

2021 Social Media Industry Benchmark Report

Industry benchmarks across the most important social media metrics

Introduction

We're back with a supercharged version of our annual Social Media Industry Benchmark Report. We surveyed thousands of the most engaging brands and companies on social to analyze what's really making them so successful.

The Benchmarks:

Our biggest report ever features the most important metrics from **2020 across 14 top industries:**

- Alcohol
- Fashion
- Financial Services
- Food & Beverage
- Health & Beauty
- Higher Education
- Home Decor
- Hotels & Resorts
- Influencers
- Media
- Nonprofits
- Retail
- Sports Teams
- Tech & Software

This report has everything you need to measure your social media success against your competitors on **Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram** across these 14 major industries. We also feature tons of insights about how social media engagement has changed over the last year for these industries so you can optimize your strategy in 2021. As usual, we have **channel observations, best post types, Instagram and Twitter hashtags, and more.**

Now let's get benchmarking.

Key takeaways



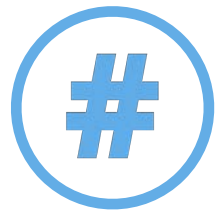
Engagement rates flat on Facebook and Twitter, down on Instagram.

It's a shame to see powerhouse channel Instagram on the decline, but nice to see brands connecting 1:1 more with followers on Twitter.



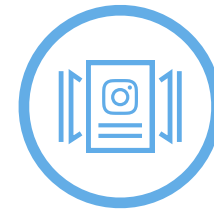
Posting frequency continues to decline.

Brands are posting a little less often on every channel for the second year in a row.



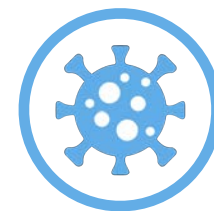
Diversifying hashtags between channels is key.

What works on Instagram might not work on Twitter, so brands should do their research and experiment.



Carousels are king on Instagram.

Brands should look for opportunities to combine photos into carousels. Why? Instagram carousels often get reserved to users who don't engage the first time, earning them more impressions.



COVID was less of a player than one might think.

No industry was immune to the effects of COVID-19 this year, but it didn't lead to disastrous declines for any industry in particular.

Methodology

To spot trends and identify benchmarks, we used Rival IQ to analyze engagement rates, posting frequency, post types, and hashtags on the top three social channels for brands: **Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.**

We define **engagement as measurable interaction on social media posts**, including likes, comments, favorites, retweets, shares, and reactions. **Engagement rate is calculated based on all these interactions divided by total follower count.**



Within this report, we provide a representative sample of organic and boosted posts from national and international companies in each industry by selecting **150 companies at random from each industry in our database of over 200,000 companies.** Companies selected had active presences on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter as of January 2020, and had Facebook fan counts between 25,000 and 1,000,000 and minimum Instagram and Twitter followers of 1,000 as of the same date.

We used **median performance from the companies selected** for each industry to compile the data for this report.

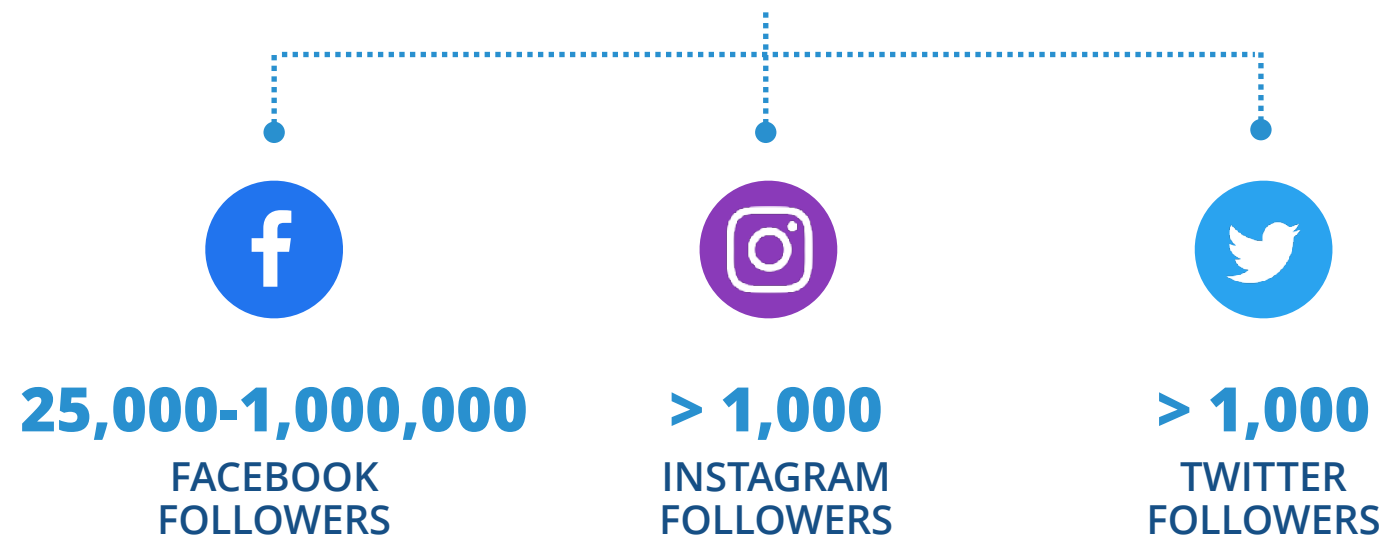
Who's included in this study?

2,100 TOTAL COMPANIES

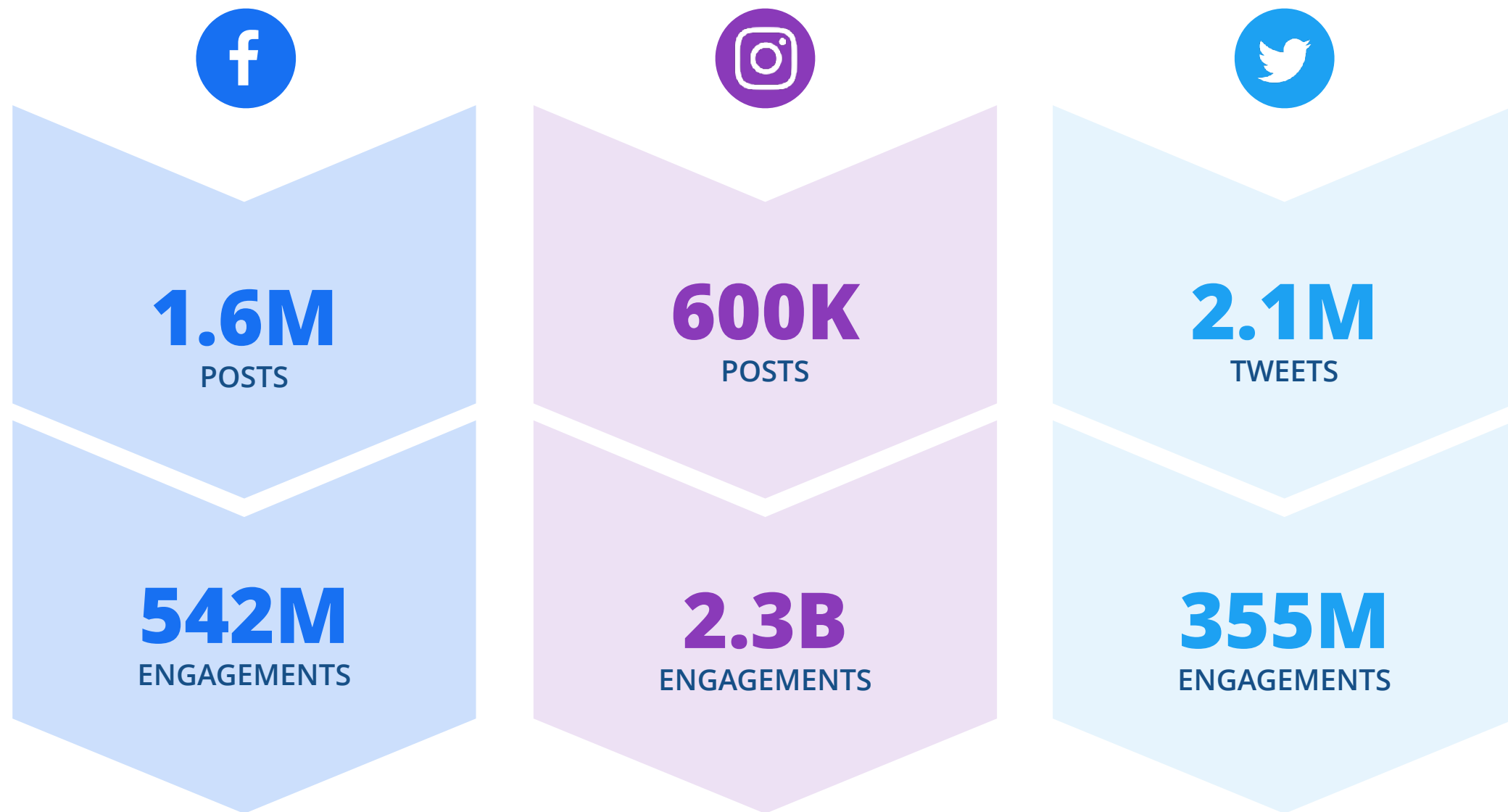
150 FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING 14 INDUSTRIES:



THAT ALSO HAVE



Let's describe the data set



**Rival
IQ**

The Benchmarks



Why do we benchmark?

Social media success is about so much more than getting the most comments or likes: **it's about increasing engagement while also growing or maintaining the percentage of your audience that engages as you expand your audience.**

To us, engagement rate per post is *the metric* because it controls for post volume and audience size and helps marketers understand how they're doing in relation to their competitors.

Why can't you gauge success on likes alone?

Because audience size is hugely important: 1,000 likes makes a huge difference to a brand with 2,000 followers, but is a drop in the bucket to a brand with 100,000 followers.

With that core metric in mind, we include a detailed look at **each industry's engagement rate alongside posting frequency, post media types, hashtags**, and more for a true sense of social performance.

In addition to our social media industry breakdowns, we also compare **all the industries together so you can see how things shake out across the board.**



Quick note: *the truest measure of your social content's resonance would be engagement divided by unique reach (the count of unique people who saw your content) or impressions (the number of times your content was displayed). Unfortunately, due to the Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter API restrictions, we aren't able to include this particular stat.*

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Start measuring your social performance

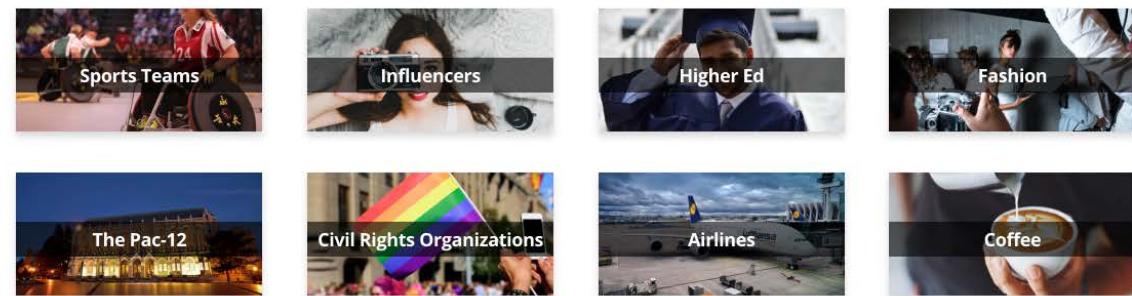
Ready to compare your social media performance live? Check out our [Explore](#) landscapes, where we feature **live social media metrics from a sample of companies from each industry represented in this study**. These landscapes feature hashtag performance, top post types, and so much more on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Or, run a **free [Head-to-Head report](#)** against your biggest rival to see how you measure up to both your competition and against industry benchmarks represented in this study.

(Oh, and if you're a Rival IQ customer or in a [trial](#), you can add those stats directly into your Rival IQ account for even more comparisons.)

Live Social Benchmark Dashboards

See how your social metrics, hashtags, and content measure up against thousands of social profiles in your industry.



Your Head-to-Head Social Snapshot

How do you stack up against your top competitor? Create a free head-to-head snapshot to find out.

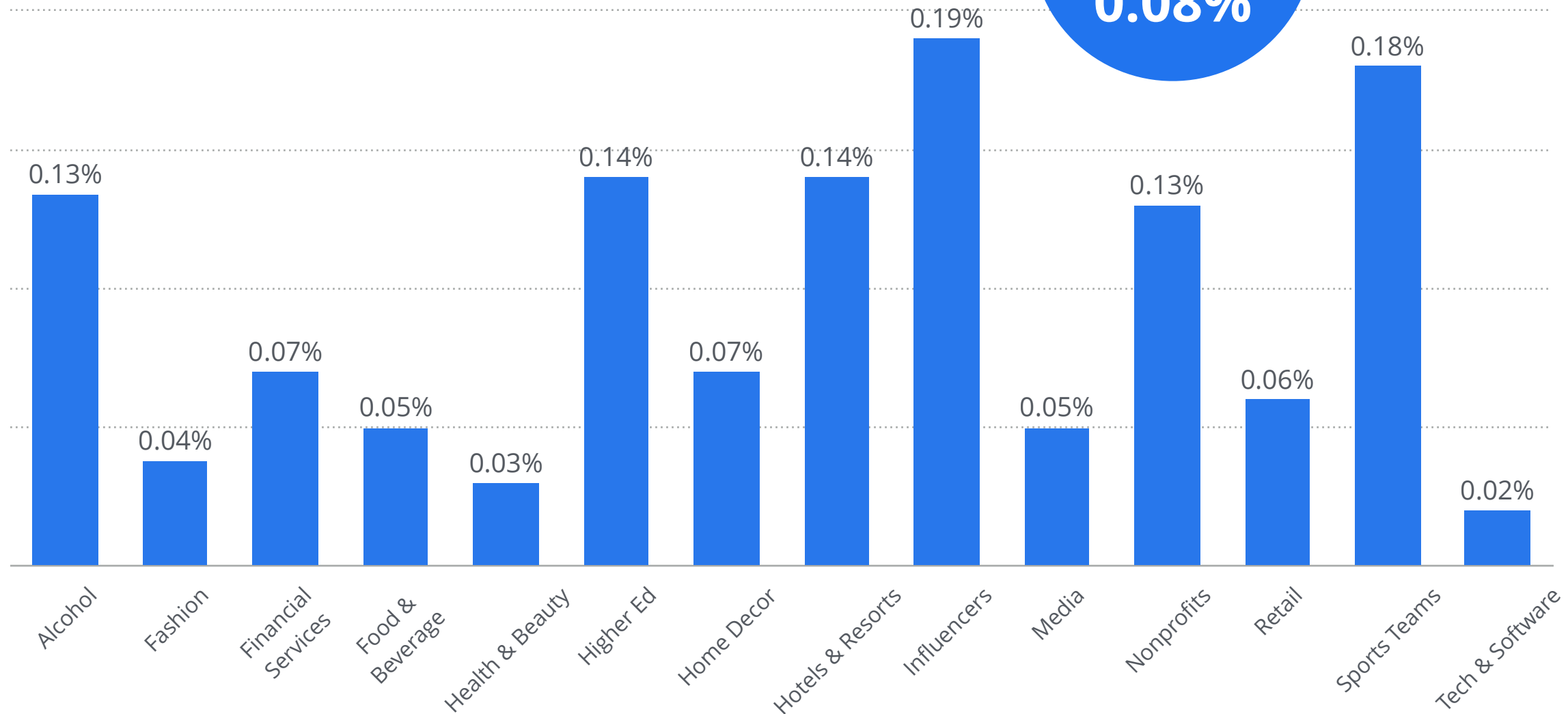


f Facebook engagement



Engagement rate / post (by follower)

The median across all industries is **0.08%**



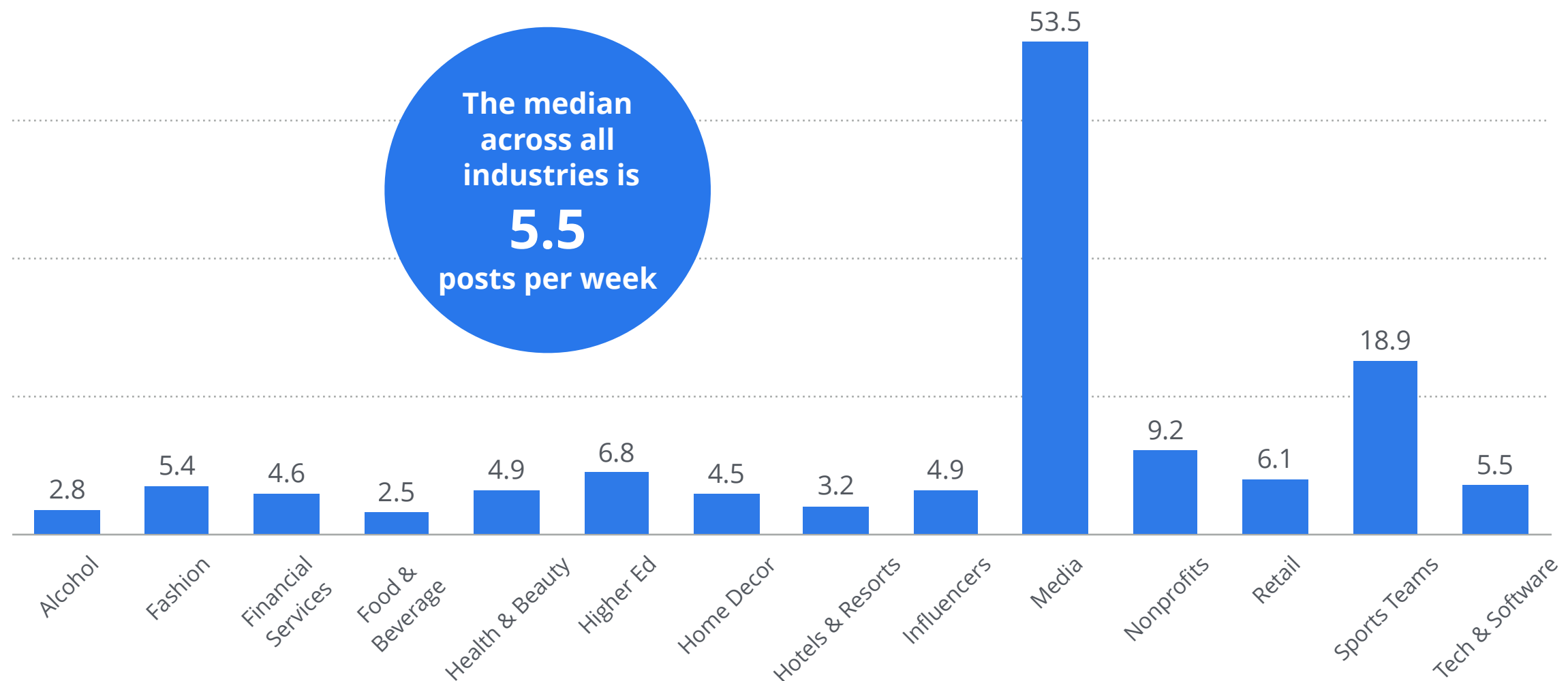
The all-industry Facebook median stayed pretty flat this year, though Alcohol, Hotels & Resorts, Influencers, and Nonprofits were all able to boost their engagement rates.



