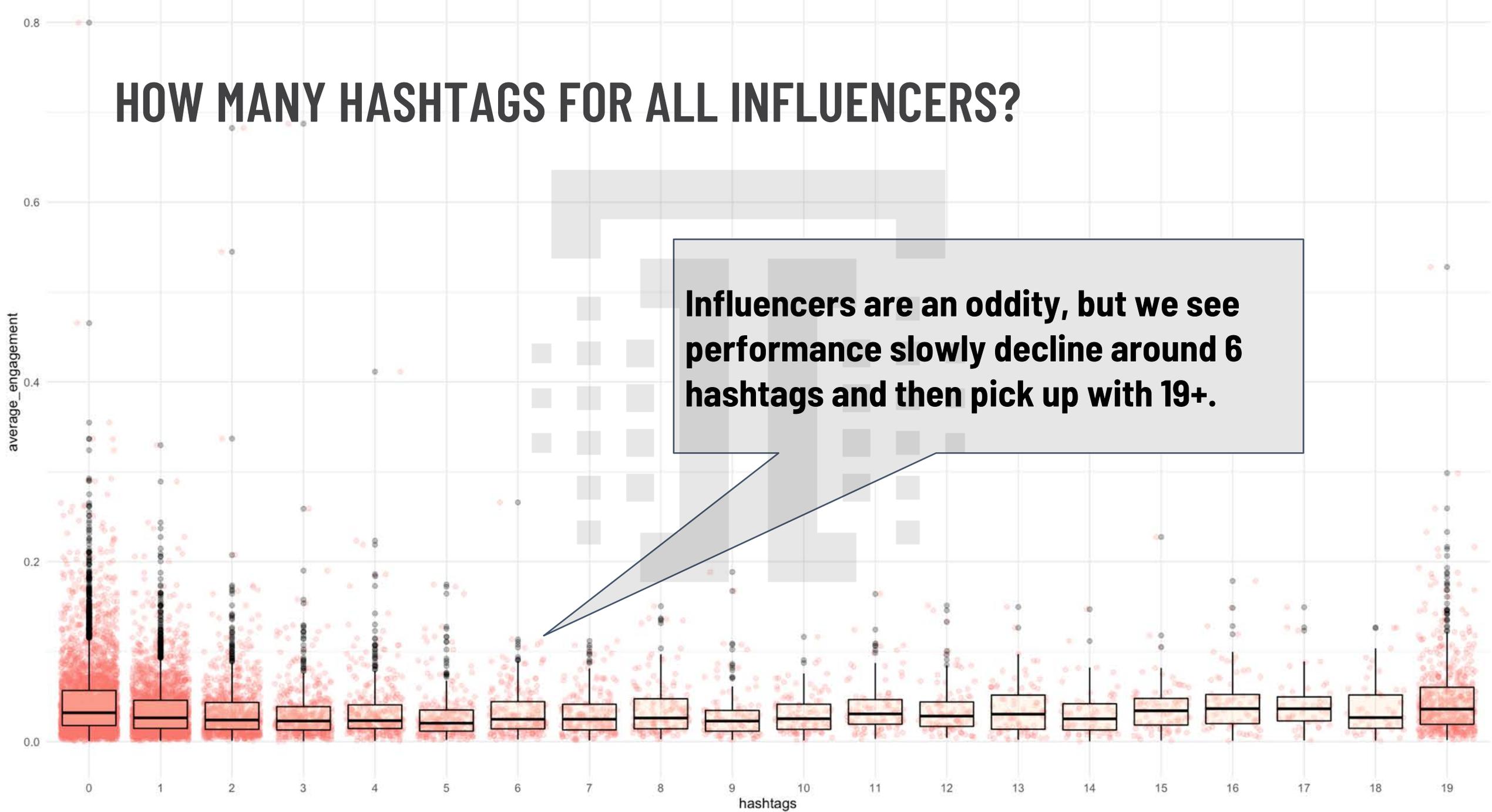


**Strong brands can use more hashtags and work on carving out a niche.**

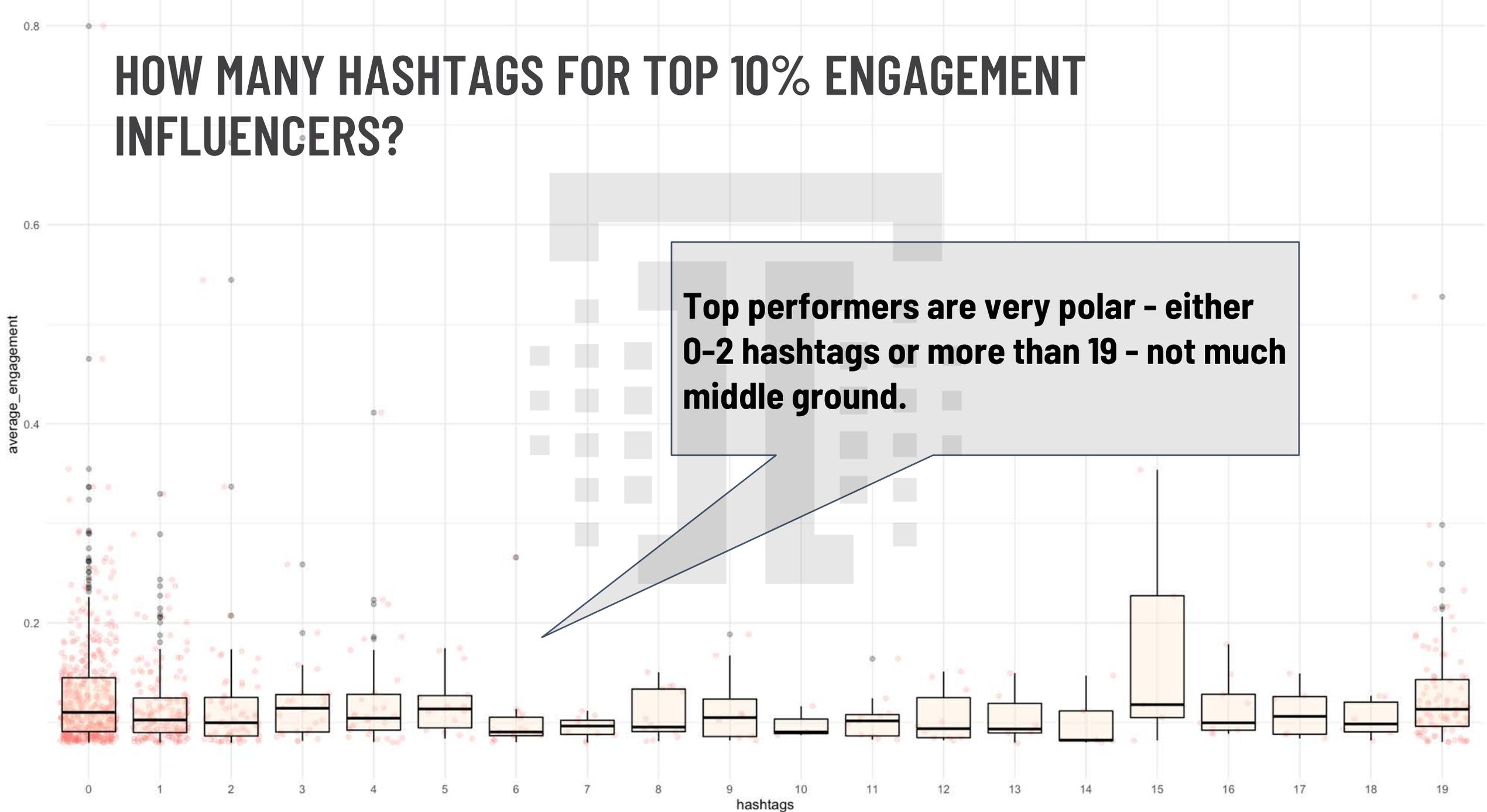


# HASHTAGS FOR INFLUENCERS

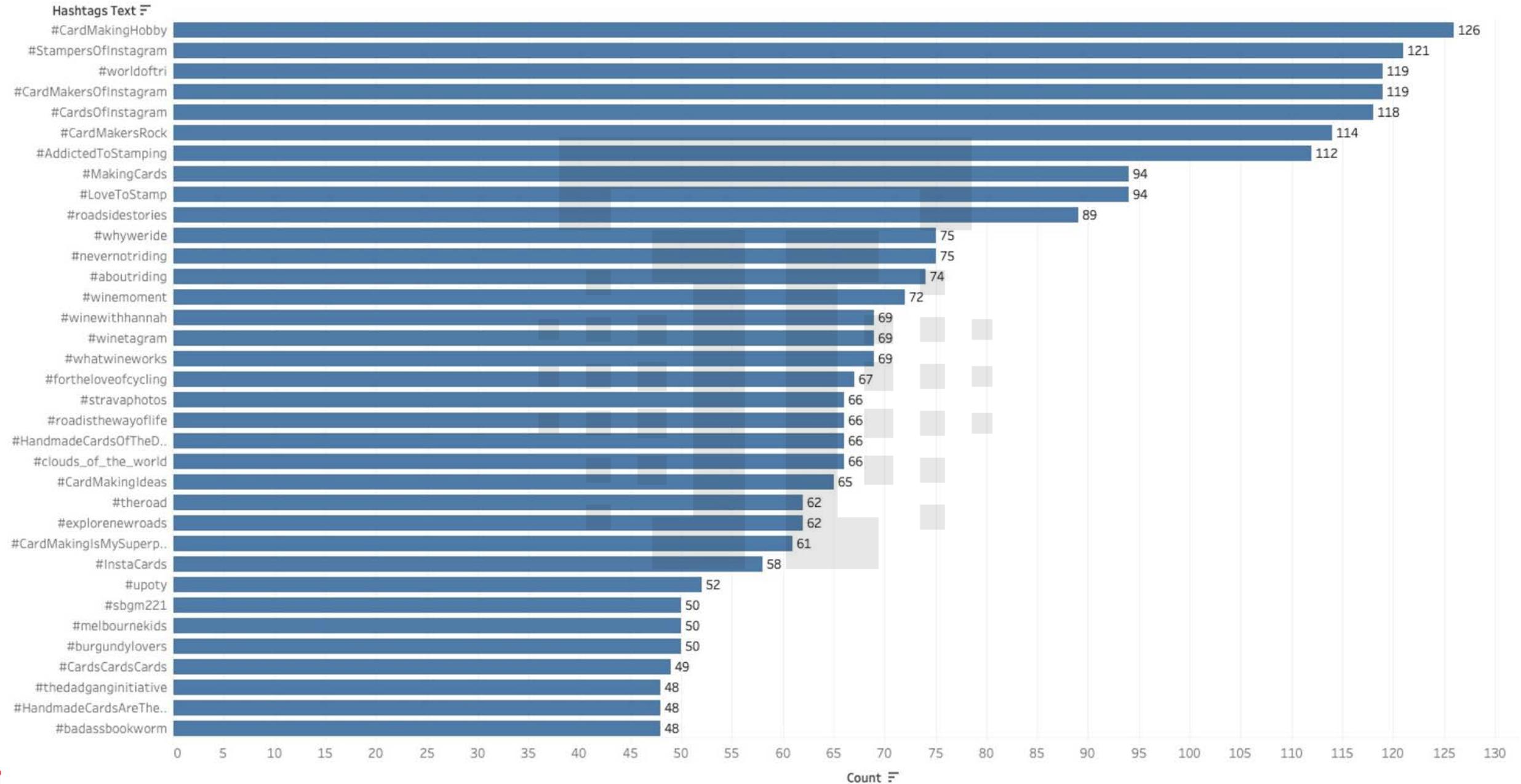
# HOW MANY HASHTAGS FOR ALL INFLUENCERS?



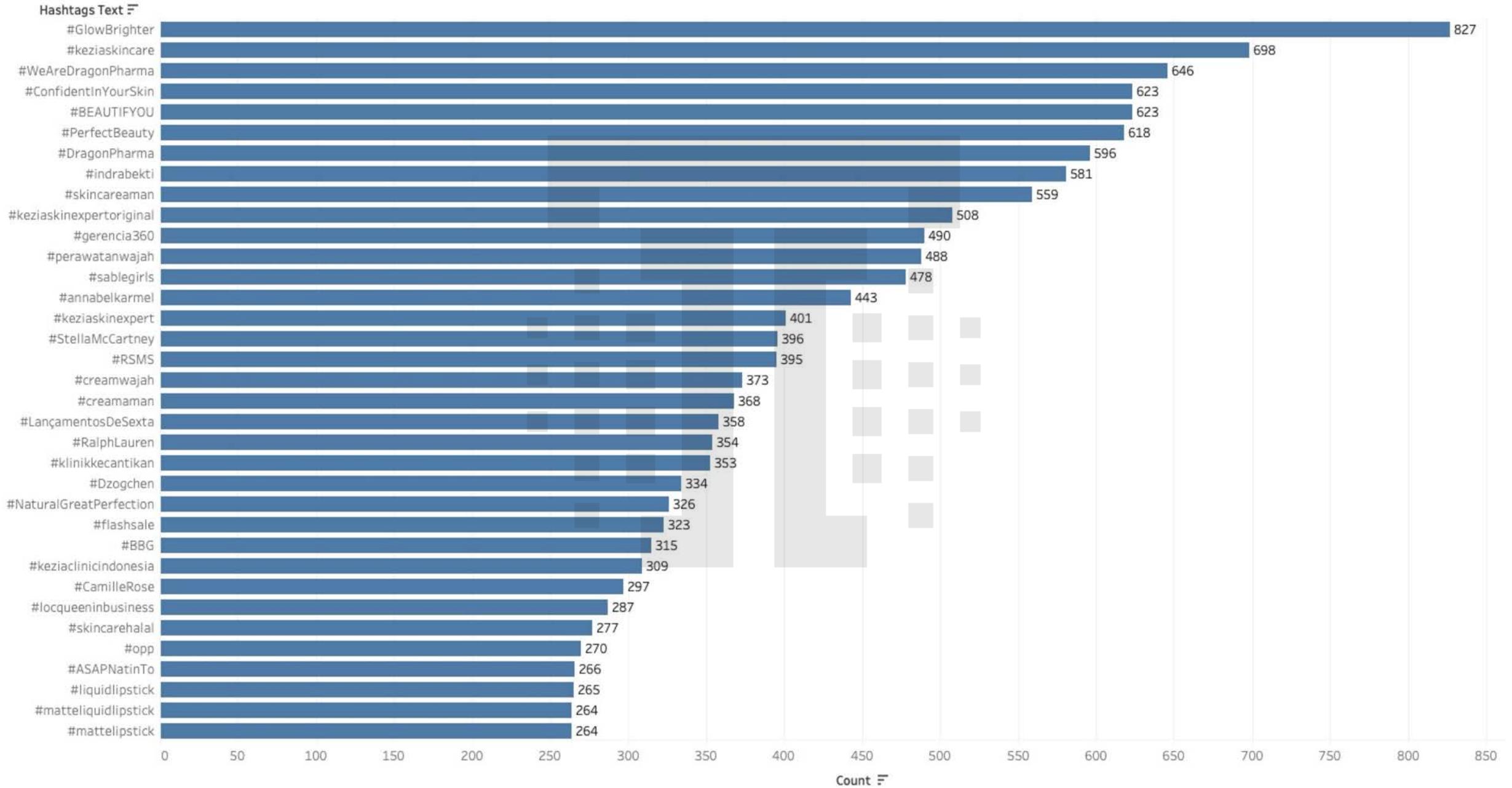
# HOW MANY HASHTAGS FOR TOP 10% ENGAGEMENT INFLUENCERS?