f Facebook activity



Posts / week

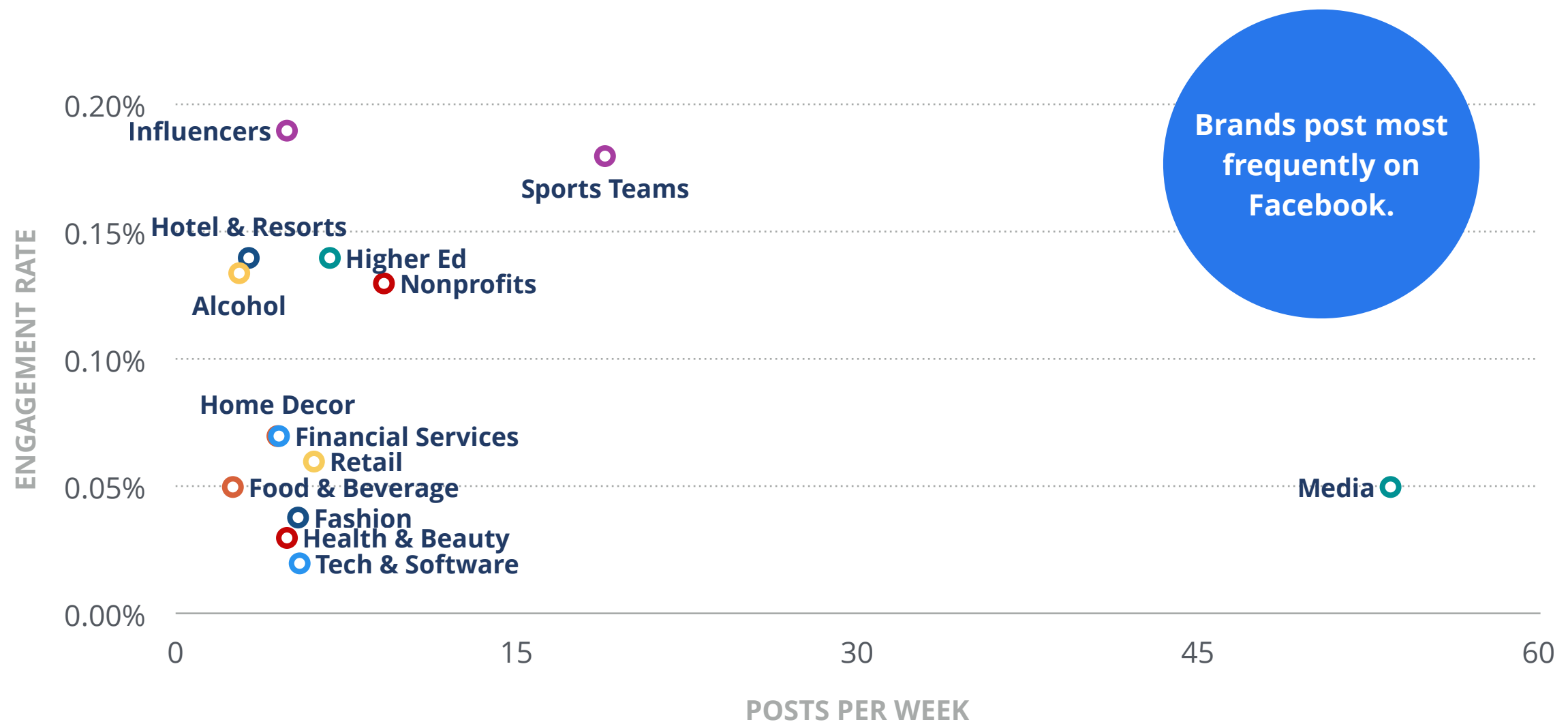


Brands across all industries were consistent posters on Facebook this year, decreasing their posting frequency by 6% over last year.

f Facebook posts vs. engagement



Posts / week vs. engagement rate / post (by follower)



Brands post most frequently on Facebook.



Influencers (infrequent posters) and Sports Teams (frequent posters) were both top performers on Facebook this year, suggesting there isn't a universal posting frequency that'll work for any brand.

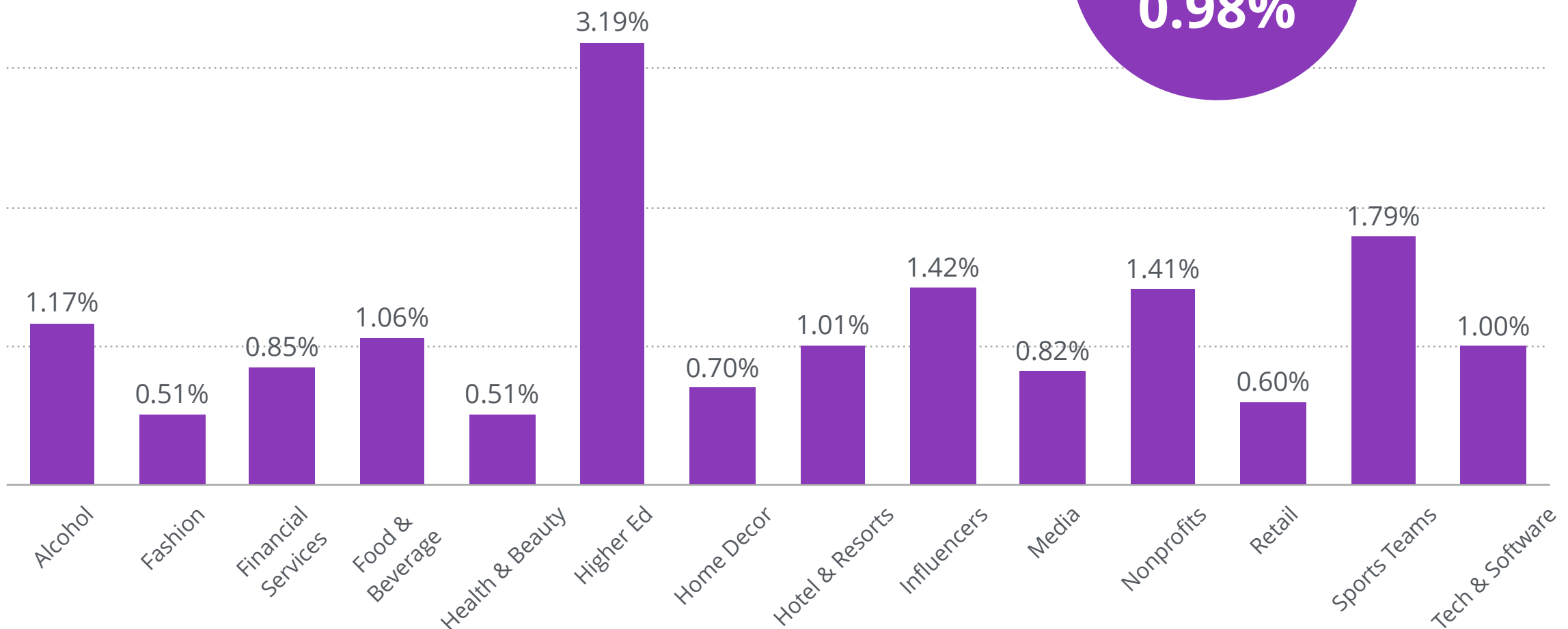


Instagram engagement



Engagement rate / post (by follower)

The median across all industries is **0.98%**



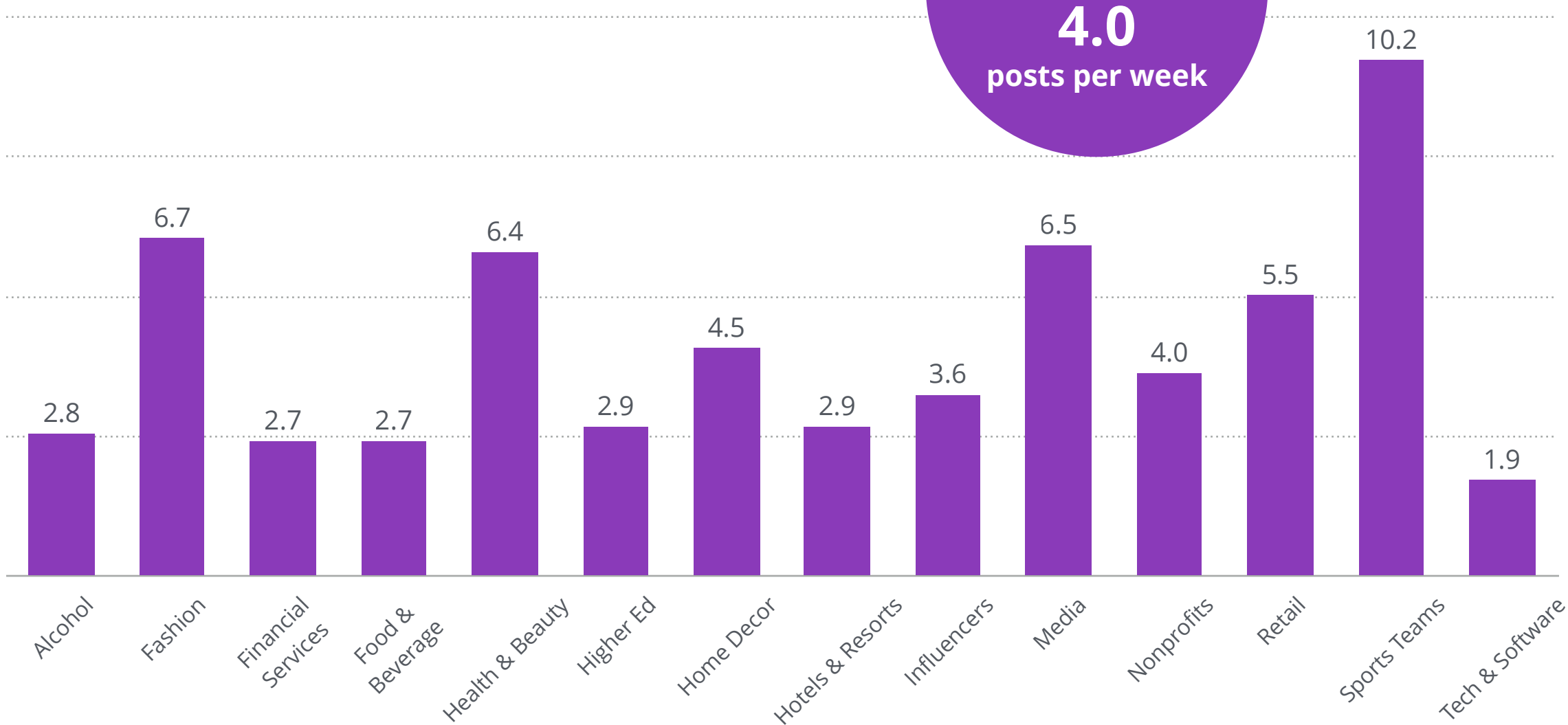
Instagram engagement rates fell about 25% this year. Industries like Higher Ed and Sports Teams still managed to come out on top.

Instagram activity



Posts / week

The median across all industries is **4.0** posts per week



The median posting frequency across all industries declined by just 8% on Instagram this year, suggesting brands are keeping up posting on this channel.

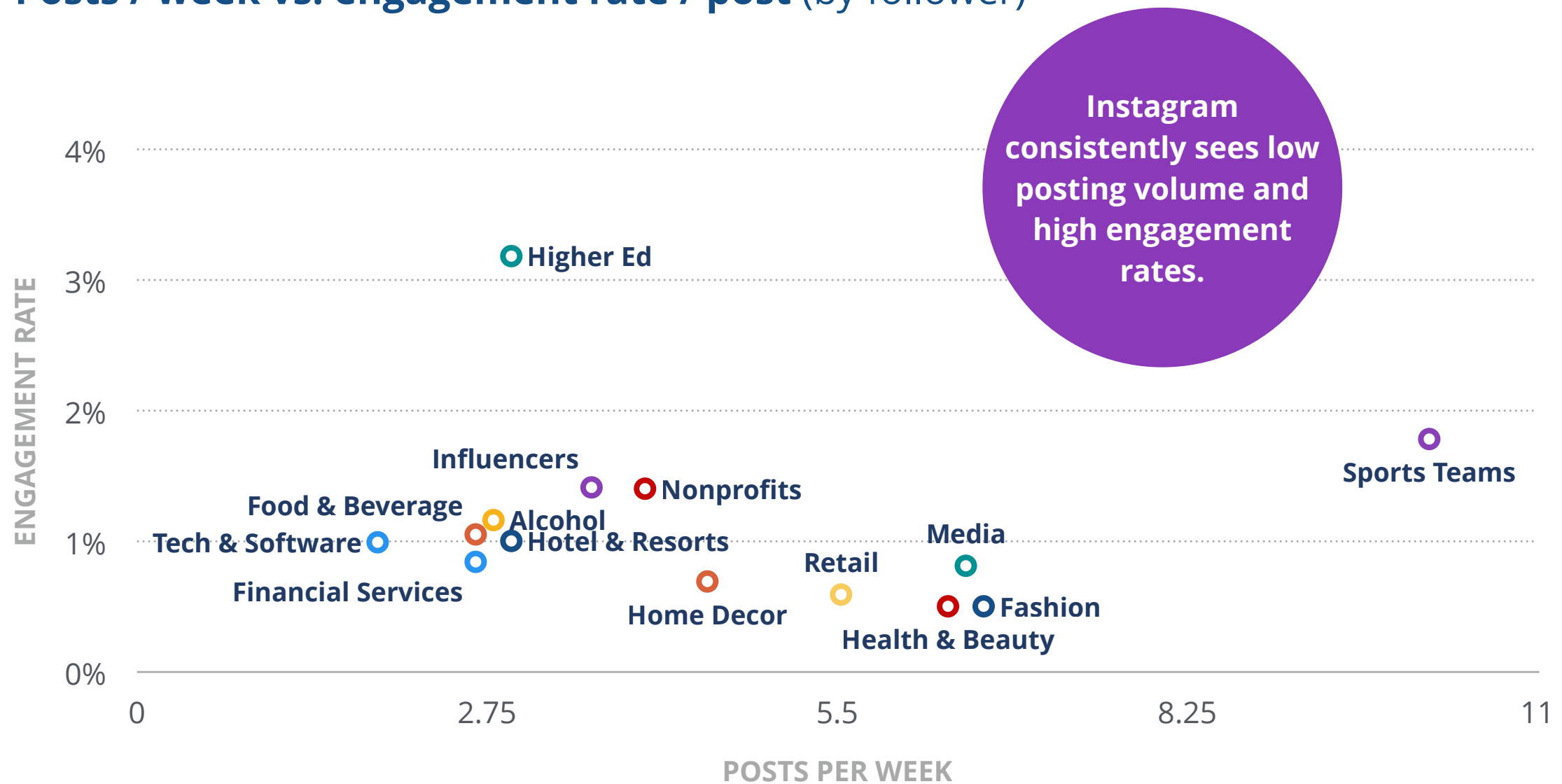




Instagram posts vs. engagement



Posts / week vs. engagement rate / post (by follower)



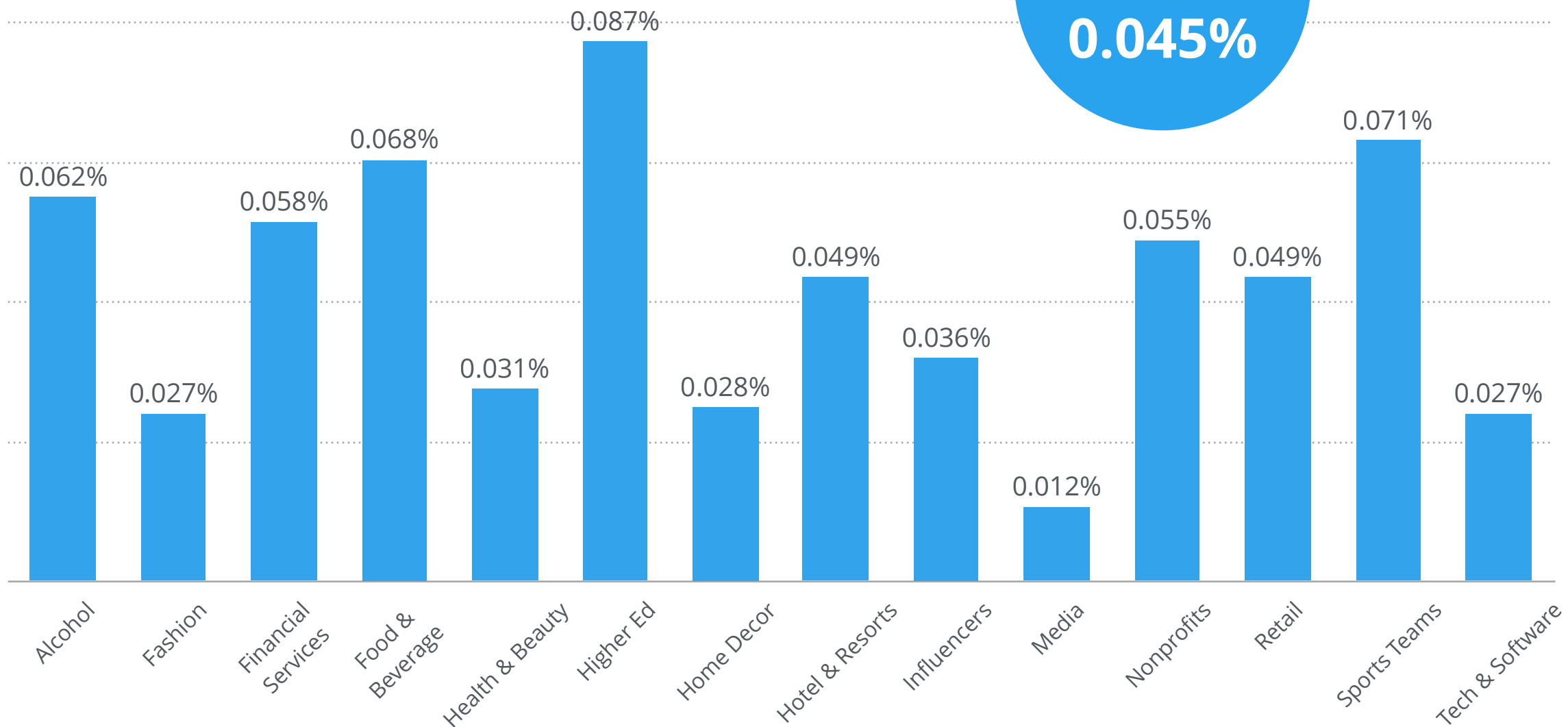
Higher Ed was the clear engagement winner on Instagram despite below-median posting frequency, suggesting more isn't always better on Instagram (though second-place Sports Teams might beg to differ).