# Hashtags UNIQUE To the Top 10% of Instagram Influencer Posts

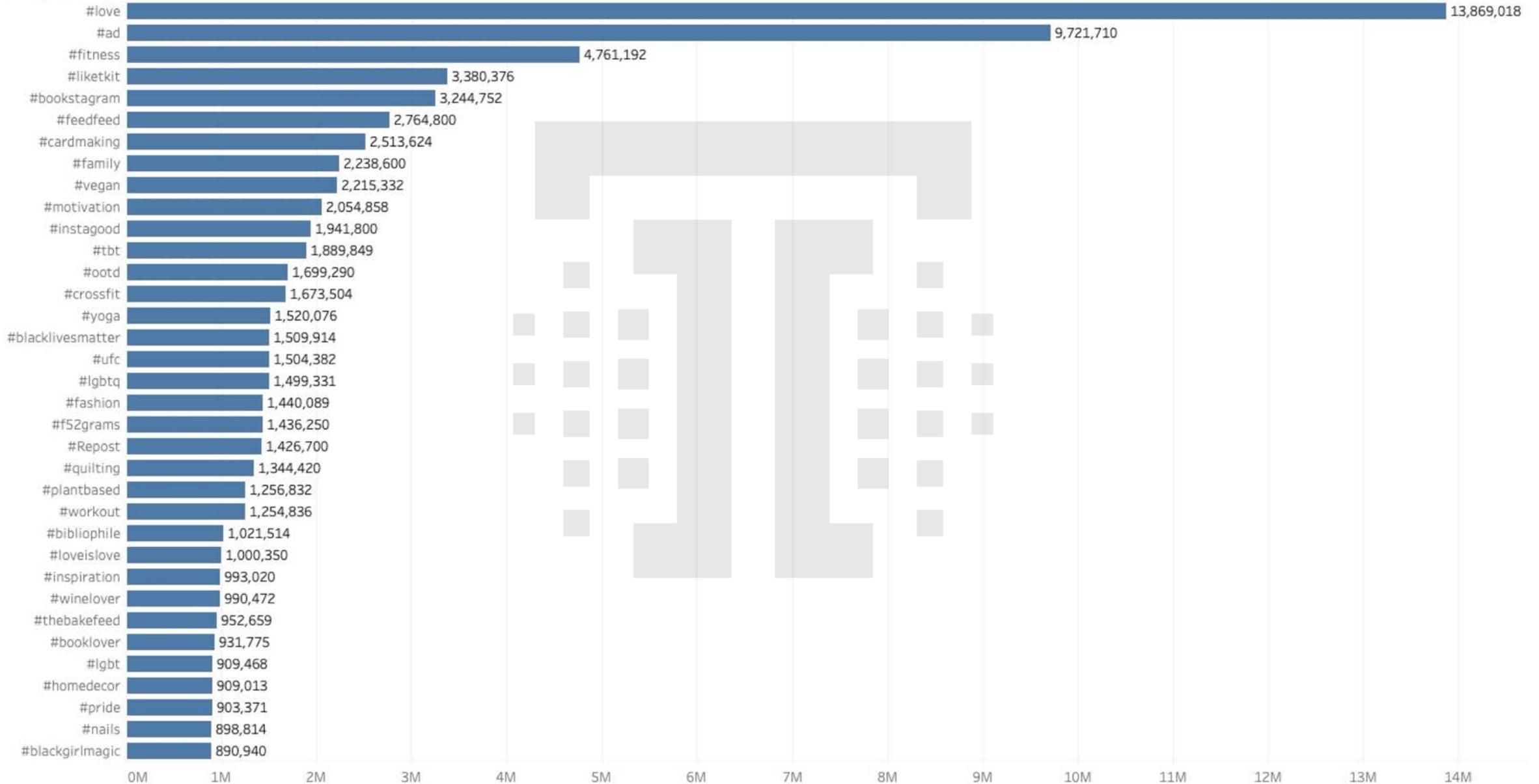


# Hashtags UNIQUE To the BOTTOM 10% of Instagram Influencer Posts



# Hashtags in COMMON To All Instagram Influencer Posts

Hashtags Text



Count

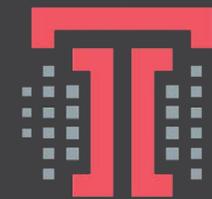




**Influencers should  
be tagging it up. Go  
wild - it won't hurt.**

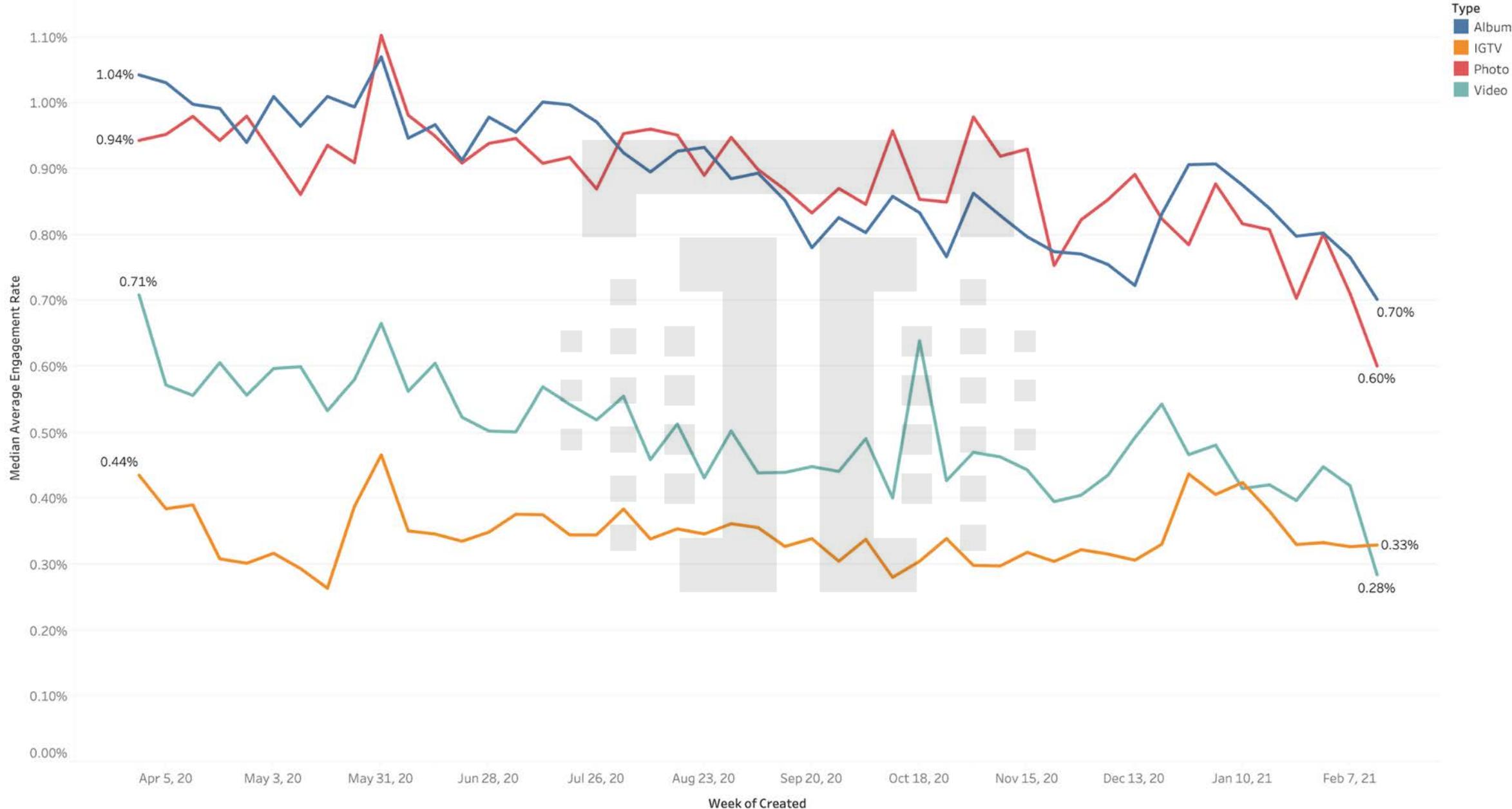


**Working with an  
influencer? Give  
them your top 10  
SEO keywords as  
hashtags.**

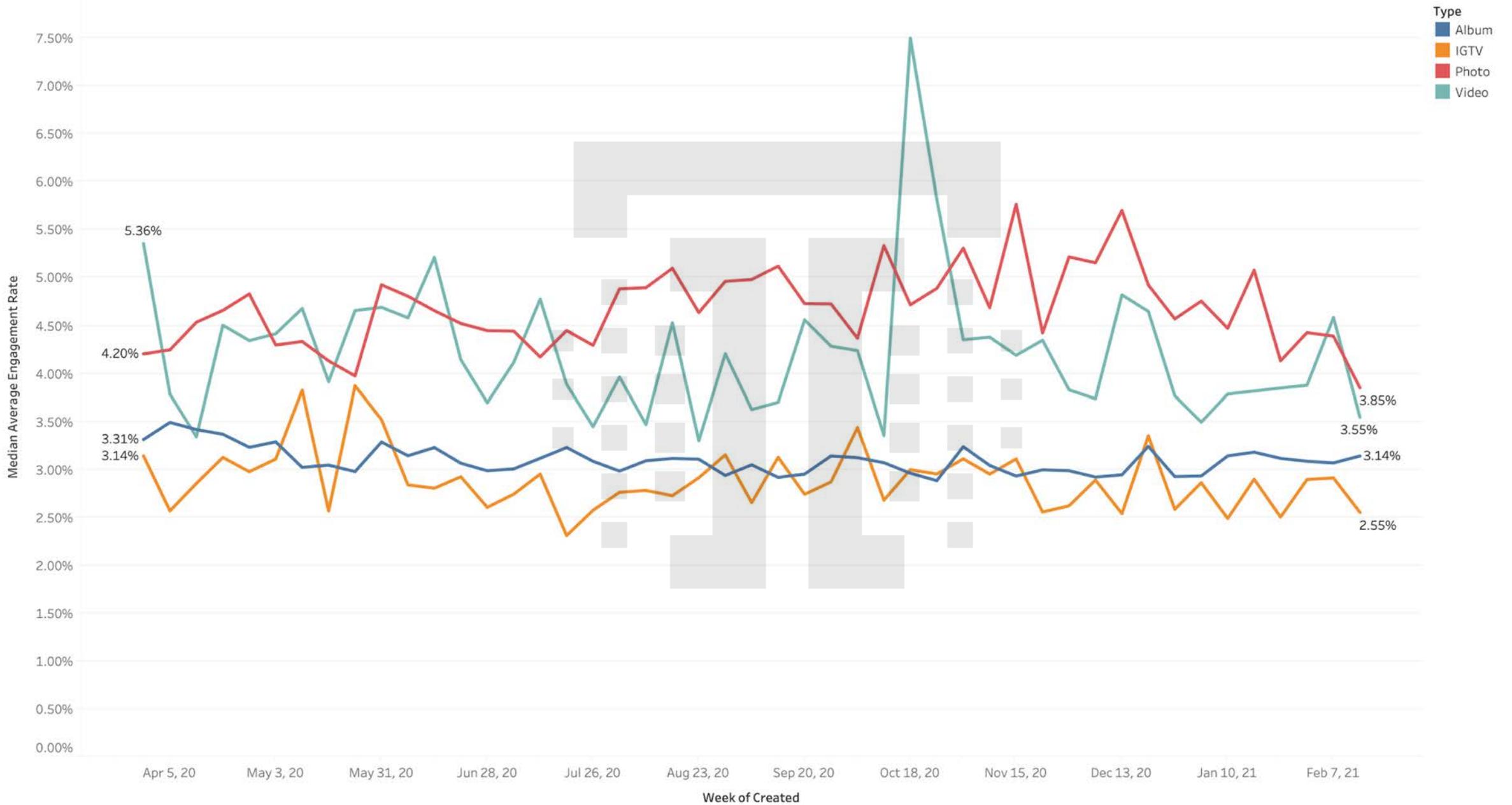


# BRAND POST CONTENT TYPE PERFORMANCE

# All Brand Median Engagement Rates by Content Type



# Top 10% Brand Median Engagement By Content Type





**Most brands should focus on albums and photos to start.**



**Top brands should  
focus on photos and  
video.**

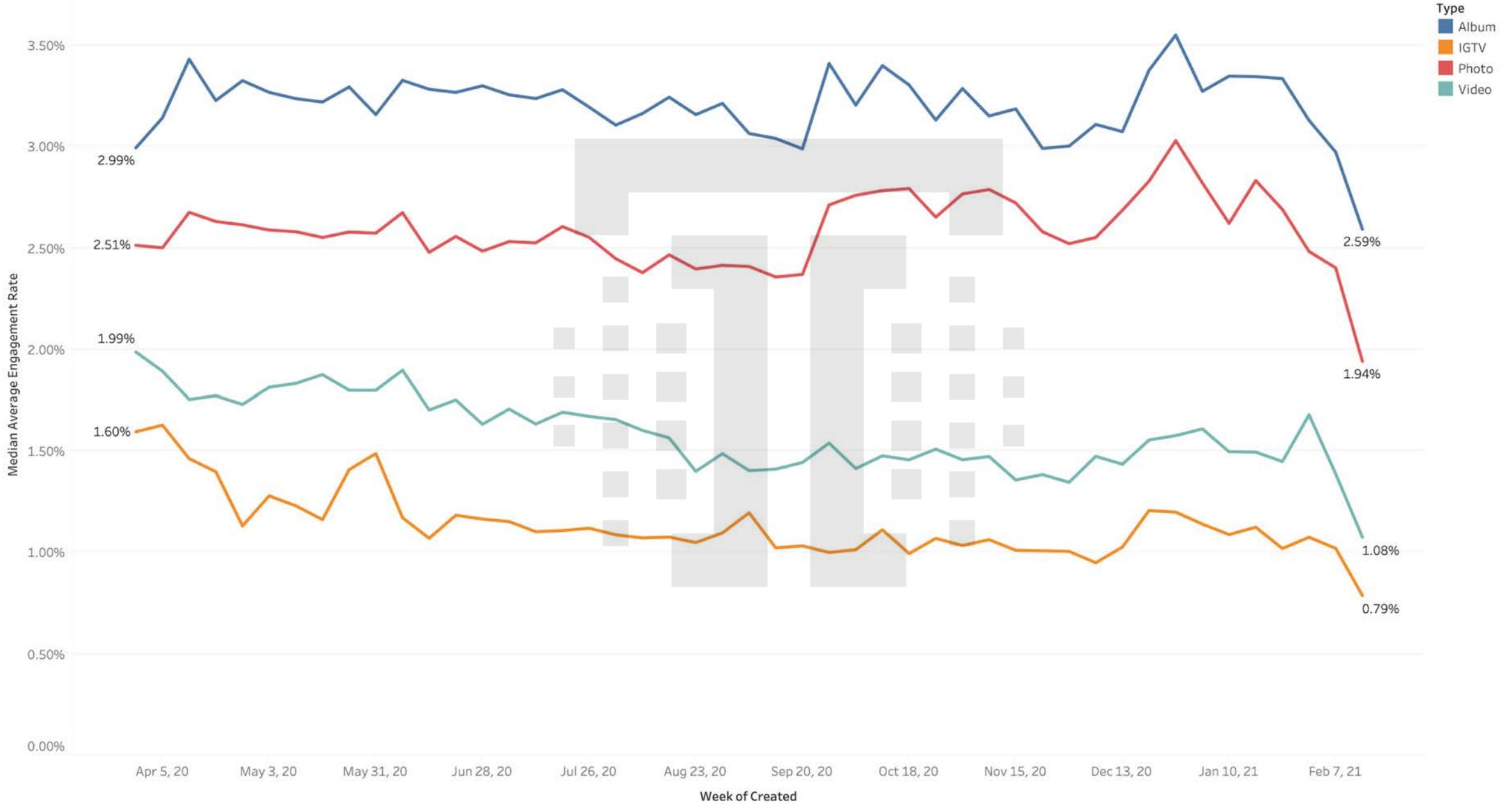


**IGTV is the lowest  
priority for all  
brands.**

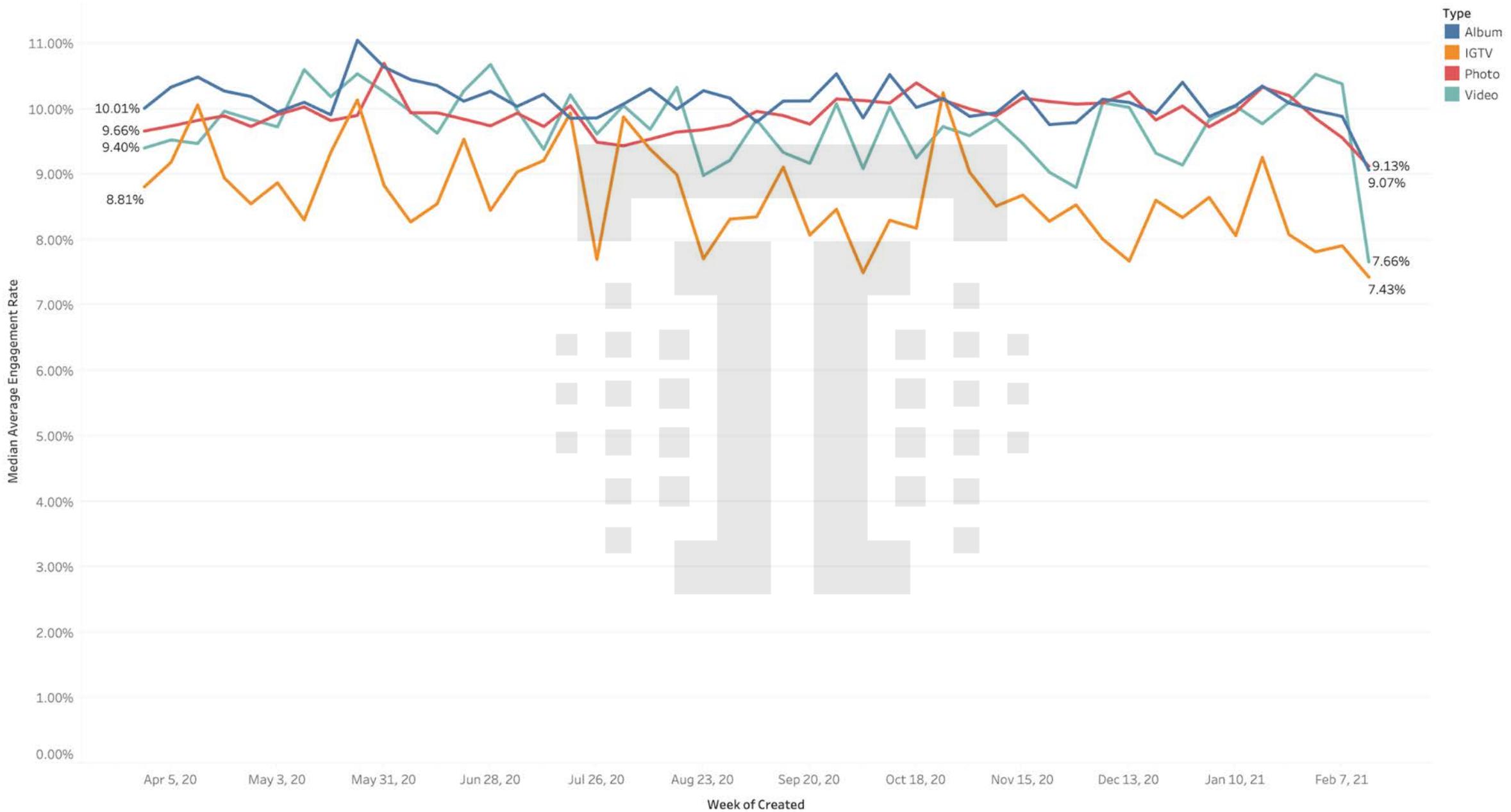


# INFLUENCER POST CONTENT TYPE PERFORMANCE

# All Influencer Median Engagement Rates by Content Type



# Top 10% Influencer Median Engagement By Content Type

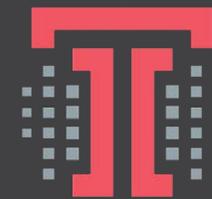




**Influencers should  
focus on albums and  
photos.**

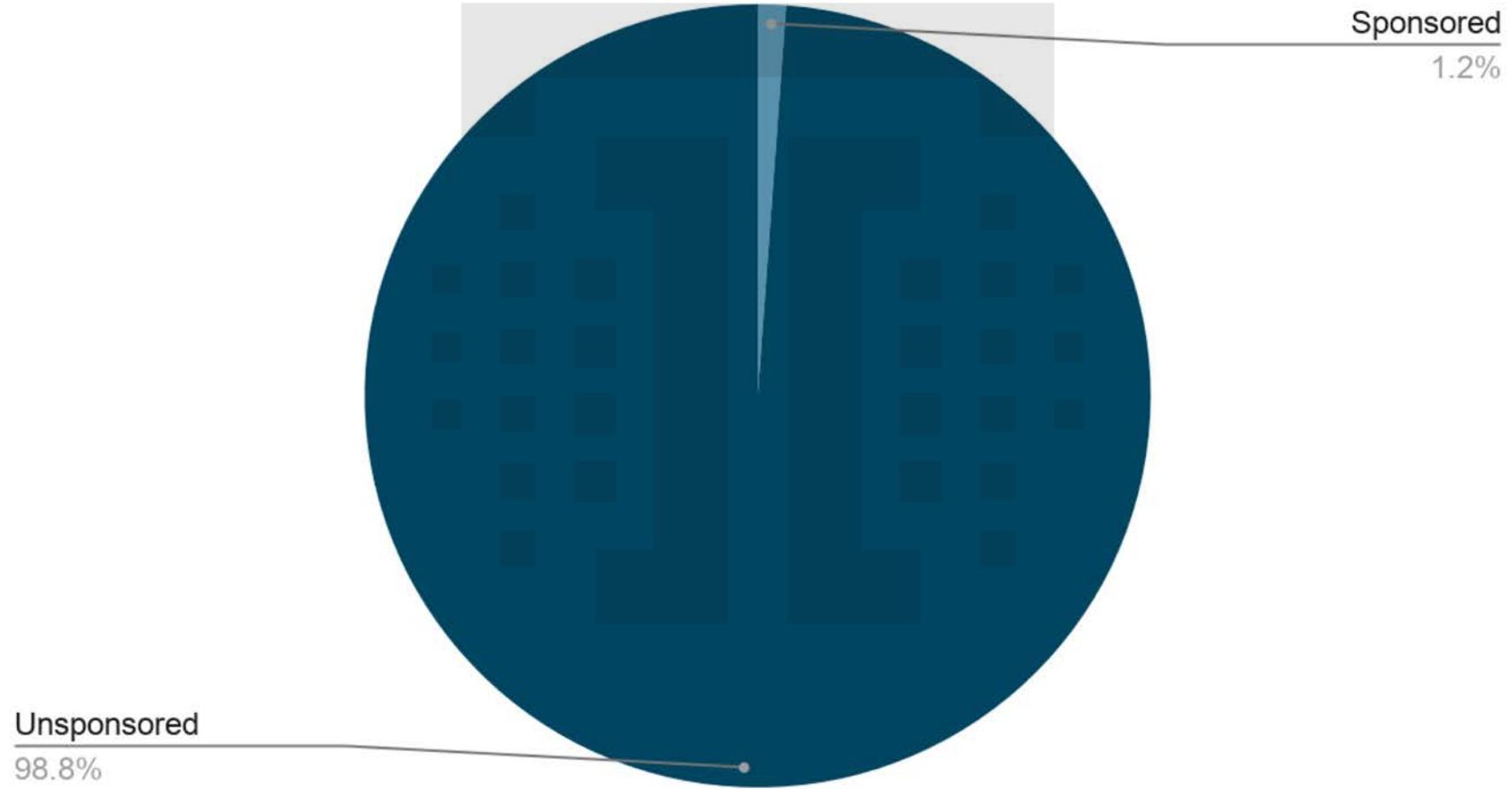


**Top influencers  
should be doing  
everything except  