Twitter engagement

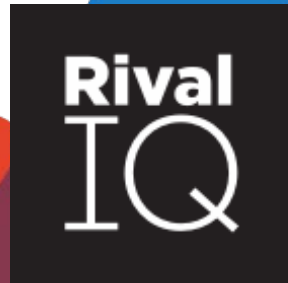


Engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

The median across all industries is **0.045%**



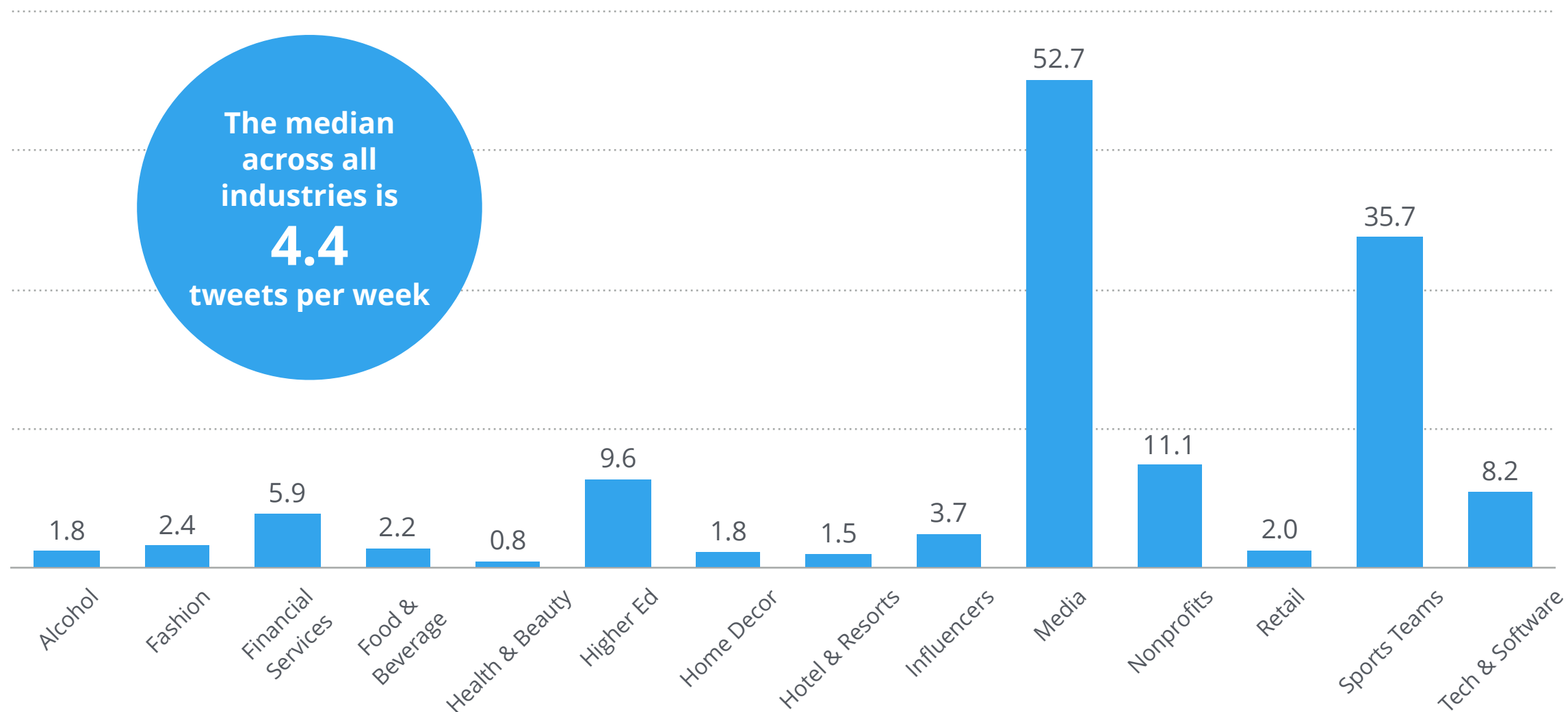
Industries like Hotels & Resorts, Media, Retail, and Tech & Software were able to increase their Twitter engagement rates.



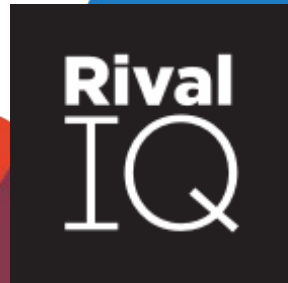
Twitter activity



Tweets / week



Tweeting frequency declined by about 20% this year, and Media and Sports Teams tweeted more than all the rest of the industries combined on Twitter.

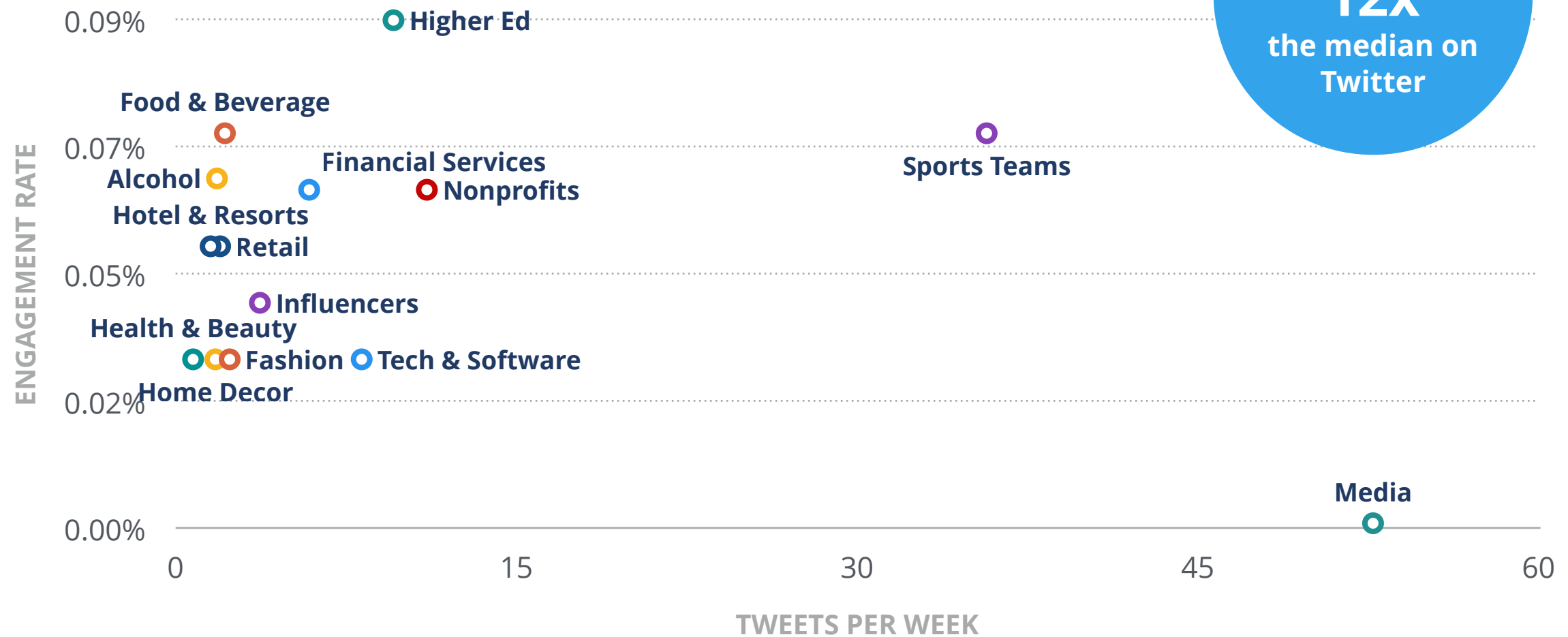




Twitter tweets vs. engagement



Tweets / week vs. engagement rate / tweet (by follower)



Media brands publish
12x
the median on
Twitter



Frequent tweeters Higher Ed and Sports Teams came out ahead on Twitter this year, but last-place Media showed other industries what happens with too much of a good thing.





INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Alcohol



ALCOHOL Overview

Alcohol Raises A Glass on Twitter

Alcohol brands won the bronze on Twitter but were middle-of-the-road on Facebook and Instagram.

A few ways Alcohol brands can keep up the pace:

- Photos are the way to your followers' hearts on Facebook and Instagram, but try changing it up on Twitter with more videos.
- Giveaways were a clear winner for Alcohol brands this year, so don't be afraid to offer more contests across all channels next year.



A few examples
from Alcohol brands



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

2.8

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.13%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

2.8

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.17%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

1.8

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.062%

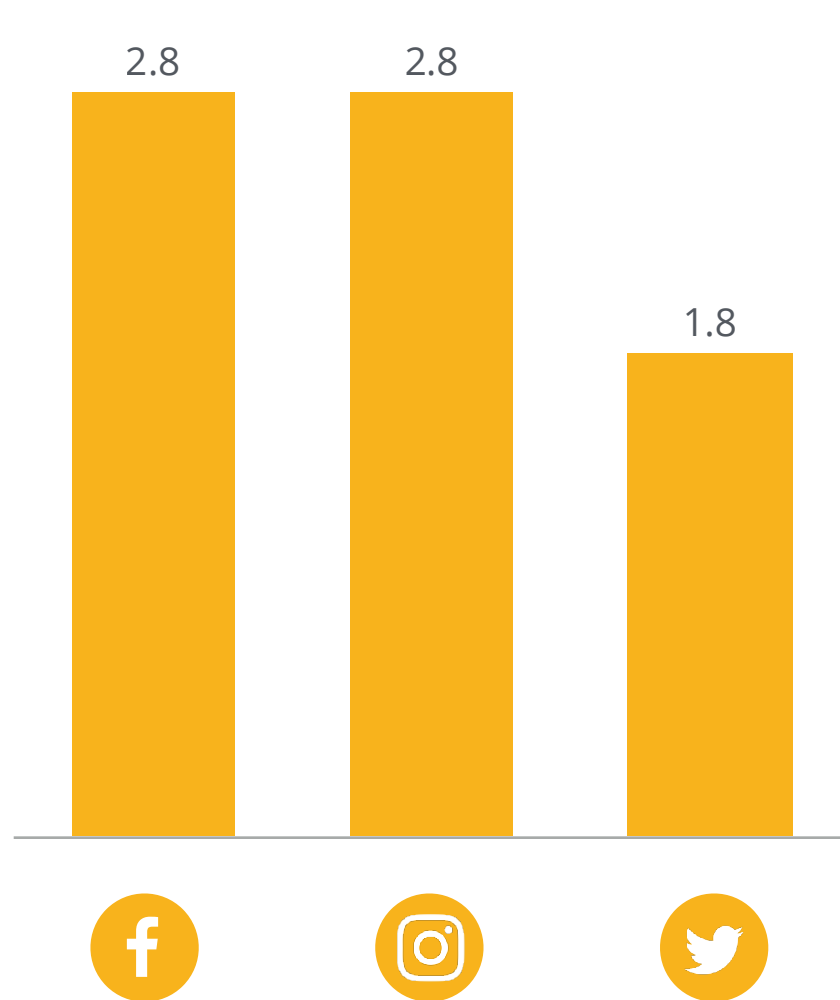
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

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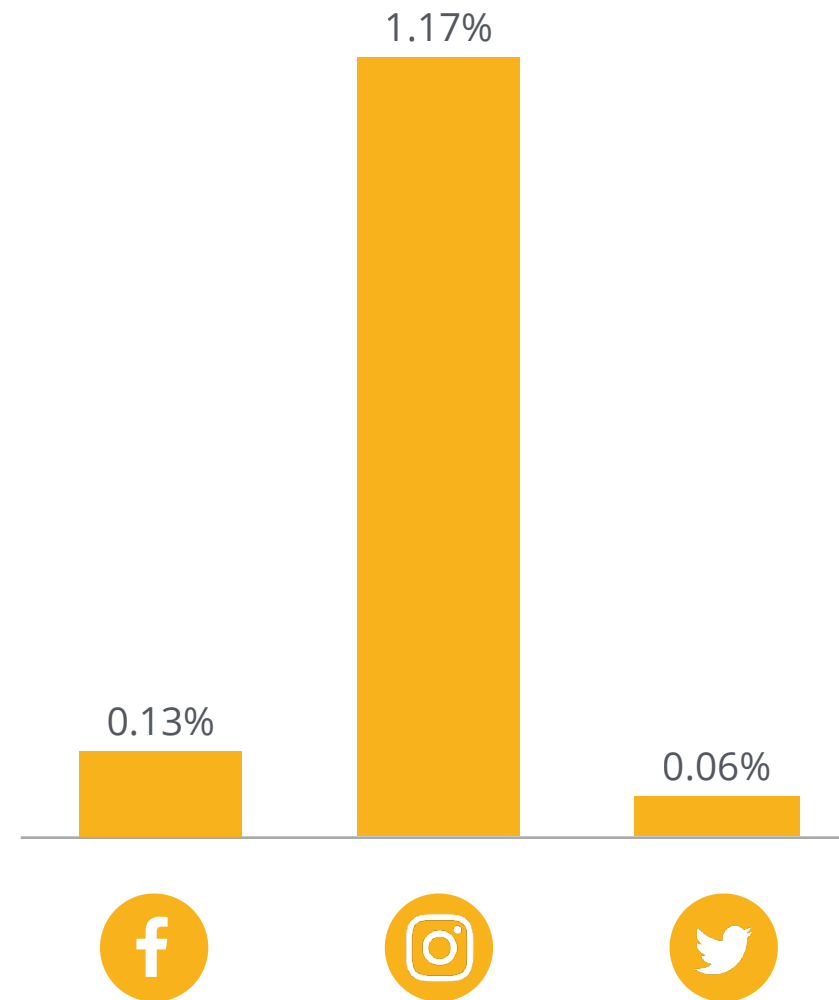
ALCOHOL

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

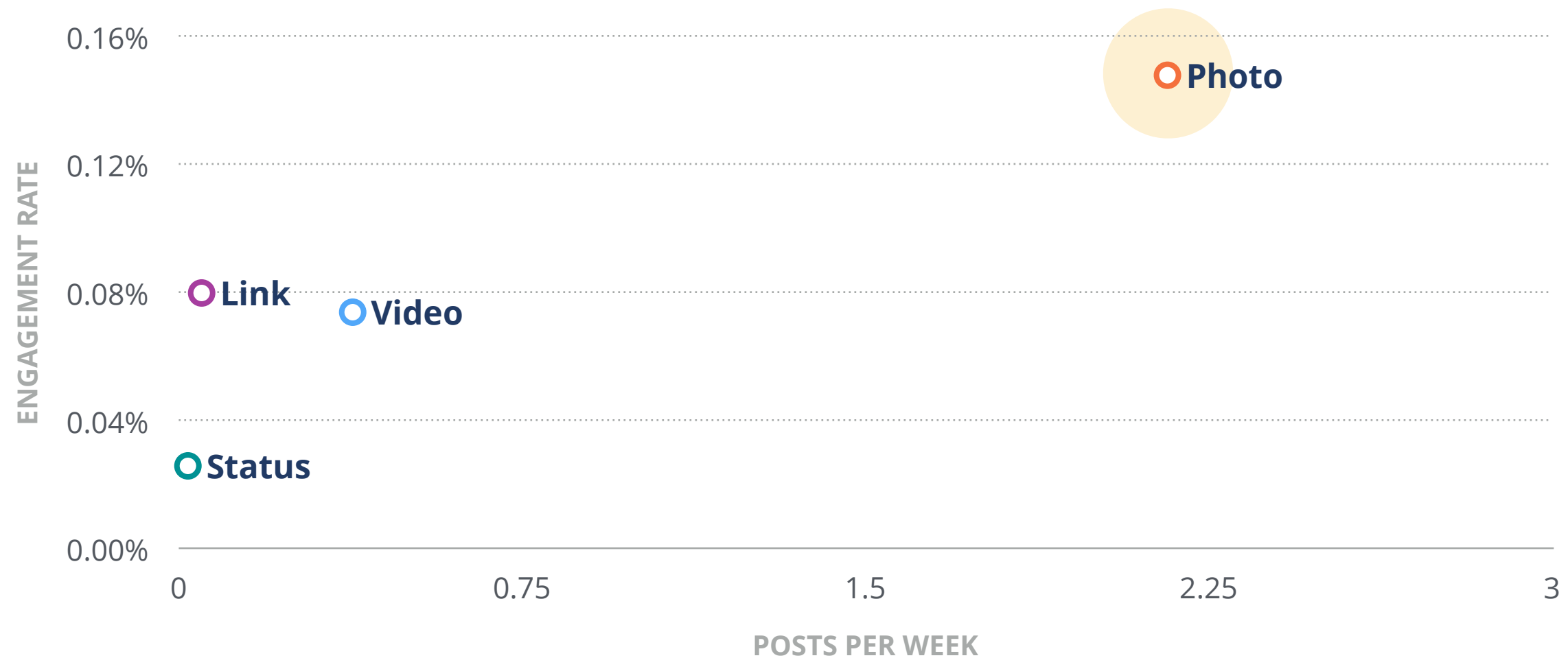


As with all our industries, Alcohol brands saw the most success on Instagram but still posted pretty consistently across all three channels. With 10x the engagement on Insta compared to Facebook, consider focusing efforts there.

ALCOHOL

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

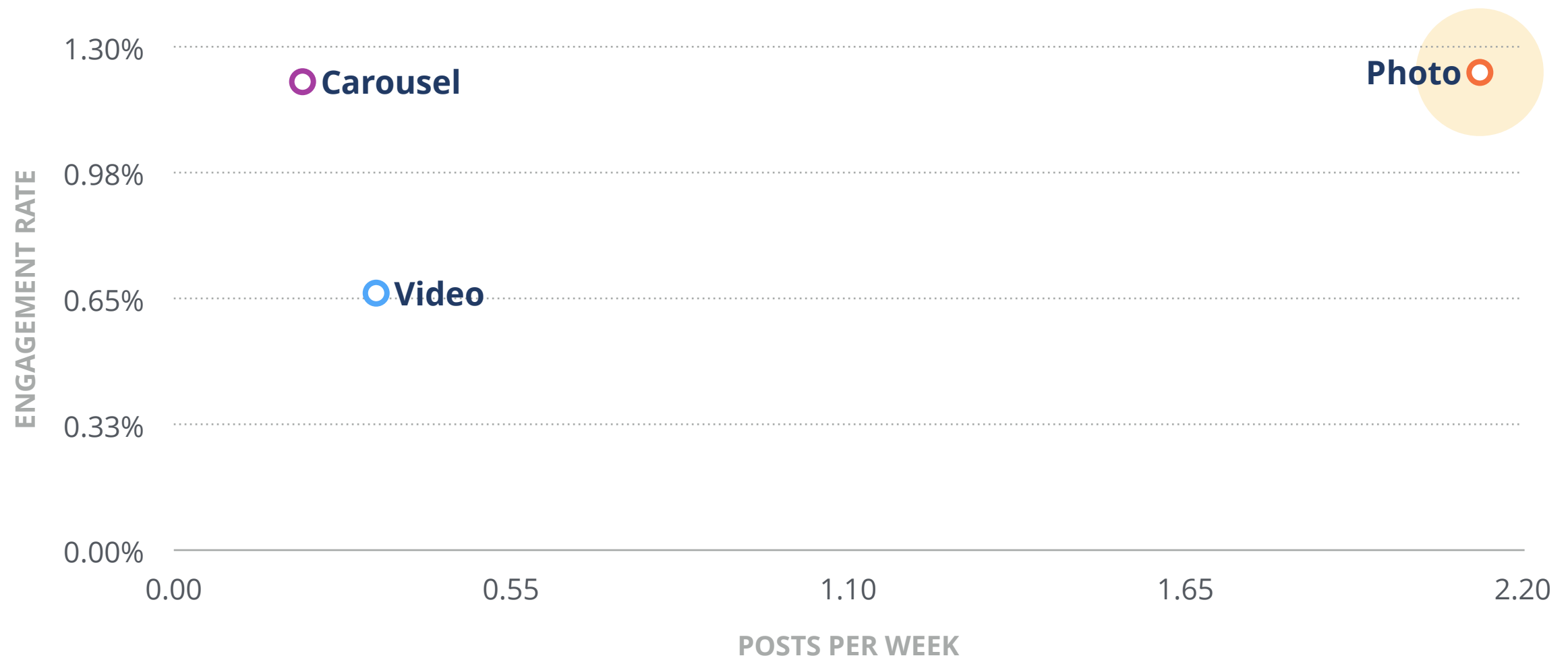


Alcohol brands made the most of photos on Facebook, which perform twice as well as the next leading post type.