IGTV.**



**SPONSORED BRAND CONTENT**

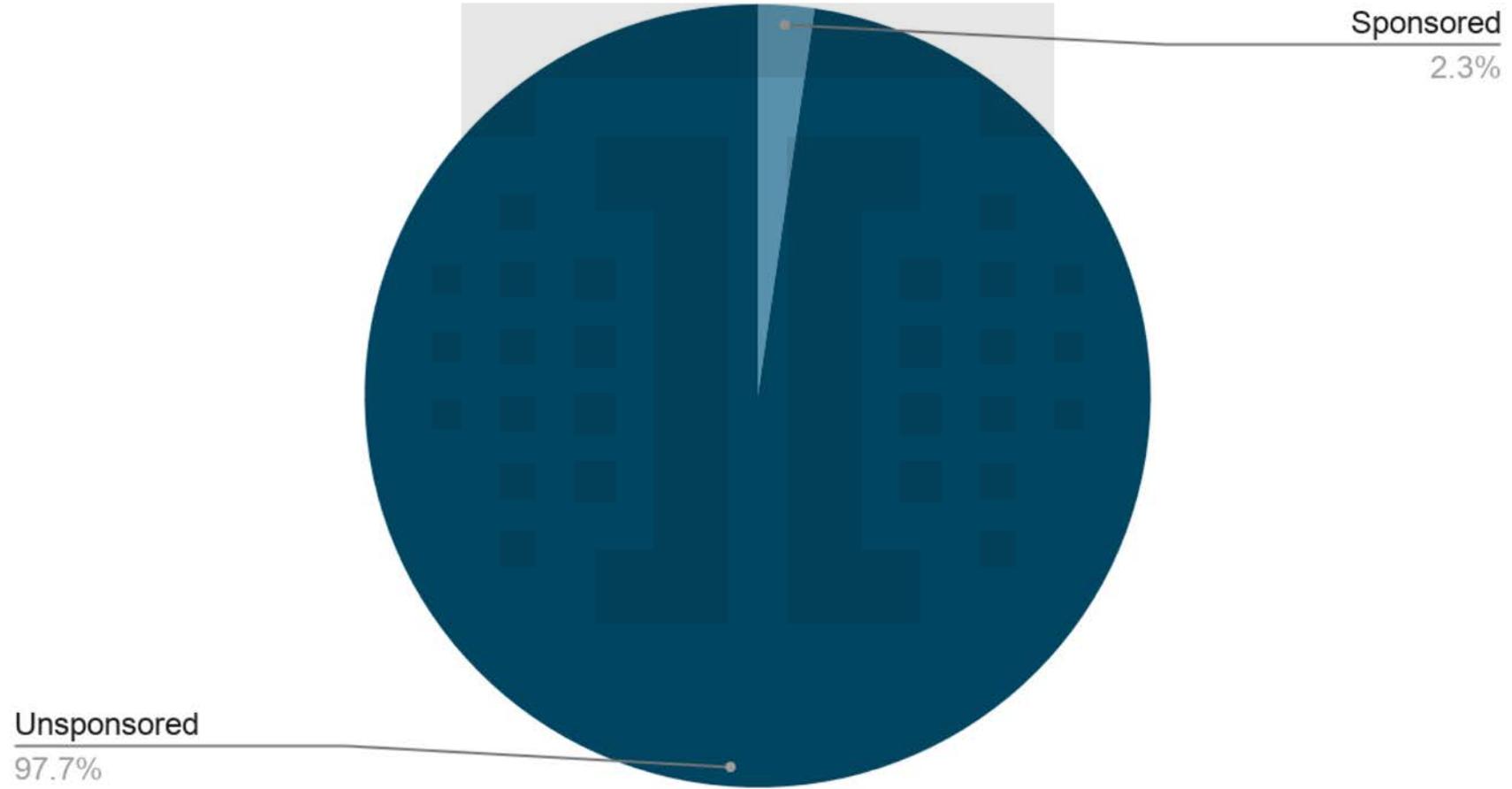
## Sponsored Brand Posts





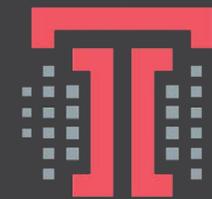
# SPONSORED INFLUENCER CONTENT

## Sponsored Influencer Posts



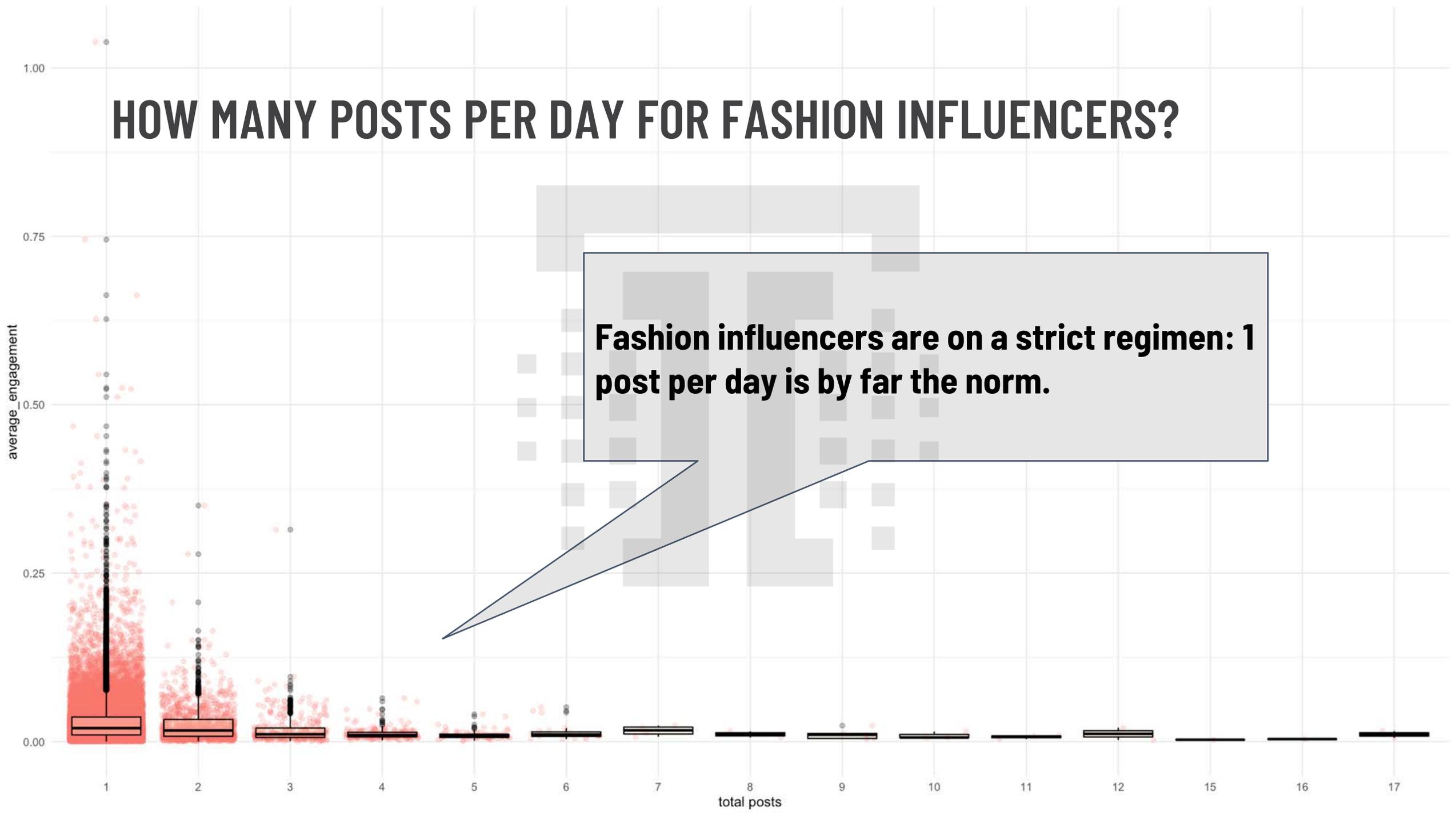


**Influencers tend to use sponsored hashtags twice as often as brands.**



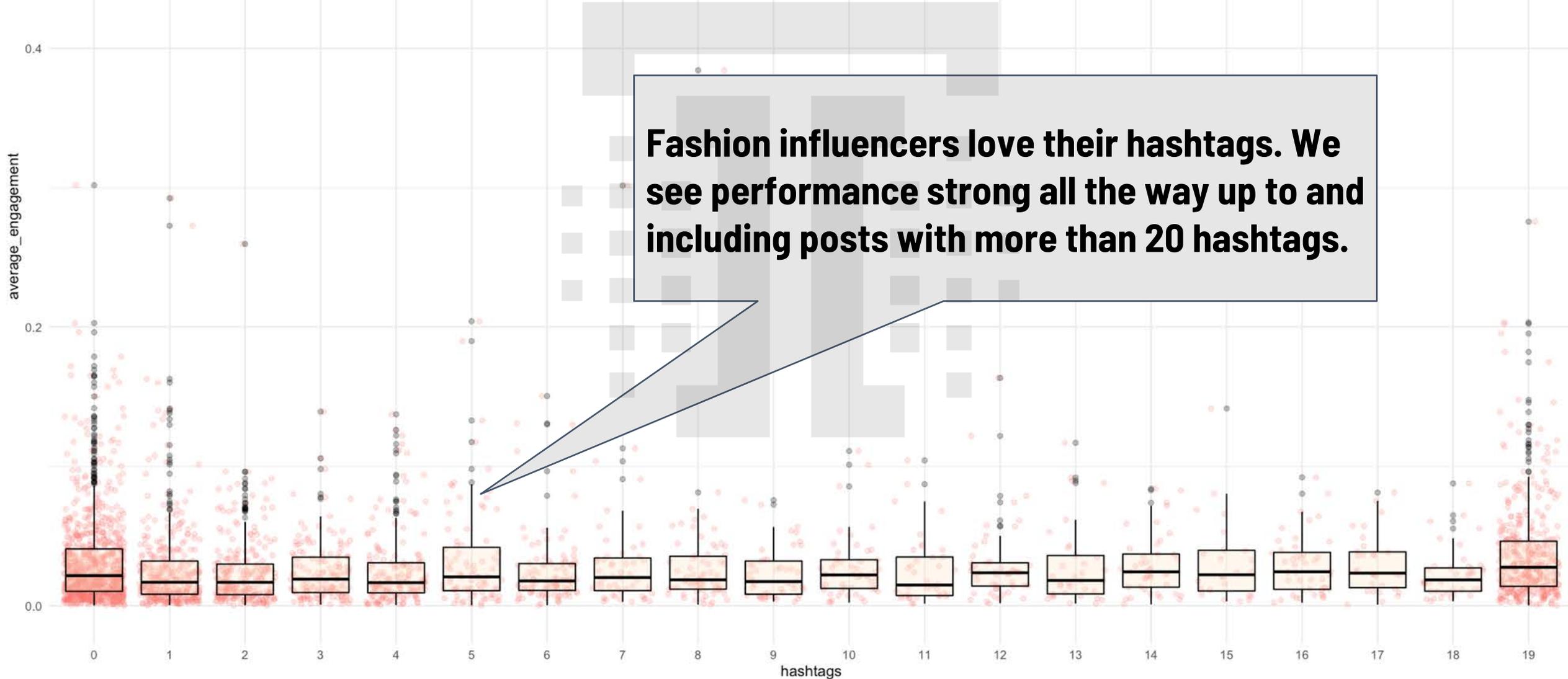
# SLICE OF DATA: FASHION INFLUENCERS

# HOW MANY POSTS PER DAY FOR FASHION INFLUENCERS?

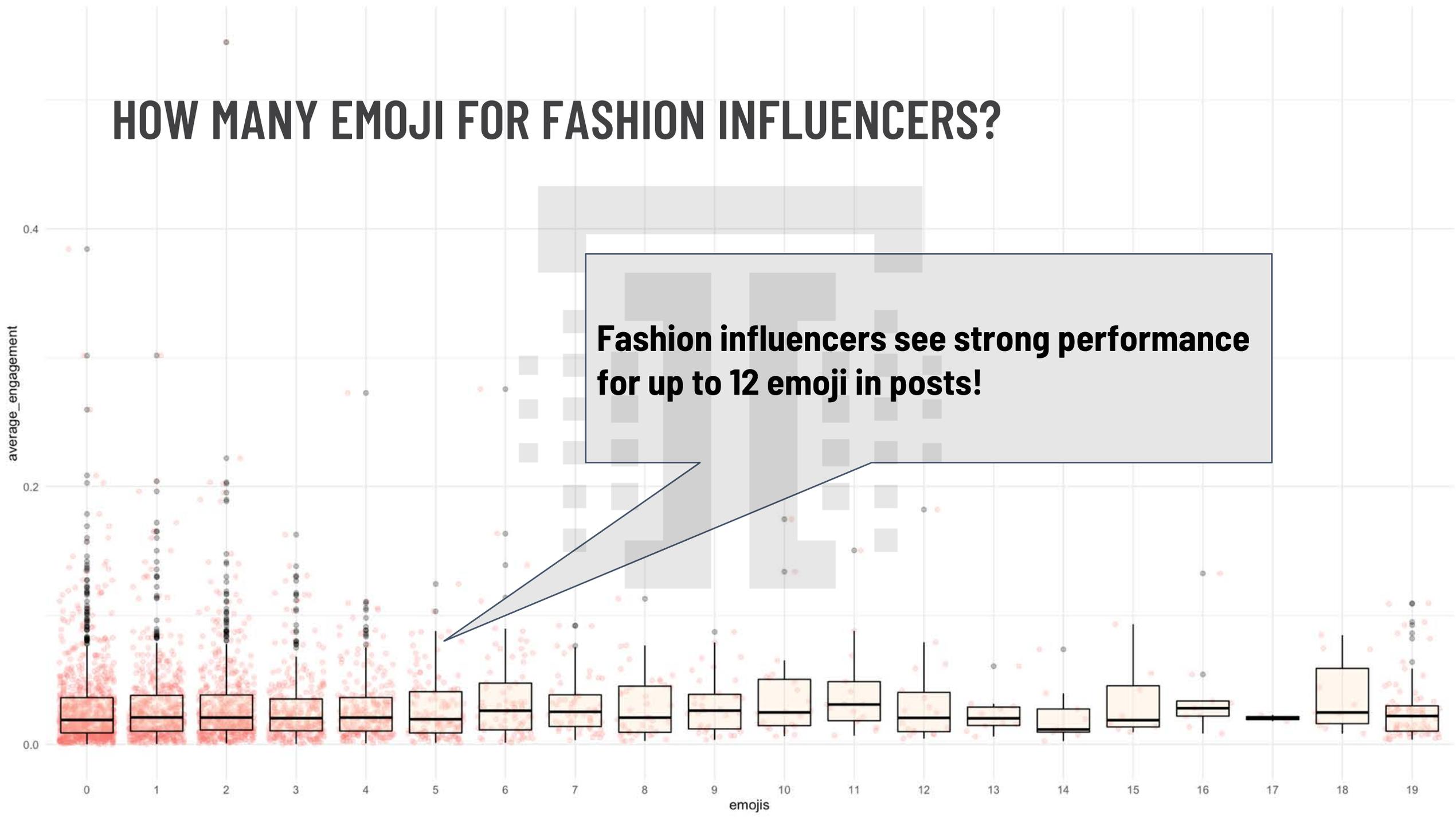


**Fashion influencers are on a strict regimen: 1 post per day is by far the norm.**

# HOW MANY HASHTAGS FOR FASHION INFLUENCERS?

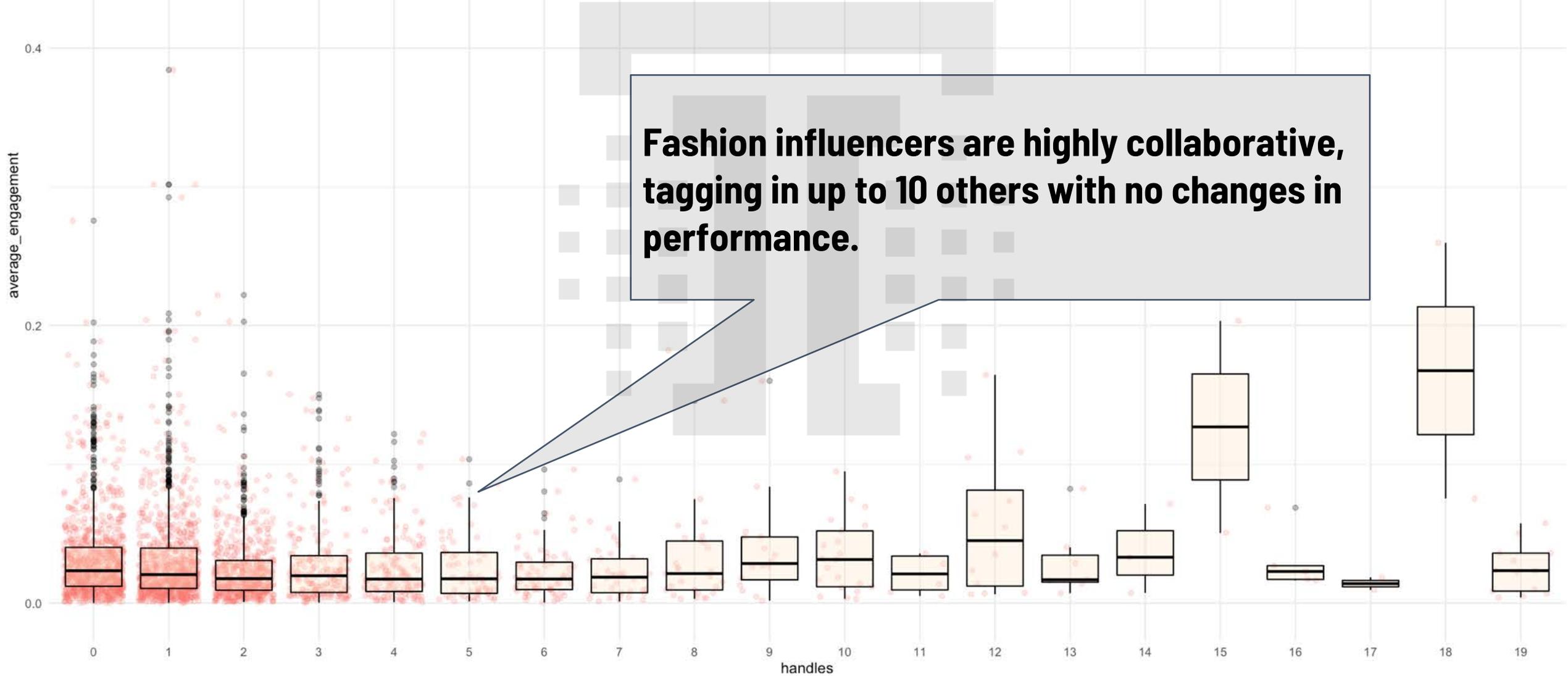


# HOW MANY EMOJI FOR FASHION INFLUENCERS?



**Fashion influencers see strong performance for up to 12 emoji in posts!**

# HOW MANY HANDLES FOR FASHION INFLUENCERS?





**Performance varies significantly within a vertical compared to the whole.**



# KEY CONCLUSIONS



**Brands should be examining influencers more carefully to determine what works.**



**The difference between top performers and everyone is more pronounced with influencers than brands.**



**Performance WILL vary in niches and verticals, so use these benchmarks as guidelines, not ironclad rules - and experiment to prove causation.**



**Got questions? Want to commission custom research for your industry or vertical?**

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# DISCLOSURES AND LIMITATIONS

The data in this study is from April 1, 2020 onwards. We chose April 1 as the start of the pandemic dataset because substantial portions of the world were in lockdown by April 1, and that more accurately reflects the world we live in now.

Total brand posts: 1,289,690,817 posts, 4,008 unique handles  
Total influencer posts: 1,282,389 posts, 9,735 unique handles

Due to API limitations, Reels and Stories are not included in the dataset, nor are they generally available in any form. The data included in this study are carousels/albums, photos, videos, and IGTV.

Brands and influencers were chosen by Facebook and augmented by Trust Insights.

Engagement is defined as (likes + comments)/size at posting.

An influencer is an individual person with at least 1,000 followers. Individual persons are identified by first name probability estimation (i.e. Cardi, Barack, Vanessa are inferred as proper names, NBA, NFL, See's Candies are not)

A brand is a non-person entity with at least 1,000 followers.

Trust Insights is the sole sponsor of this research and declares no competing interests. No compensation has been given or received for this research.