ALCOHOL

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

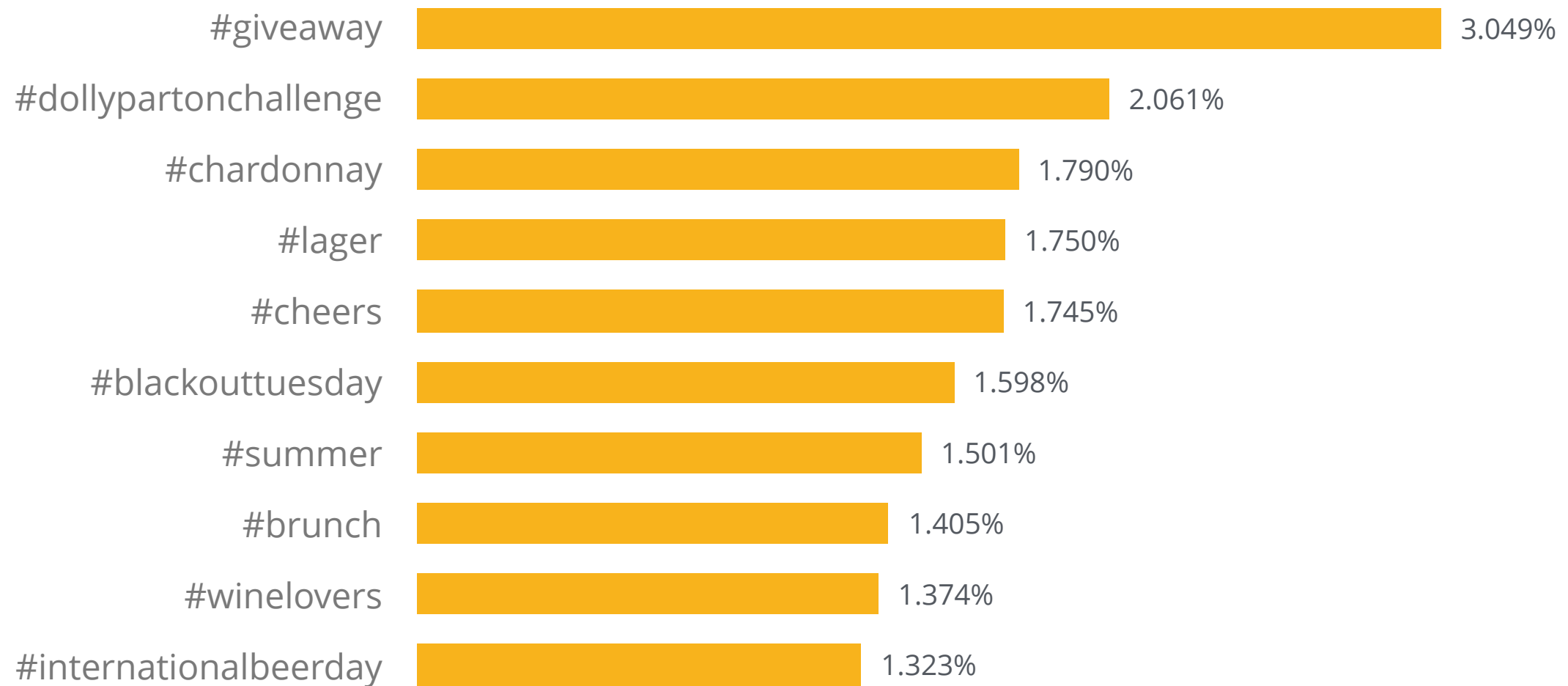


Alcohol brands saw identical engagement rates for photos and carousels on Instagram but were 6x as likely to post photos. Consider combining a few of those single-photo posts into high-performing carousels.

ALCOHOL

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

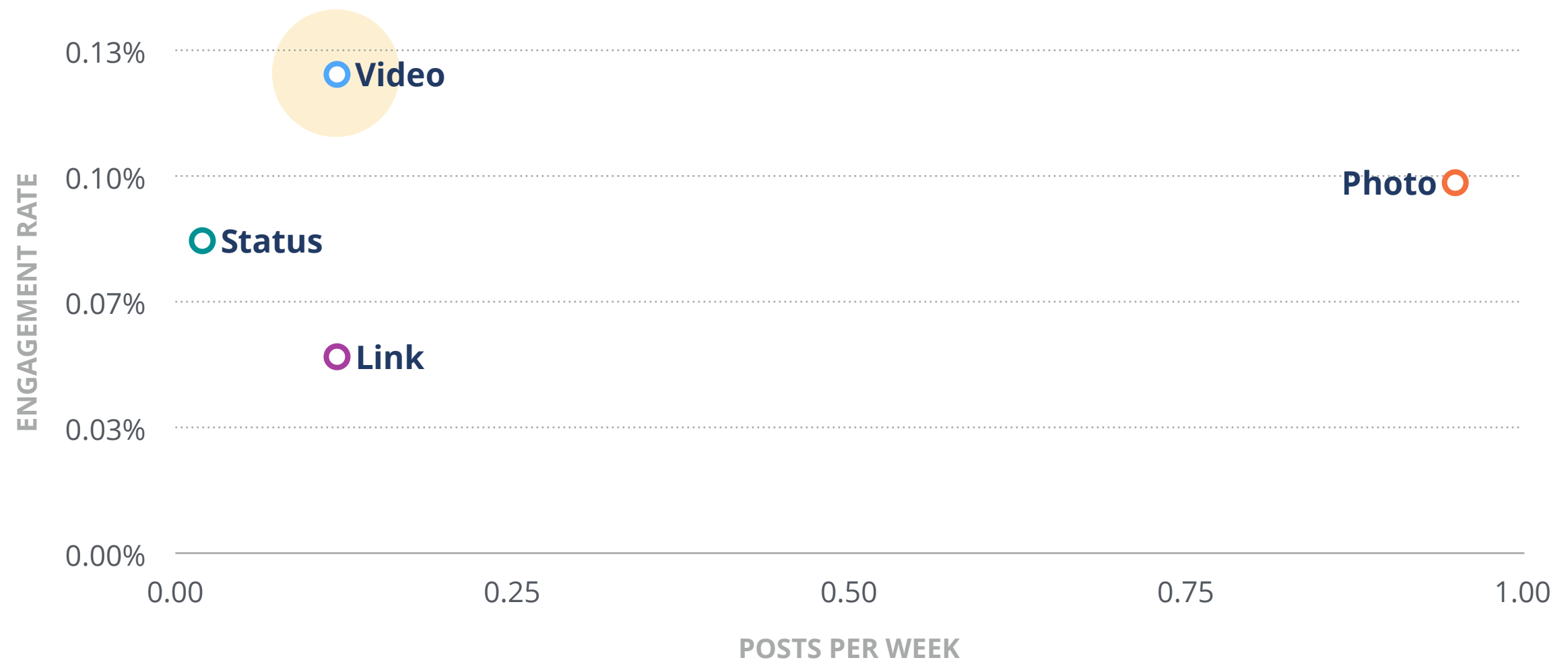


No surprise here that posts featuring a #giveaway hashtag performed 50% better than the next best hashtag.

ALCOHOL

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

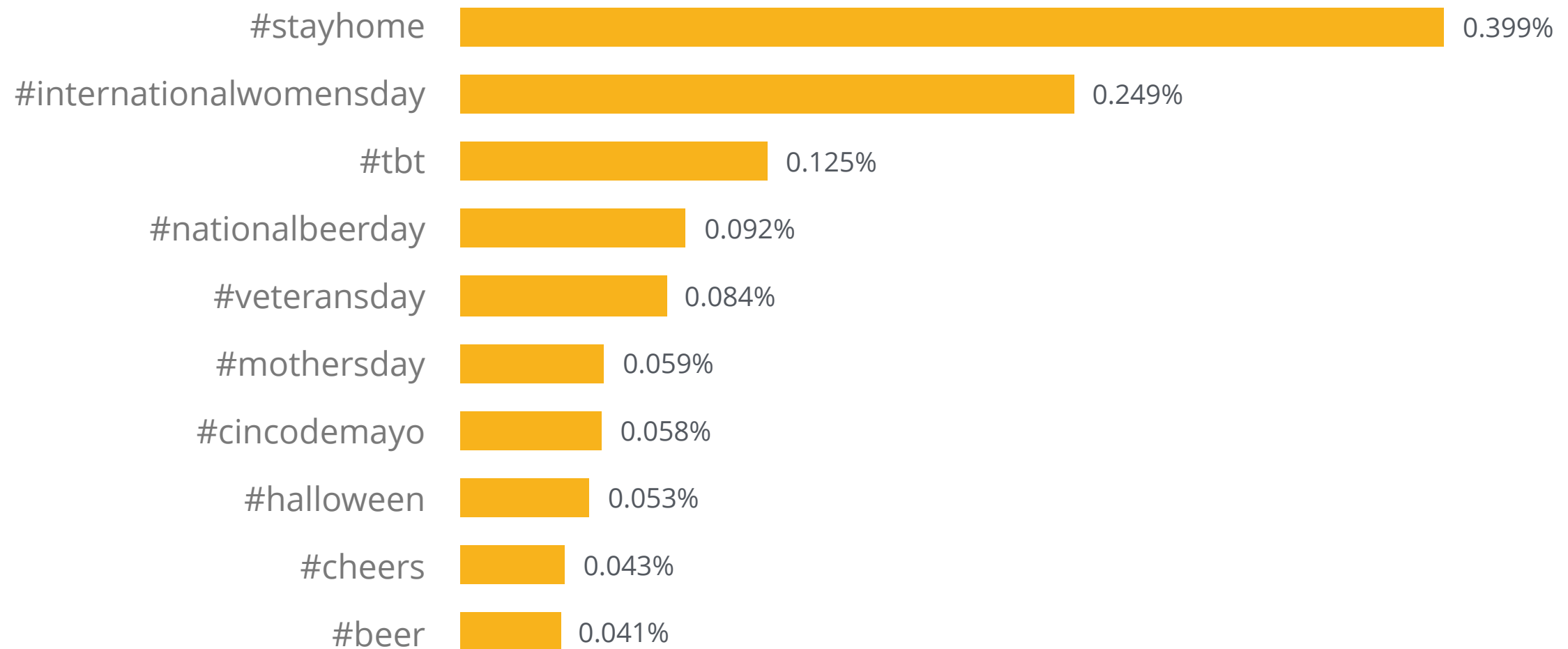


Video topped the Twitter engagement charts this year for alcohol brands, but these brands were 4x as likely to tweet a photo instead of a top-performing video.

ALCOHOL

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



When not reminding their followers to #stayhome, Alcohol brands were all about the holiday hashtags on Twitter this year.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Fashion



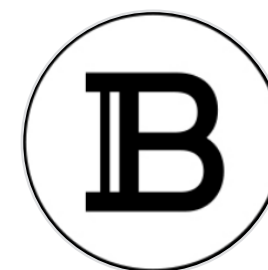
FASHION Overview

Fashion Lagging Across All Three Channels

Fashion brands came in well below median engagement on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter despite regular posting.

Some suggestions for Fashion brands:

- Carousels are key to any brand's Insta success: they outperform photos and videos because Instagram often re-serves them to folks who didn't engage with the post the first time around.
- Shoot for more hashtag research and experimentation on Twitter.



A few examples from Fashion brands



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

5.4

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.04%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

6.7

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

0.51%



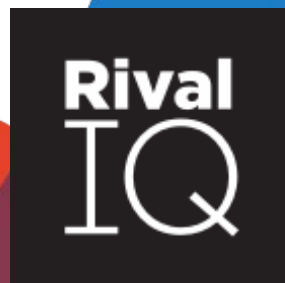
TWEETS
PER WEEK

2.4

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.027%

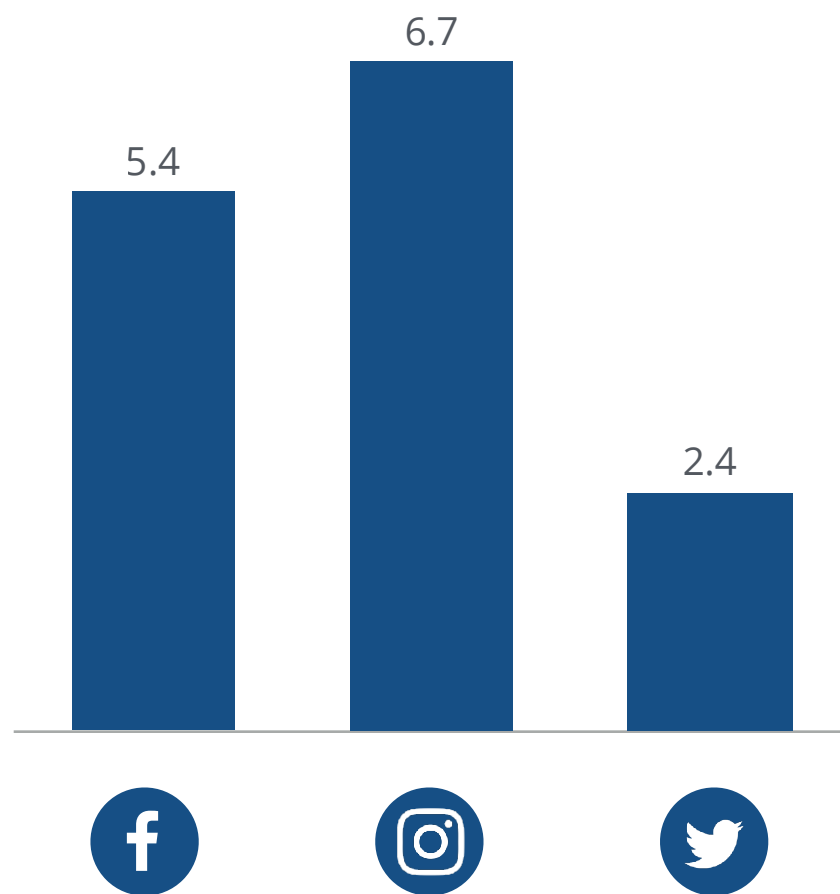
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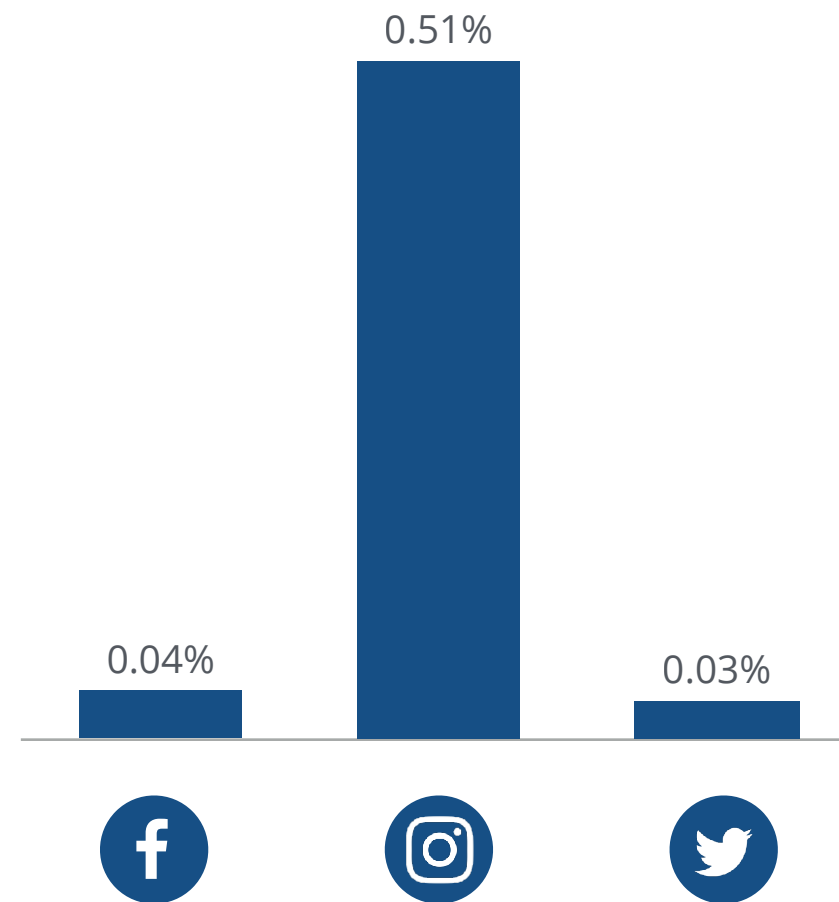
FASHION

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



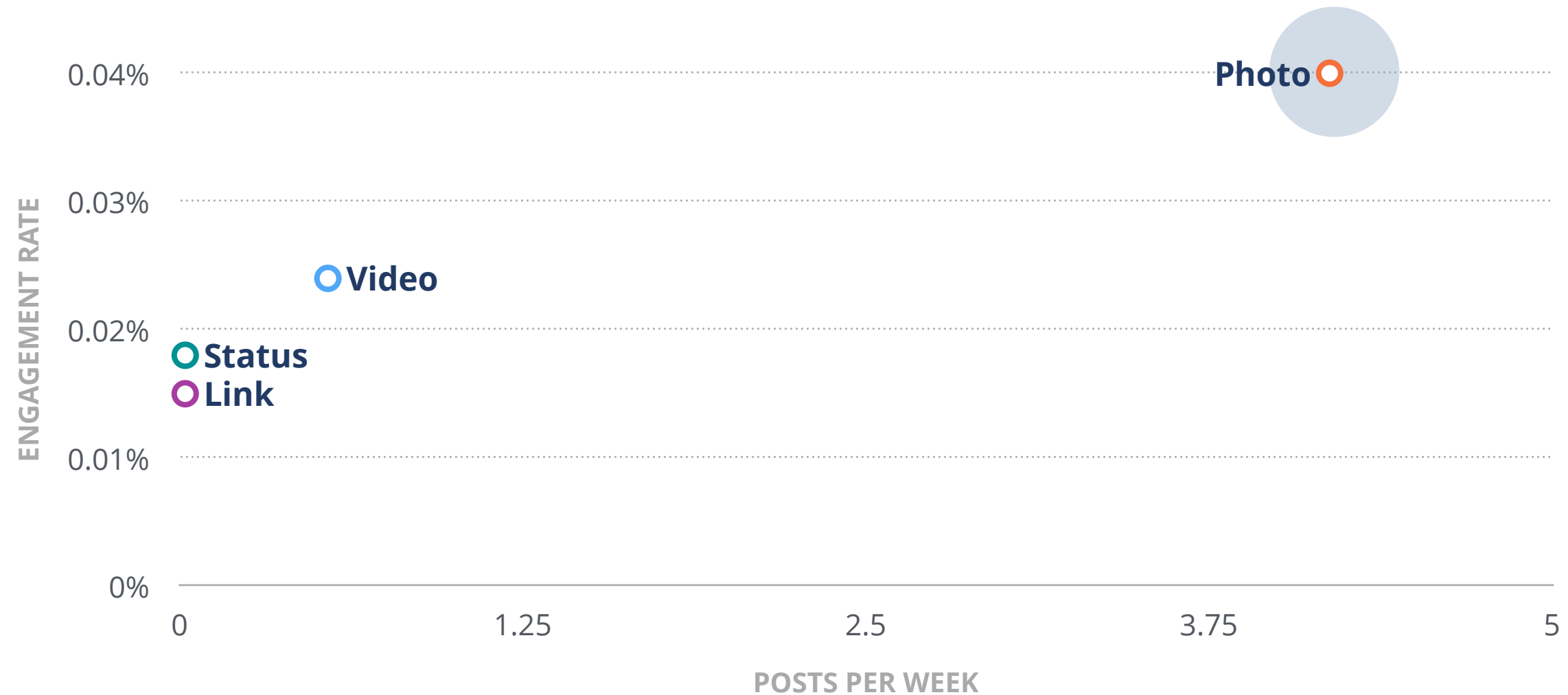
Fashion brands saw low engagement rates on both Facebook and Twitter, but were twice as likely to post on Facebook.



FASHION

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



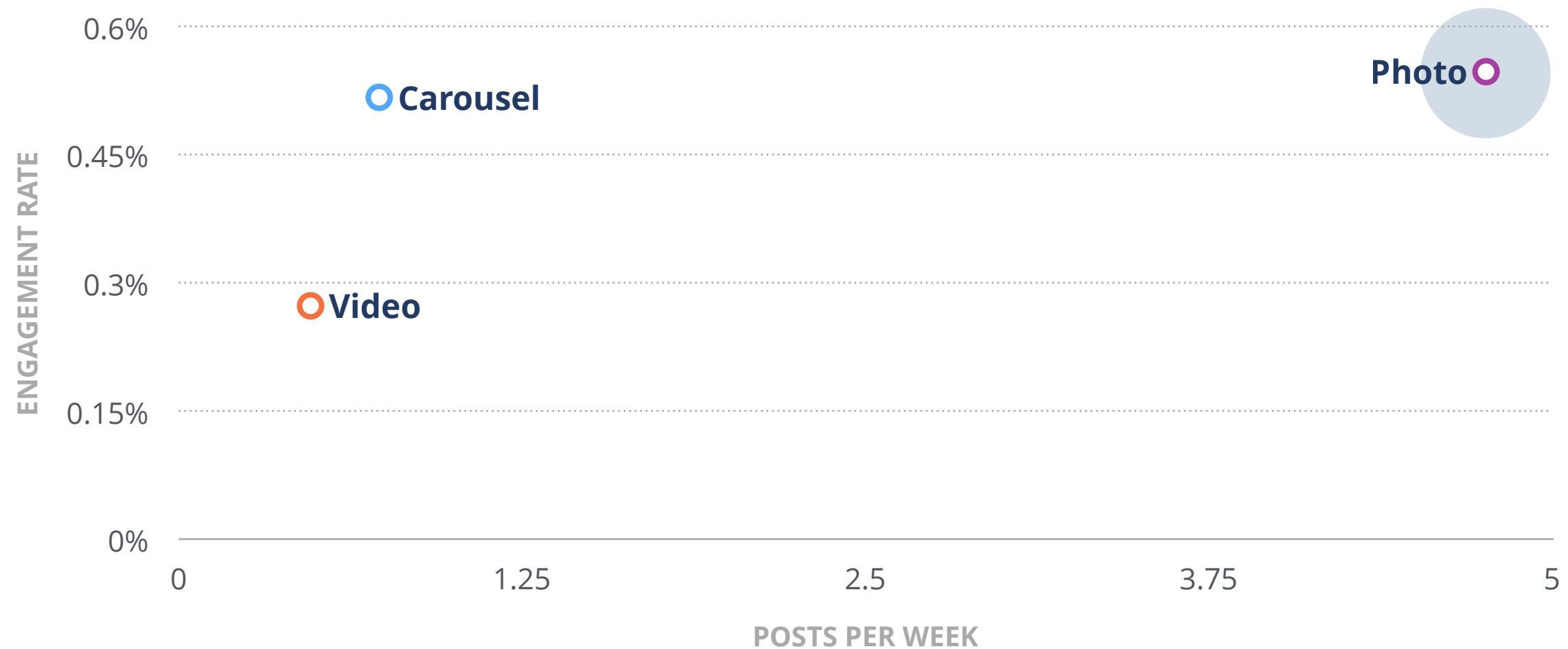
Fashion brands are focusing their efforts on photos on Facebook, which is the way to go with 50% more engagement than any other post type.

**Rival
IQ**

FASHION

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



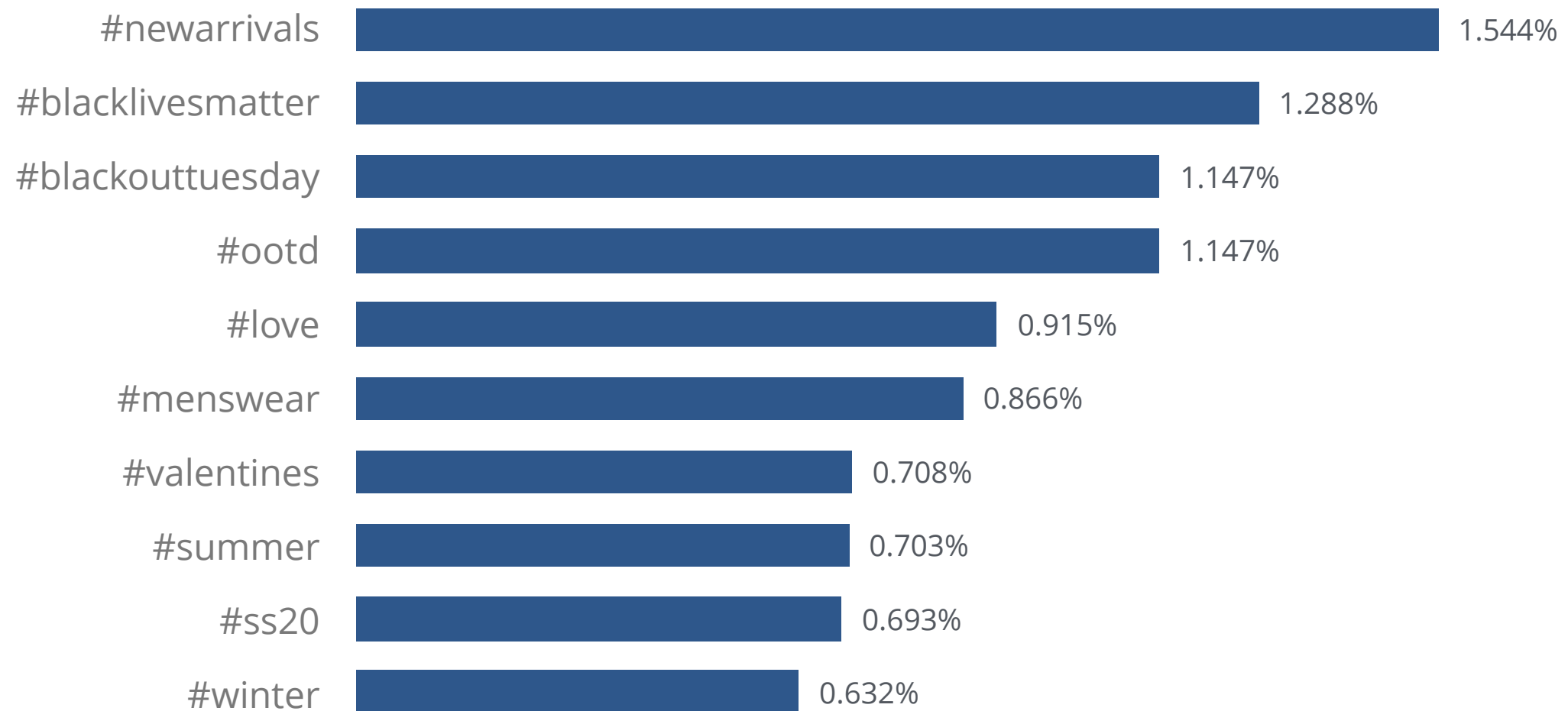
Fashion brands saw nearly identical engagement rates for photos and carousels on Instagram this year, but were 4x as likely to post a photo. Try combining photos into carousels by theme to supercharge engagement rates.

Rival
IQ

FASHION

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

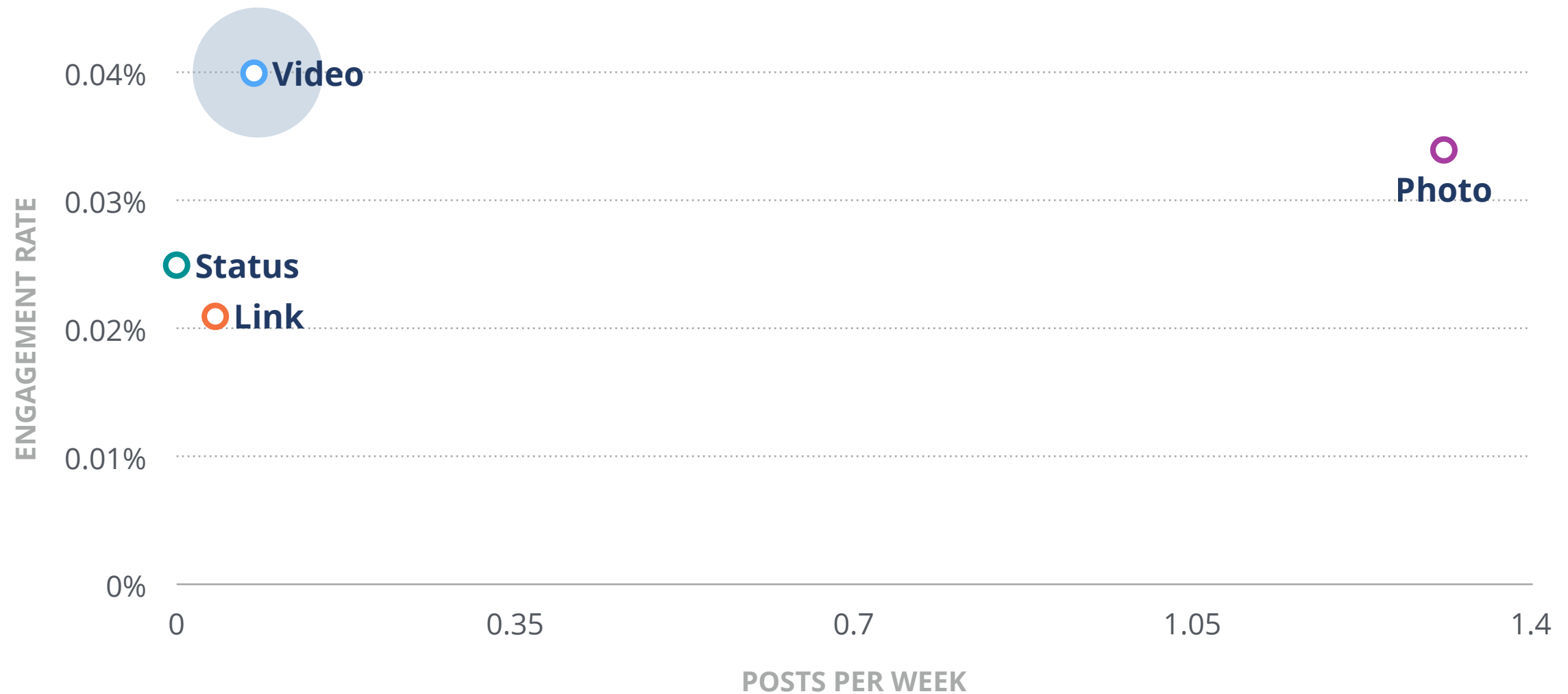


Like many other brands, Fashion was all about the holiday and seasonal hashtags on Twitter this year.

FASHION

🐦 Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

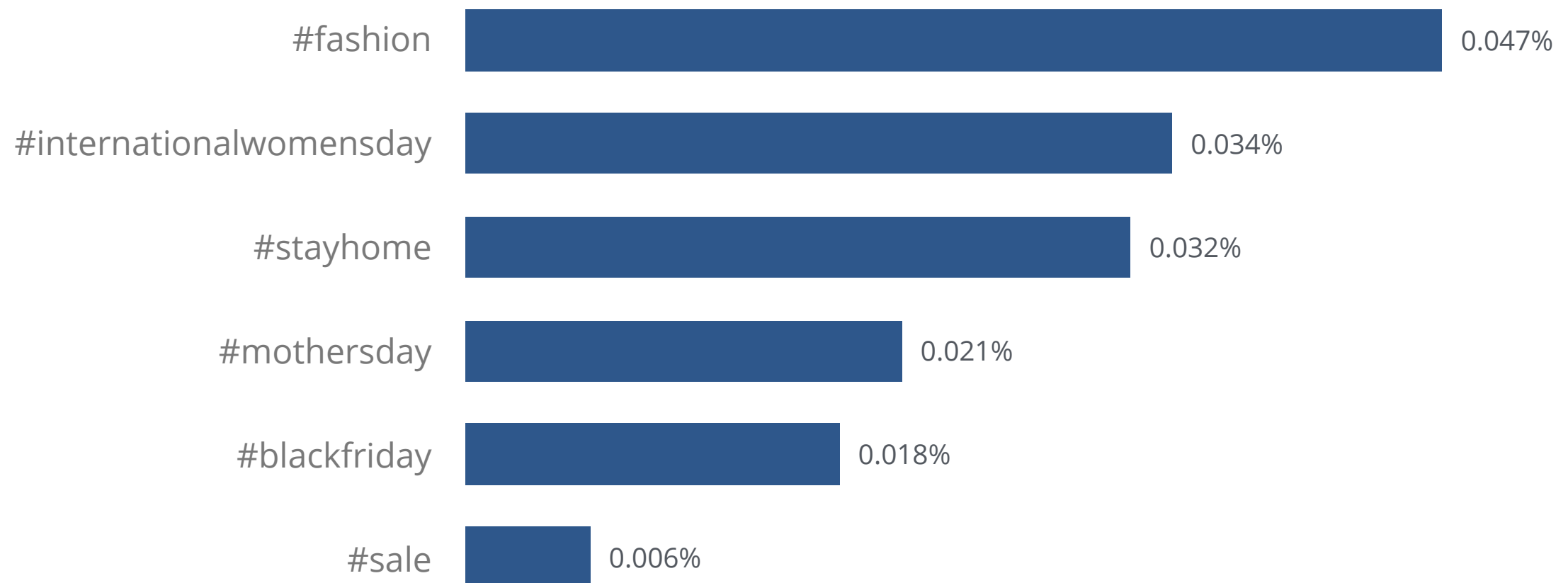


Video was a top performer for Fashion brands on Twitter, but these brands were 16x more likely to tweet a photo.

FASHION

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Fashion brands topped last year's Twitter charts with contests and giveaways, but abandoned that strategy in 2020.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Financial Services



FINANCIAL SERVICES

Overview



Banks and Credit Unions Cashing In on Twitter

Financial Services were just under median performance on Facebook and Instagram but pulled ahead on Twitter.

A few ideas for Financial Services brands:

- Financial Services are posting lots of photos on all channels, but try bulking up this post type on Instagram to dial in performance there.
- Hashtags were all about the holidays on Instagram and Twitter this year, so keep up with content aligns with the seasons.



A few examples from
Financial Services companies



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

4.6

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.07%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

2.7

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

0.85%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

5.9

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.058%

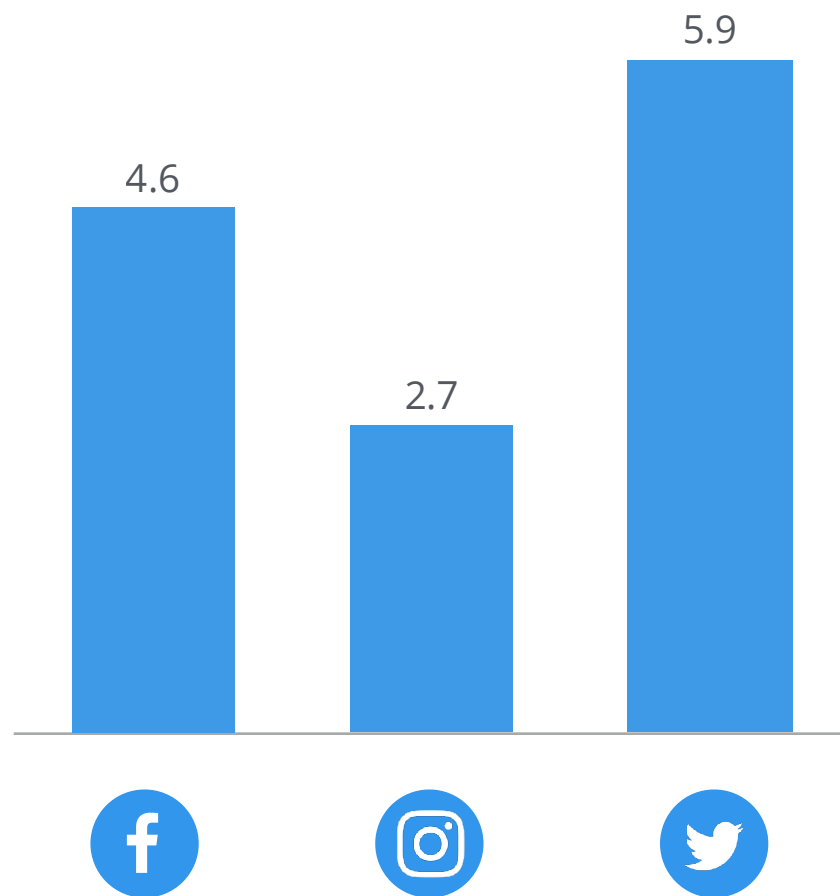
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Rival
IQ

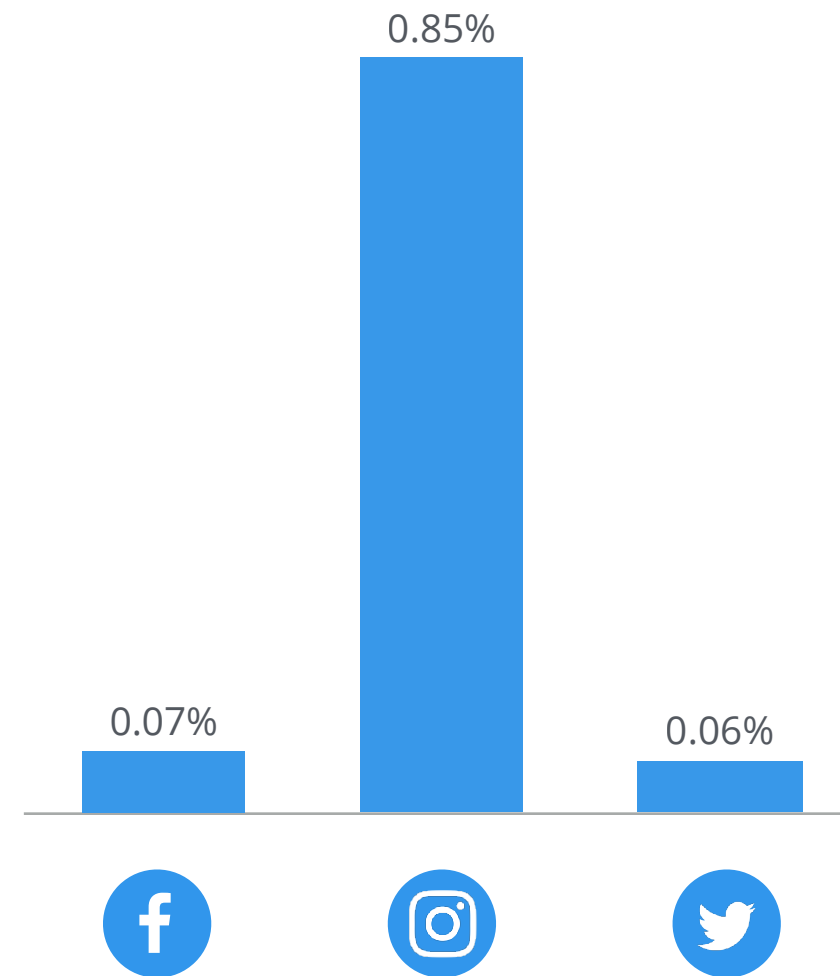
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



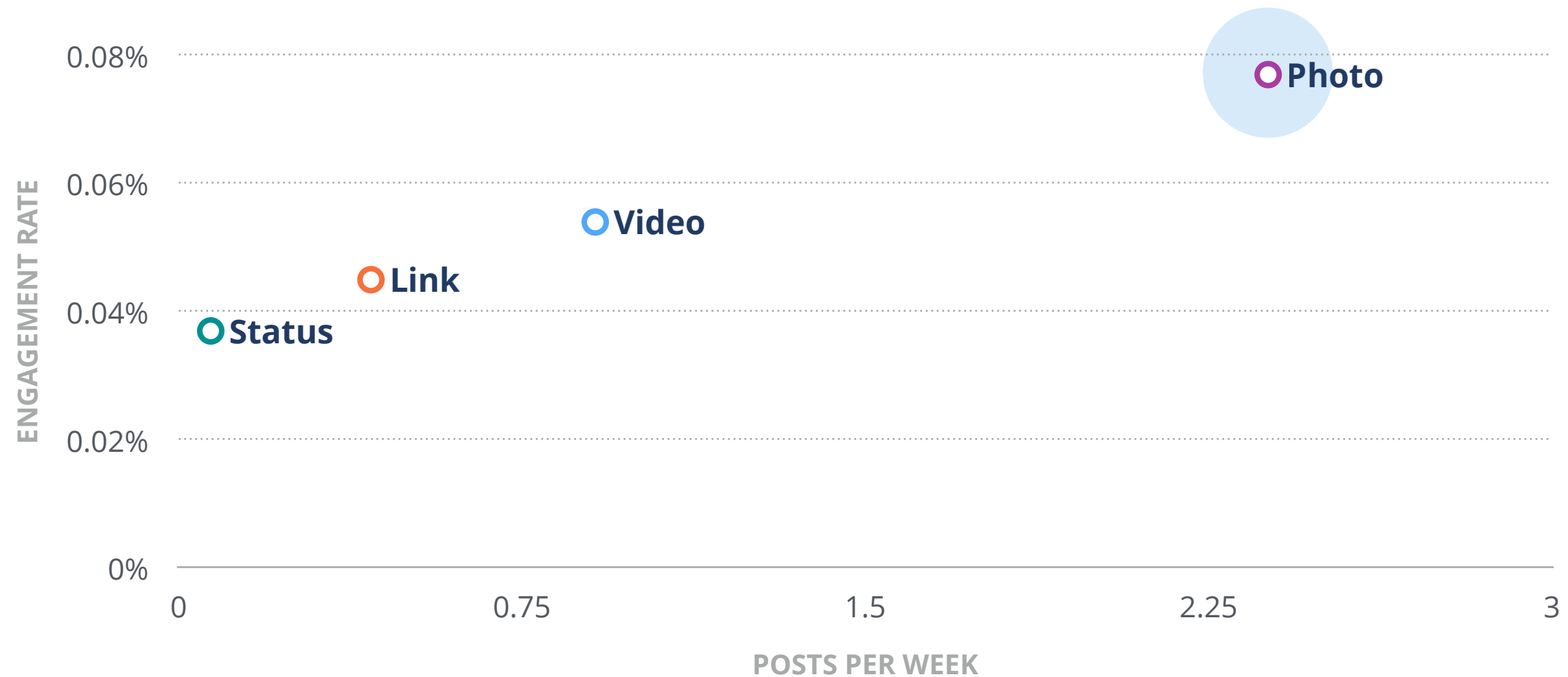
Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



Financial Services sees engagement rates slightly above the median on Twitter, which helps explain heavy emphasis on tweet counts each week.

f Facebook engagement by post type

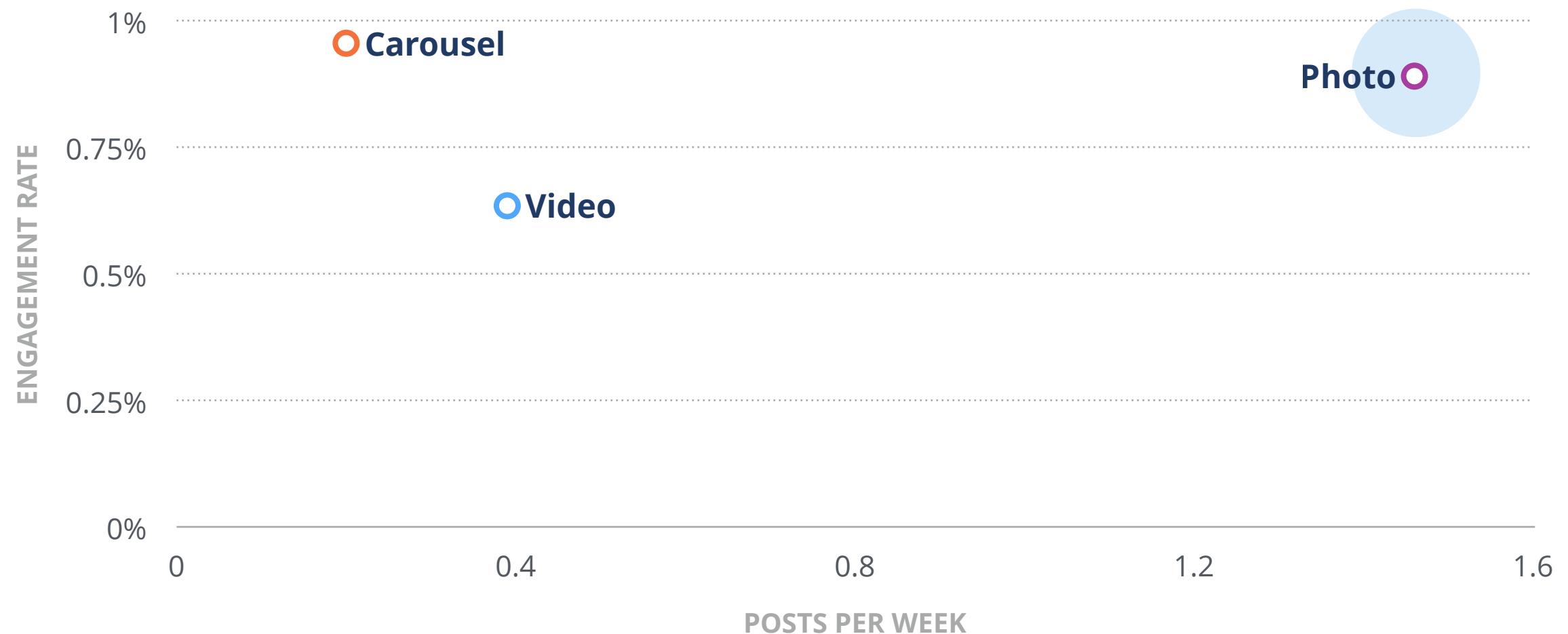
Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



Financial Services brands are using Facebook strategically by focusing on high-performance photo posts and putting less emphasis on post types with lower engagement, like links and statuses.

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

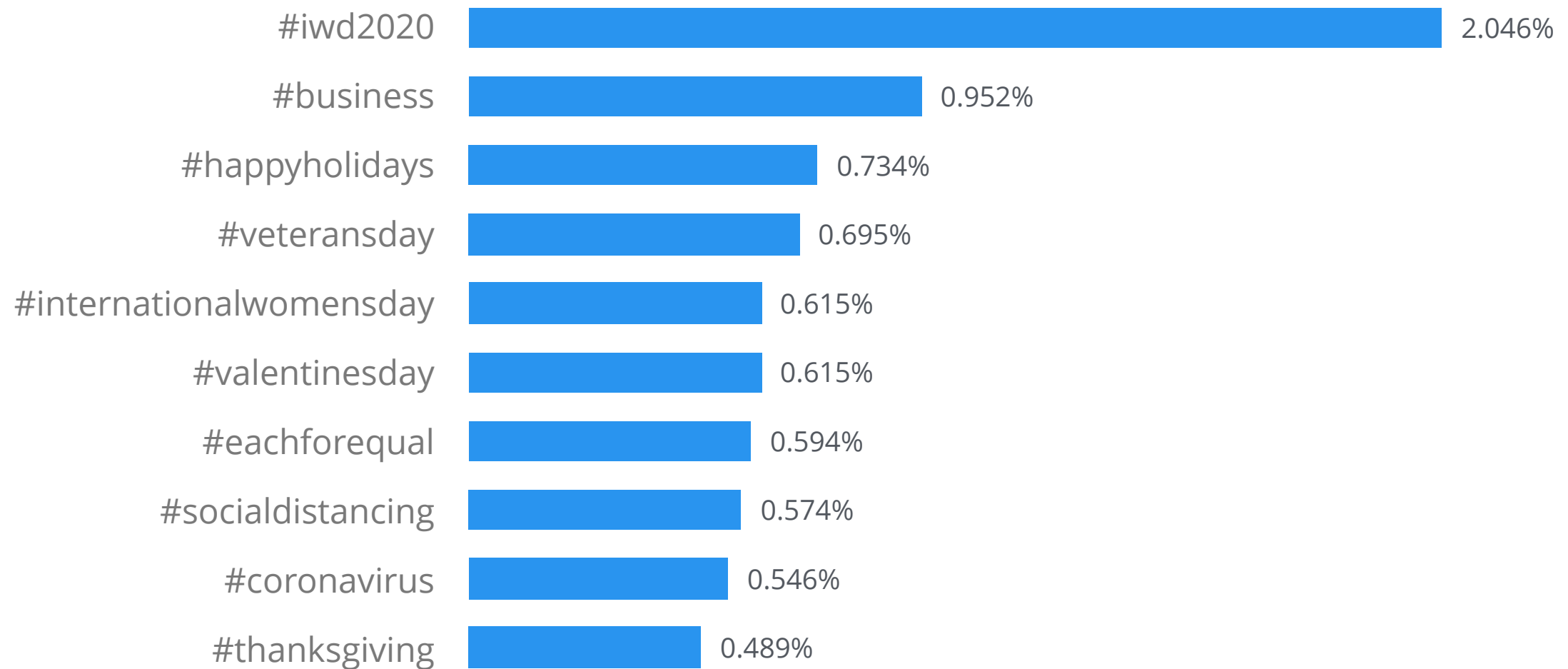


Financial Services saw the highest engagement rates on Instagram with carousels of any post type, but posted them least frequently of any post type.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Instagram hashtags

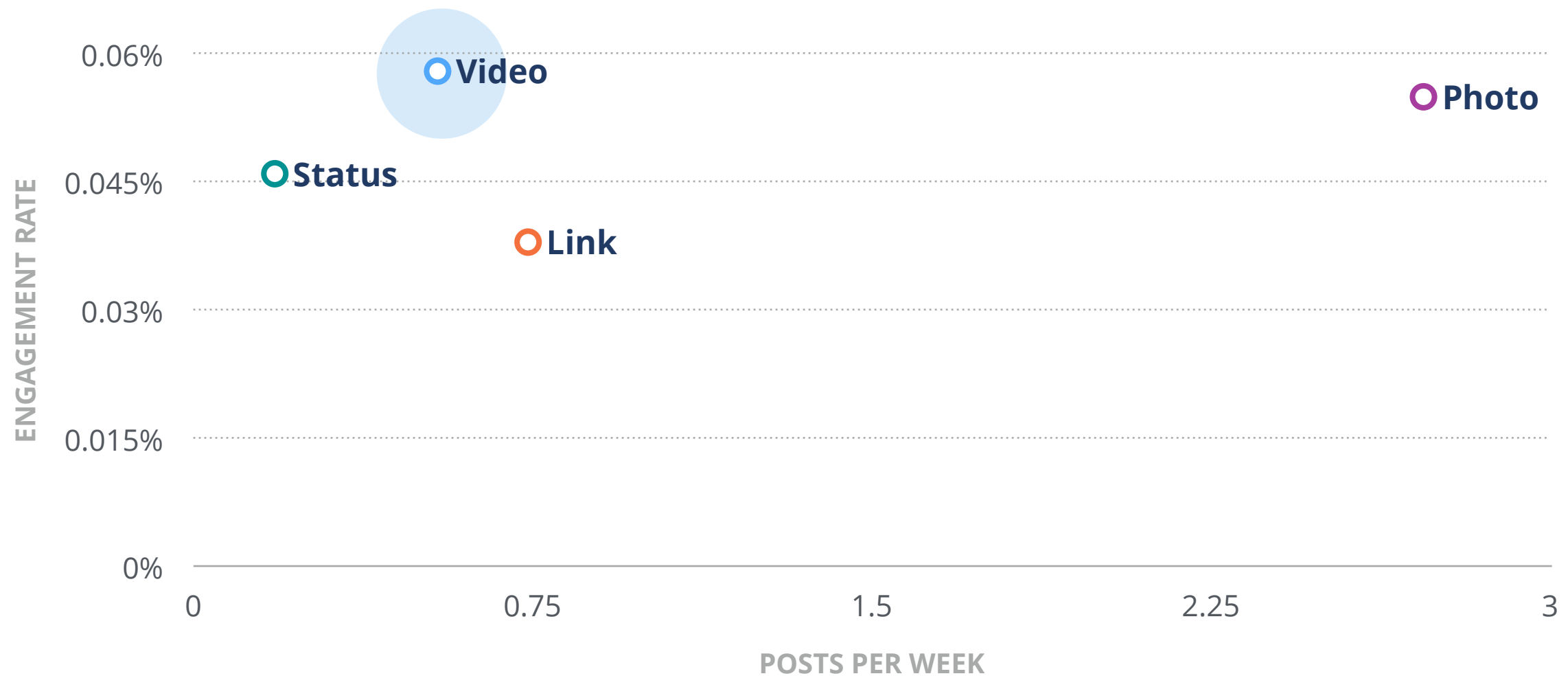
Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



The hashtag for International Women's Day 2020 blew other Instagram hashtags out of the water for Financial Services brands.

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

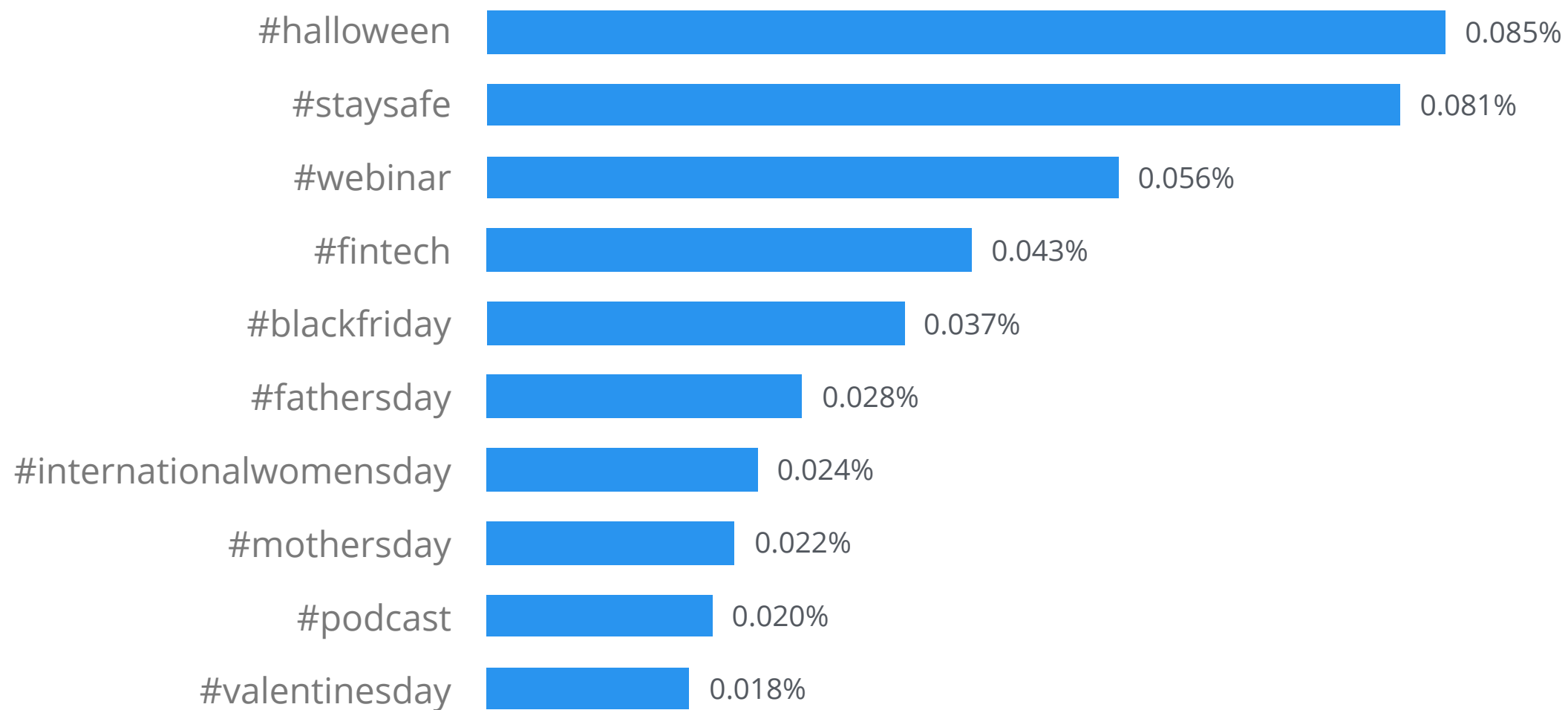


Financial Services were top performers on Twitter this year, but could widen that lead by focusing more on high engagement videos.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Like on Instagram, holidays hashtags were a hit for Financial Services brands on Twitter.



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INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Food & Beverage

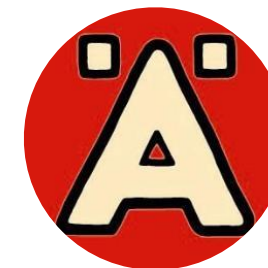
FOOD & BEVERAGE Overview

Food & Beverage Pulling Ahead on Twitter and Insta

Food & Beverage brands weren't frequent posters on any channel, but managed to beat out many other industries on Twitter and Instagram while losing a little ground on Facebook.

Some ideas for improvement:

- Giveaways and holidays are the hashtag secret sauce for Food & Beverage brands.
- Food & Beverage followers favor more visual post types, so keep investing in photos and videos.



A few examples from
Food & Beverage companies



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

2.5

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.05%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

2.7

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.06%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

2.2

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.068%

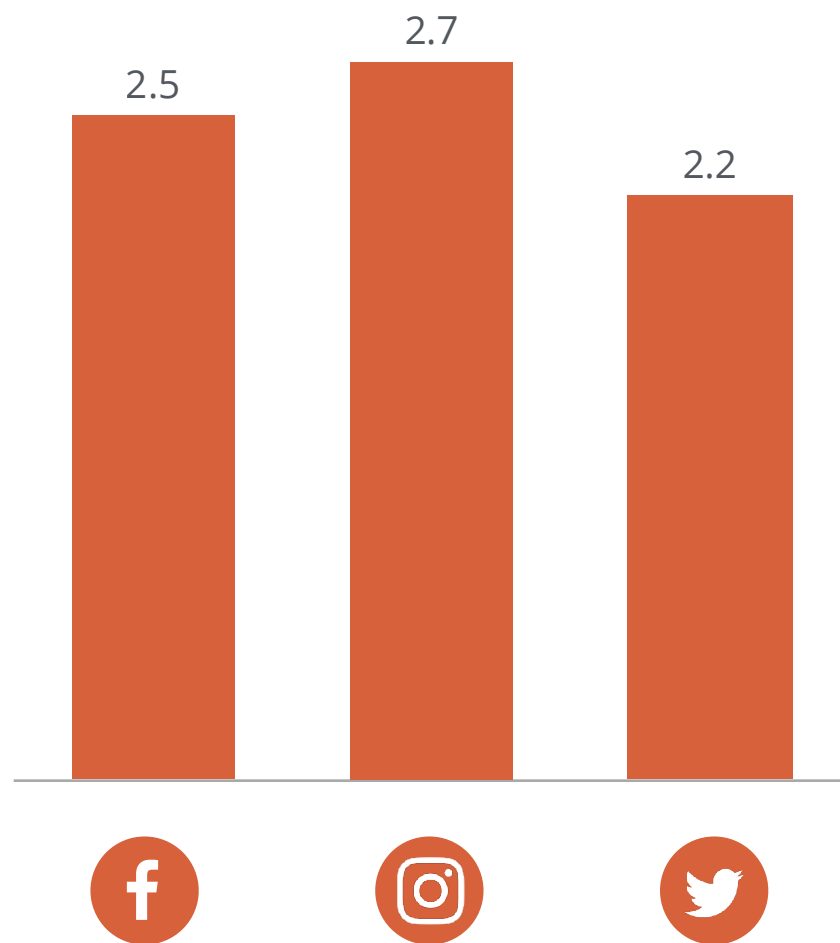
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**Rival
IQ**

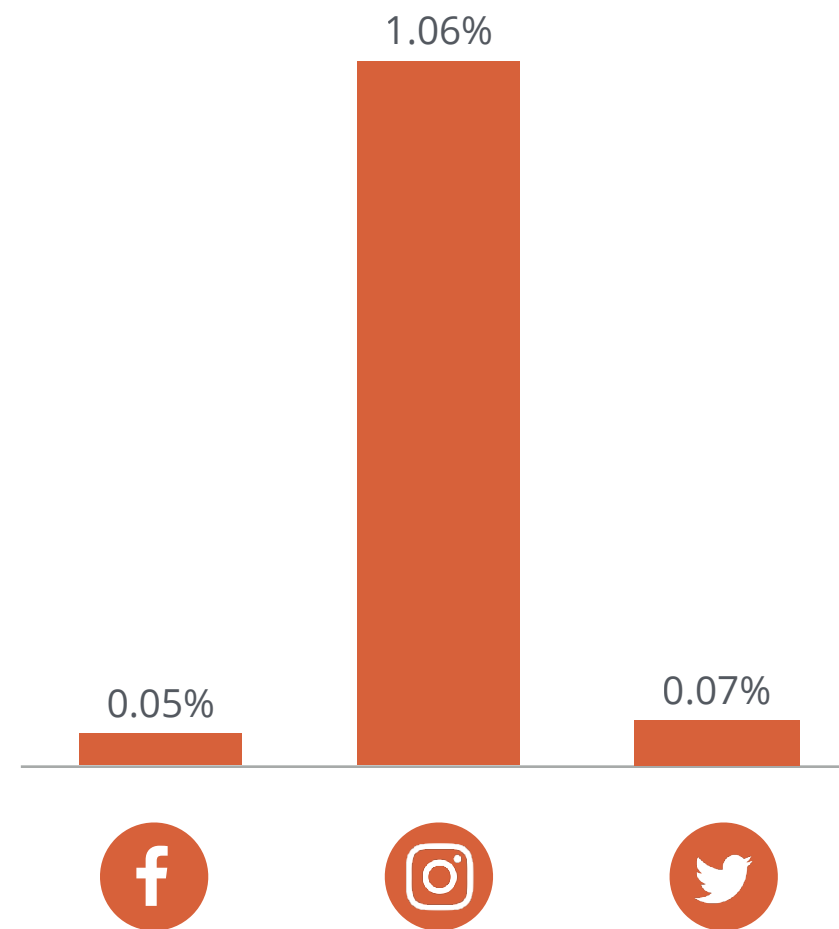


Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



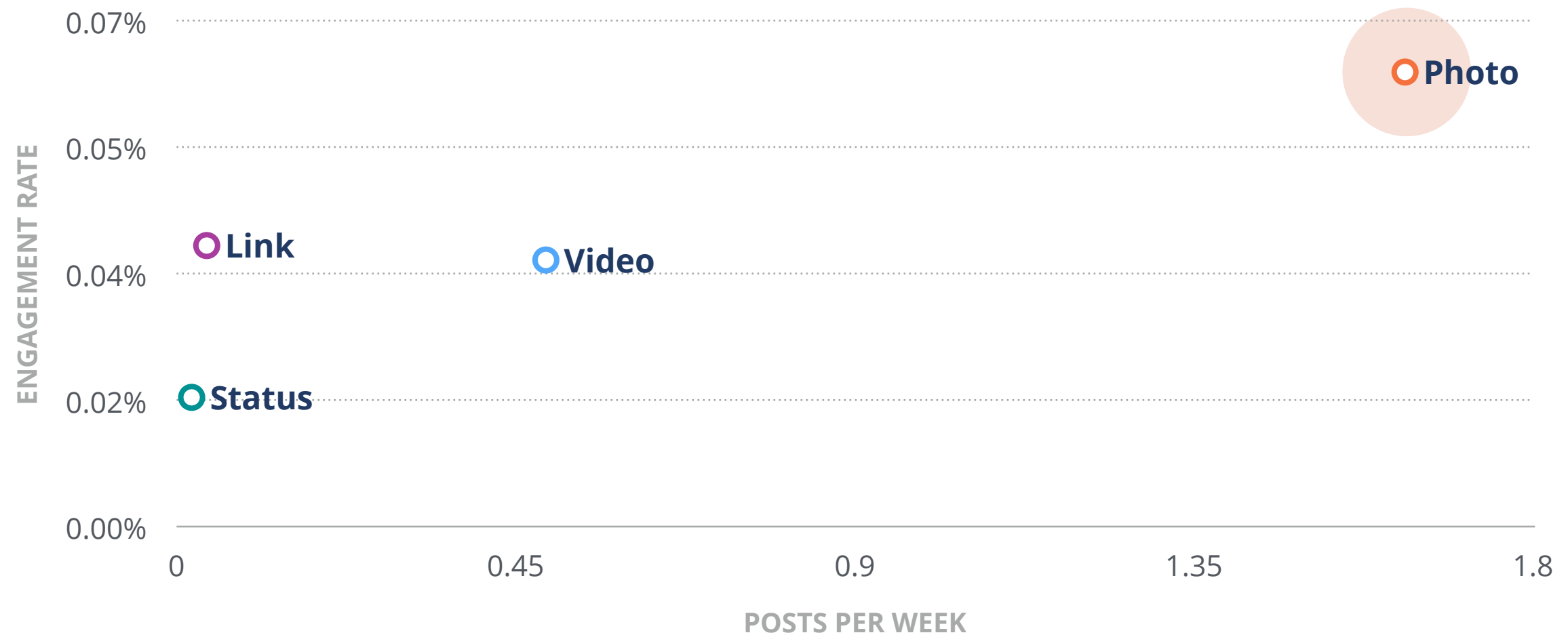
Food & Beverage brands saw above-median engagement rates on Twitter and Instagram but lagged a little on Facebook.



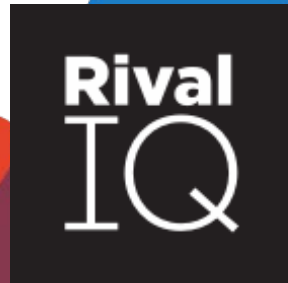
FOOD & BEVERAGE

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



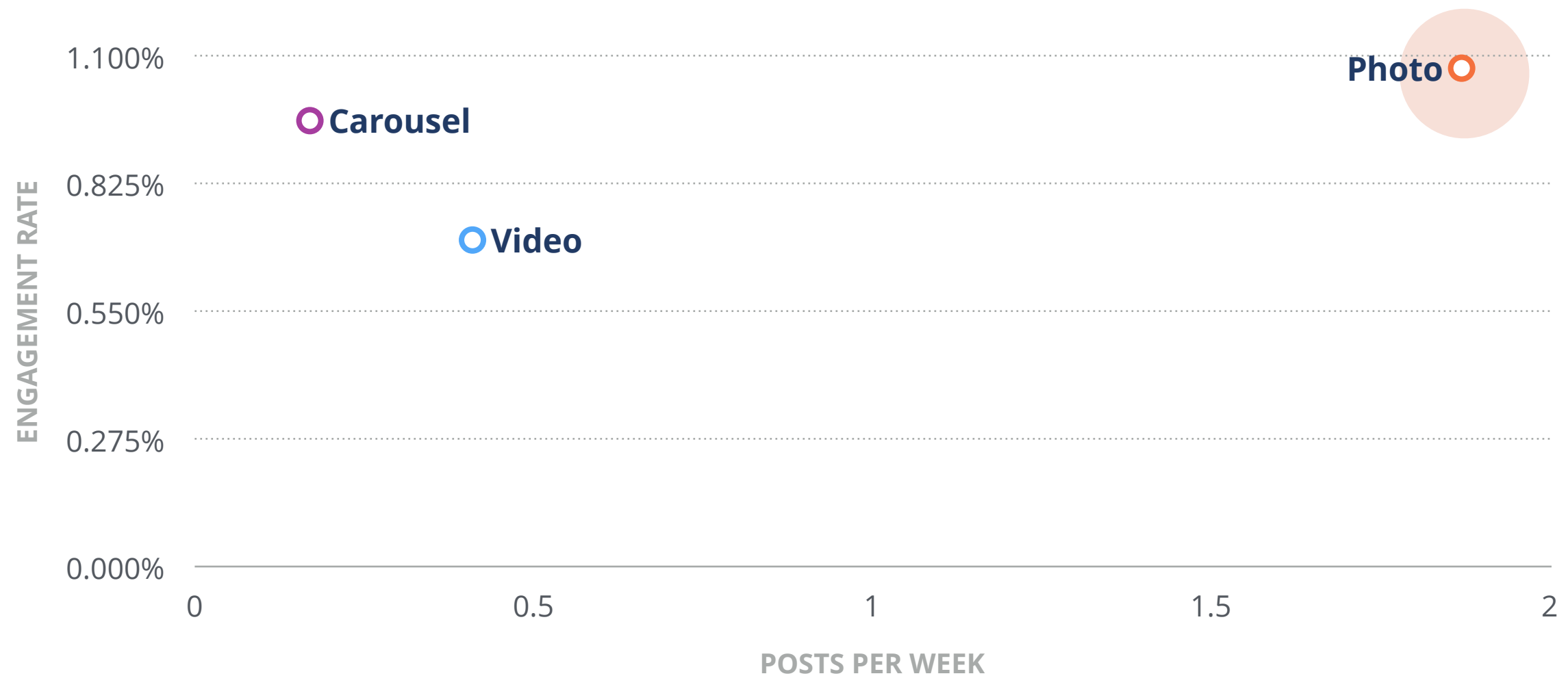
No surprise here that mouthwatering photos of tasty snacks and drinks won the day on Facebook for Food & Beverage brands.



FOOD & BEVERAGE

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

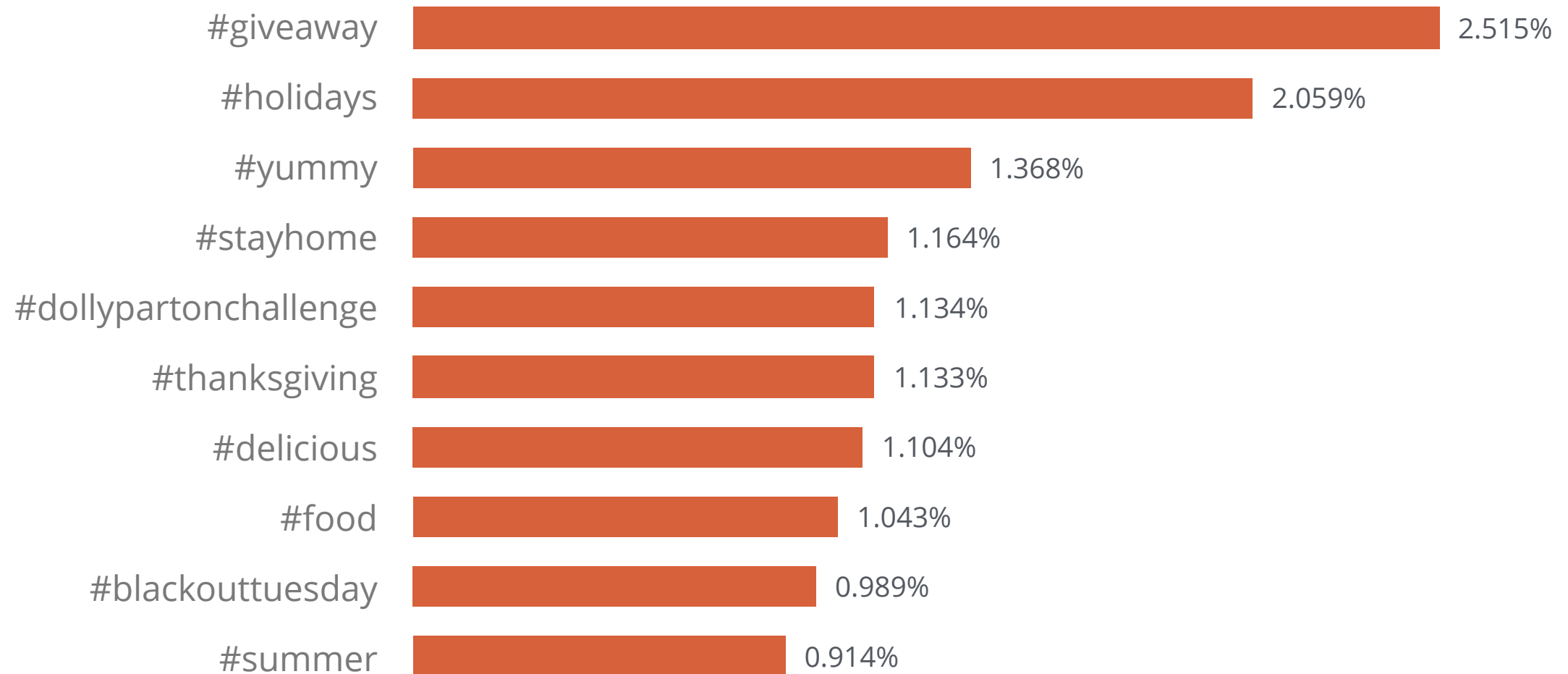


Food & Beverage brand Greek Gods rocked a whopping 4.88% engagement rate on Instagram this year thanks to delicious photos inviting followers to enter contests and giveaways.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



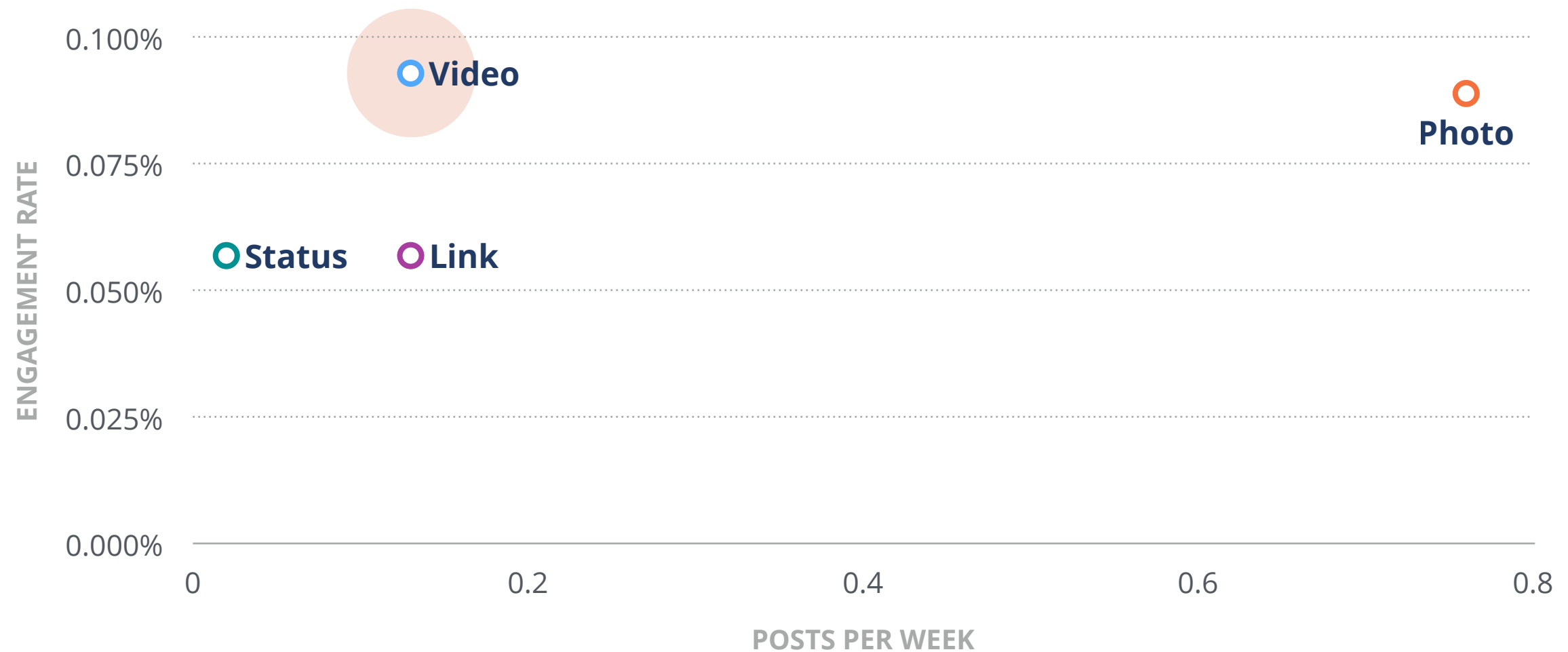
Food & Beverage brands killed it on Instagram when posting about contests and giveaways.

Rival
IQ

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

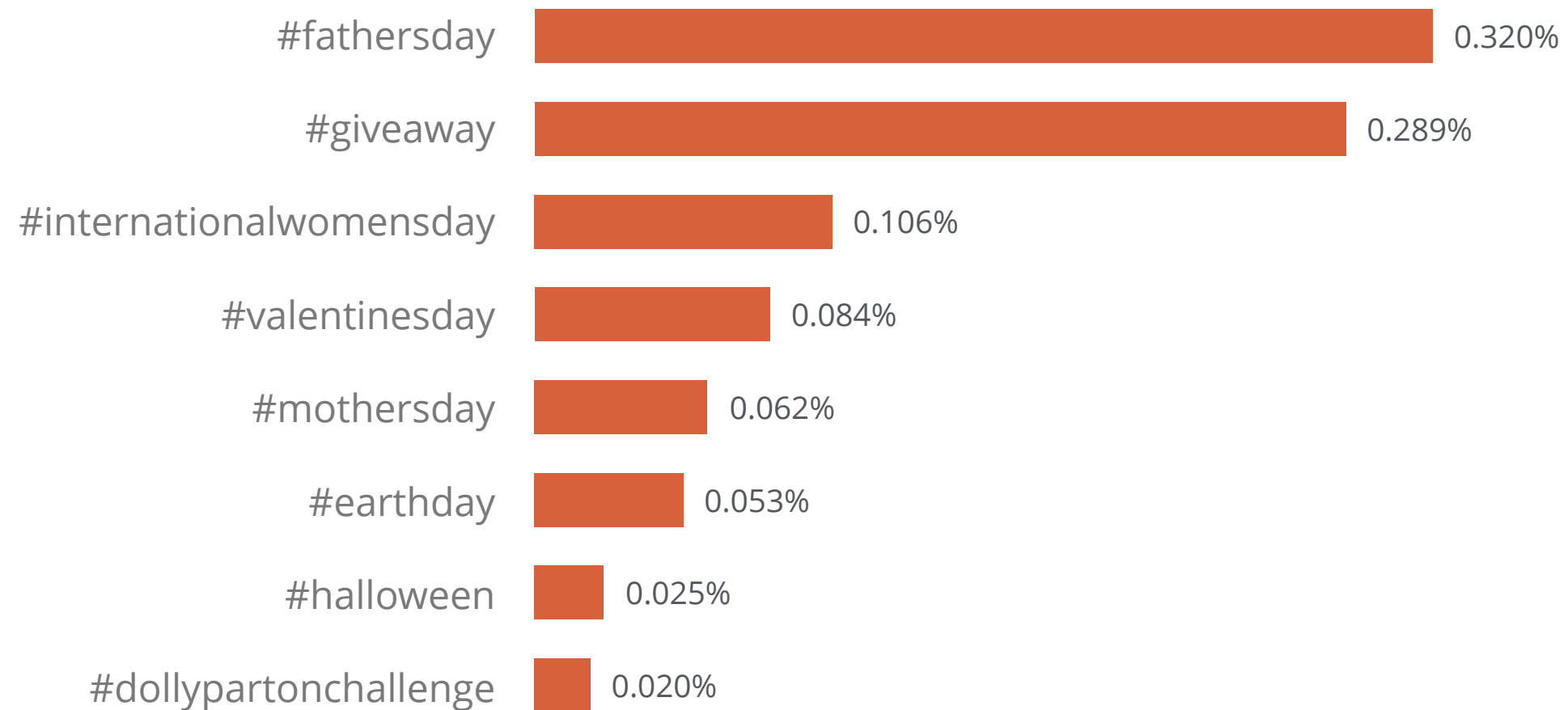


Video was a powerful tool for Food & Beverage brands on Twitter this year, so consider putting more resources behind this tweet type.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Holidays were a big focus for Food & Beverage brands on Twitter this year, with contests and giveaways coming in hot as well.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Health & Beauty



HEALTH & BEAUTY

Overview

Health & Beauty Comes Up Short

Not for lack of trying (especially on Instagram), Health & Beauty saw below-median engagement across all social channels.

A few growth ideas:

- Photos perform well on Facebook and Instagram, so stick with what works.
- Contests and giveaways represented the most engaging hashtags on both Instagram and Twitter, so keep giving things away to your followers.



A few examples from Health & Beauty brands



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

4.9

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.03%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

6.4

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

0.51%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

0.8

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.031%

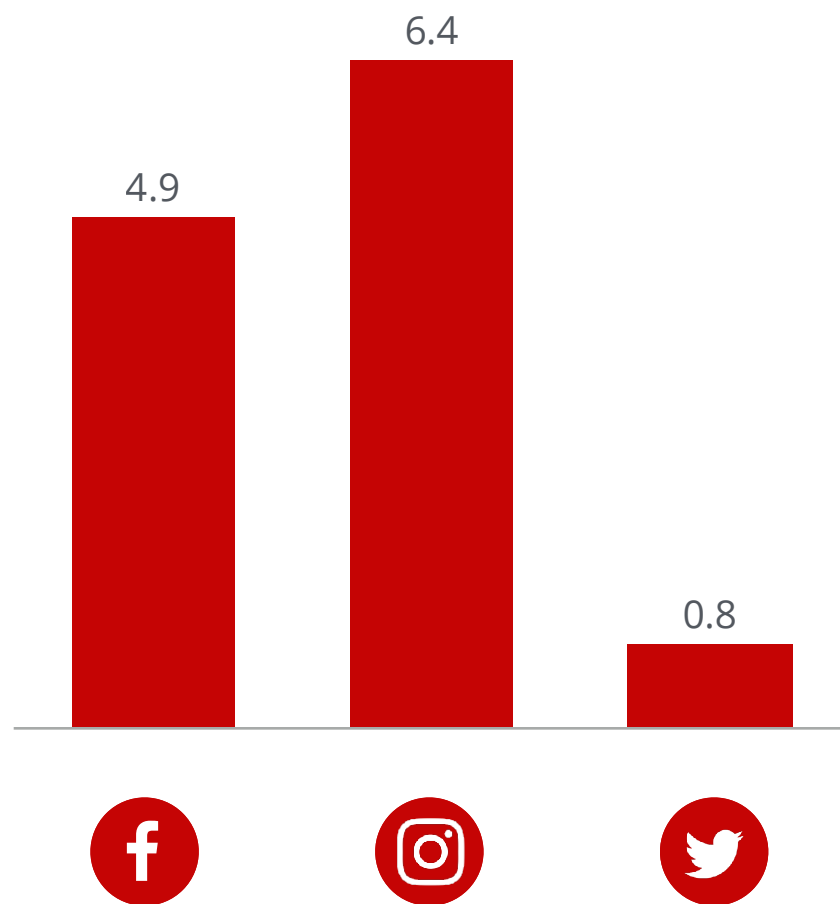
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

Rival
IQ

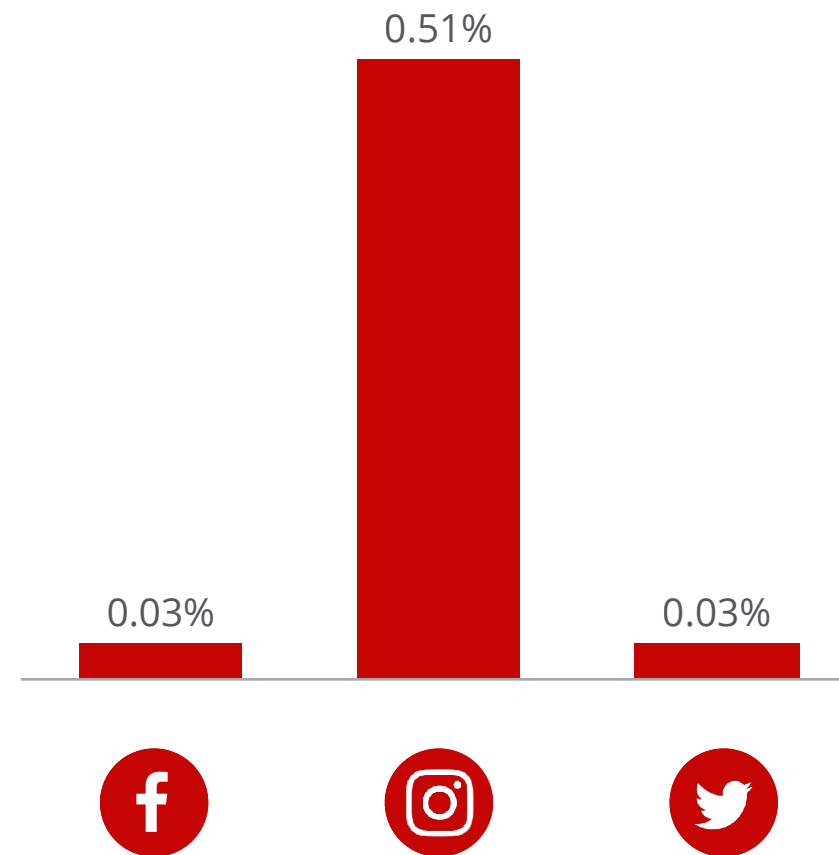
HEALTH & BEAUTY

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

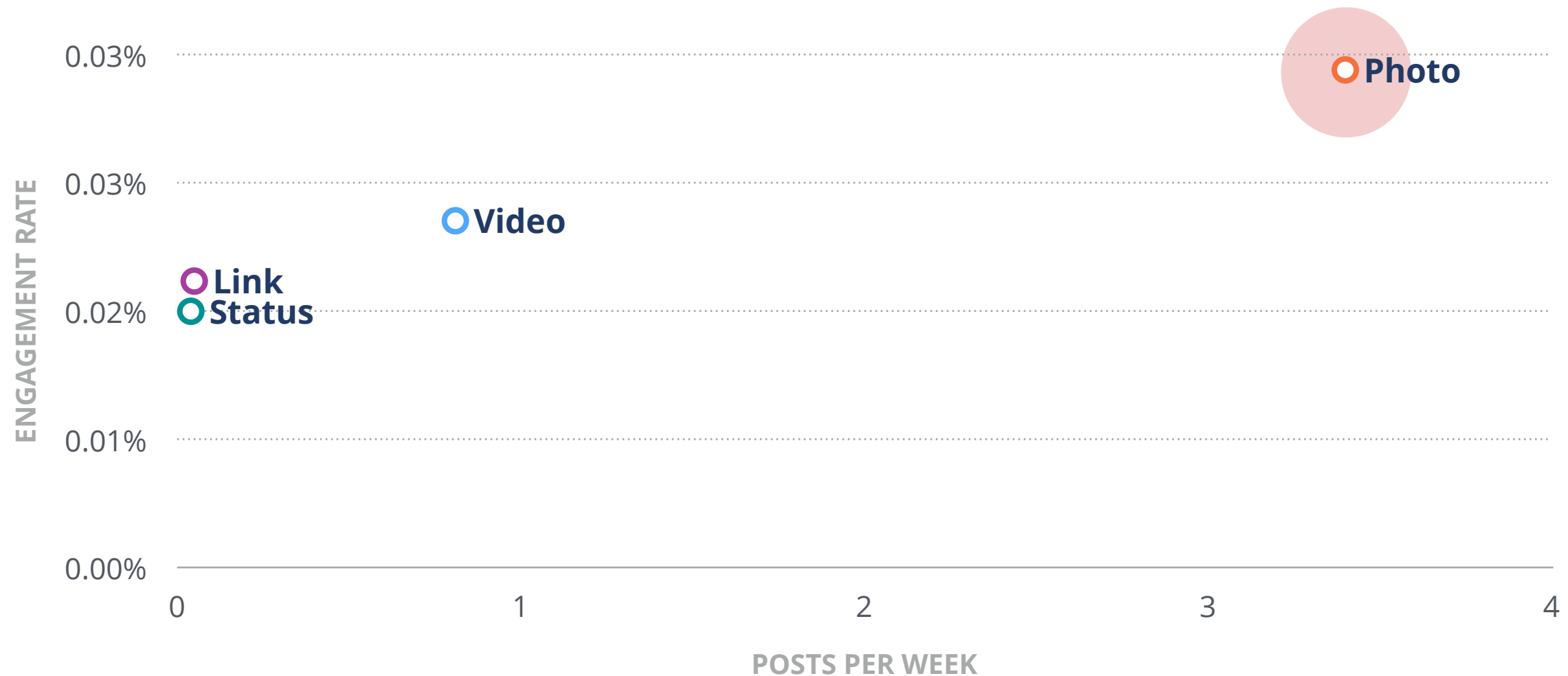


Health & Beauty brands saw below-median engagement rates despite median posting frequency across the board. 😞

HEALTH & BEAUTY

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



Photos dramatically outperformed other post types for Health & Beauty brands on Facebook.

Rival
IQ

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

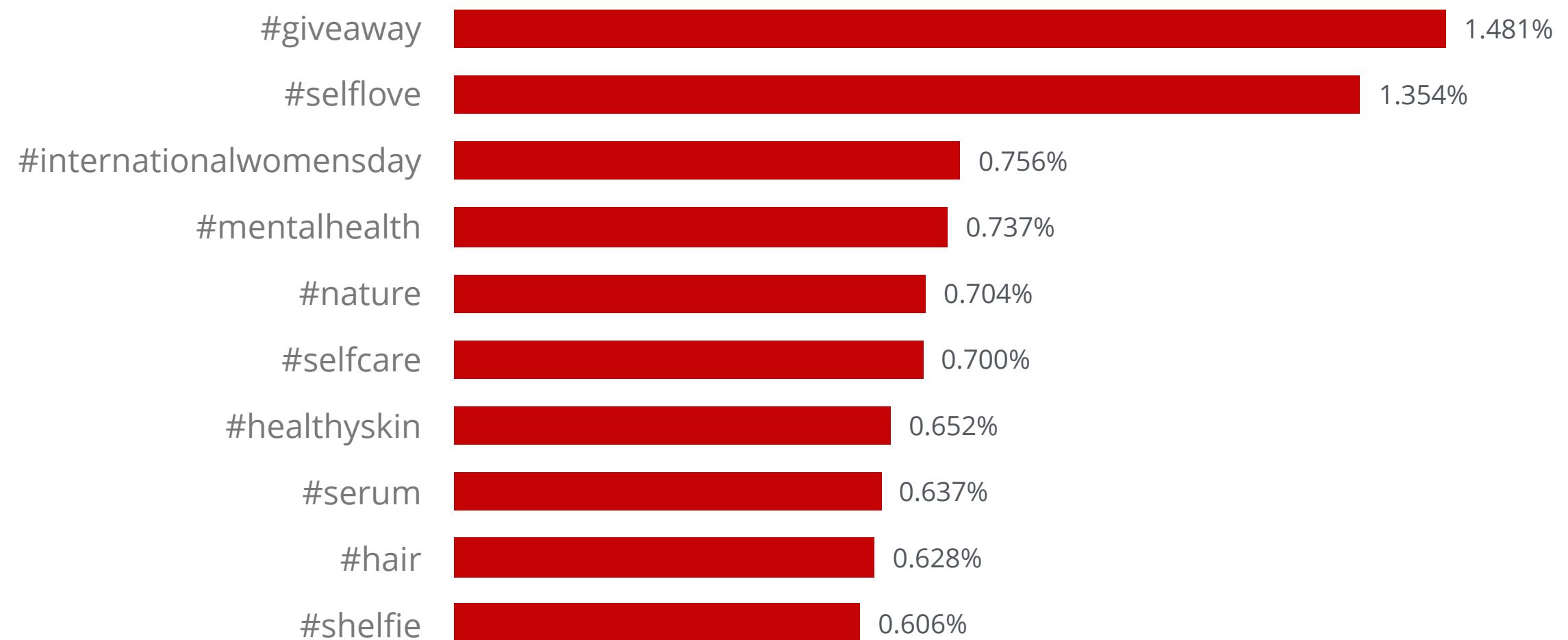


Photo and carousel posts were neck-and-neck for Health & Beauty brands this year, so it's good to include a mix of both in your 2021 Instagram strategy.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

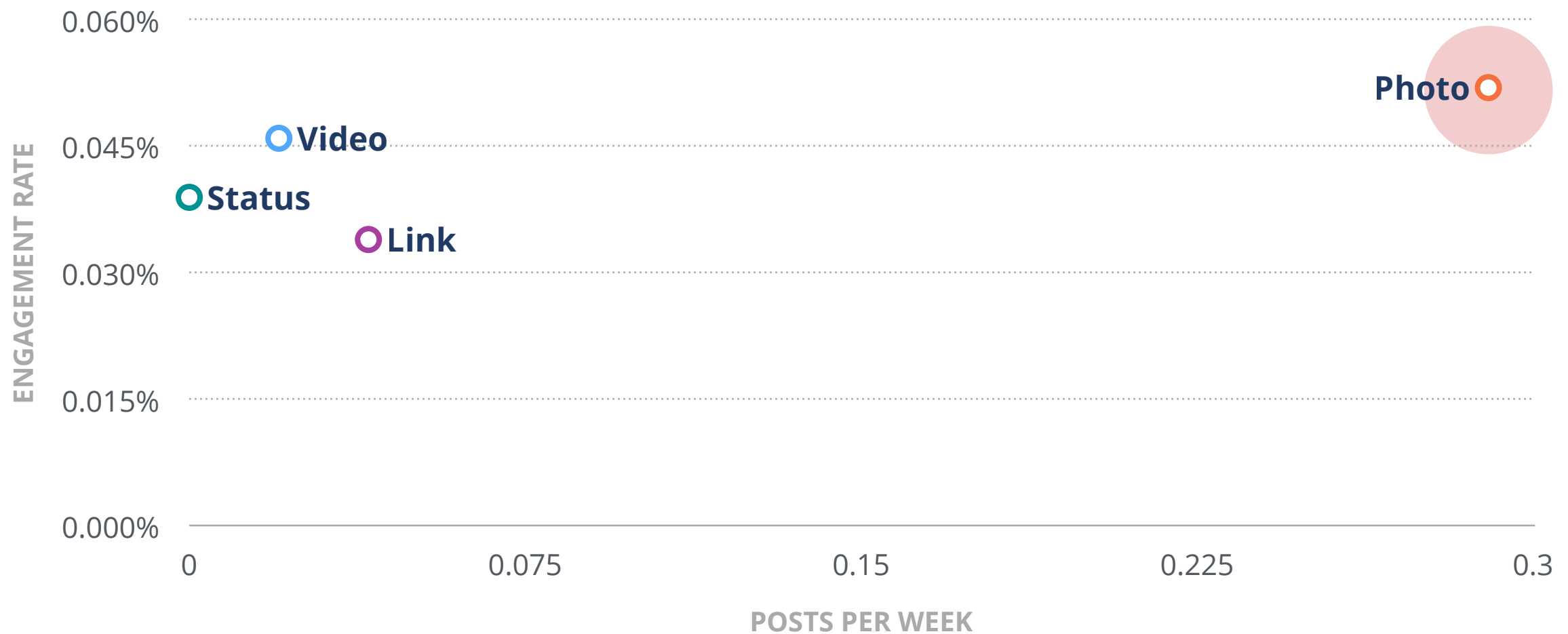


Contests and giveaways topped the Instagram hashtag charts for Health & Beauty brands again this year, alongside #selflove and #selfcare hashtags reminding followers to take a moment for themselves during this stressful time.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

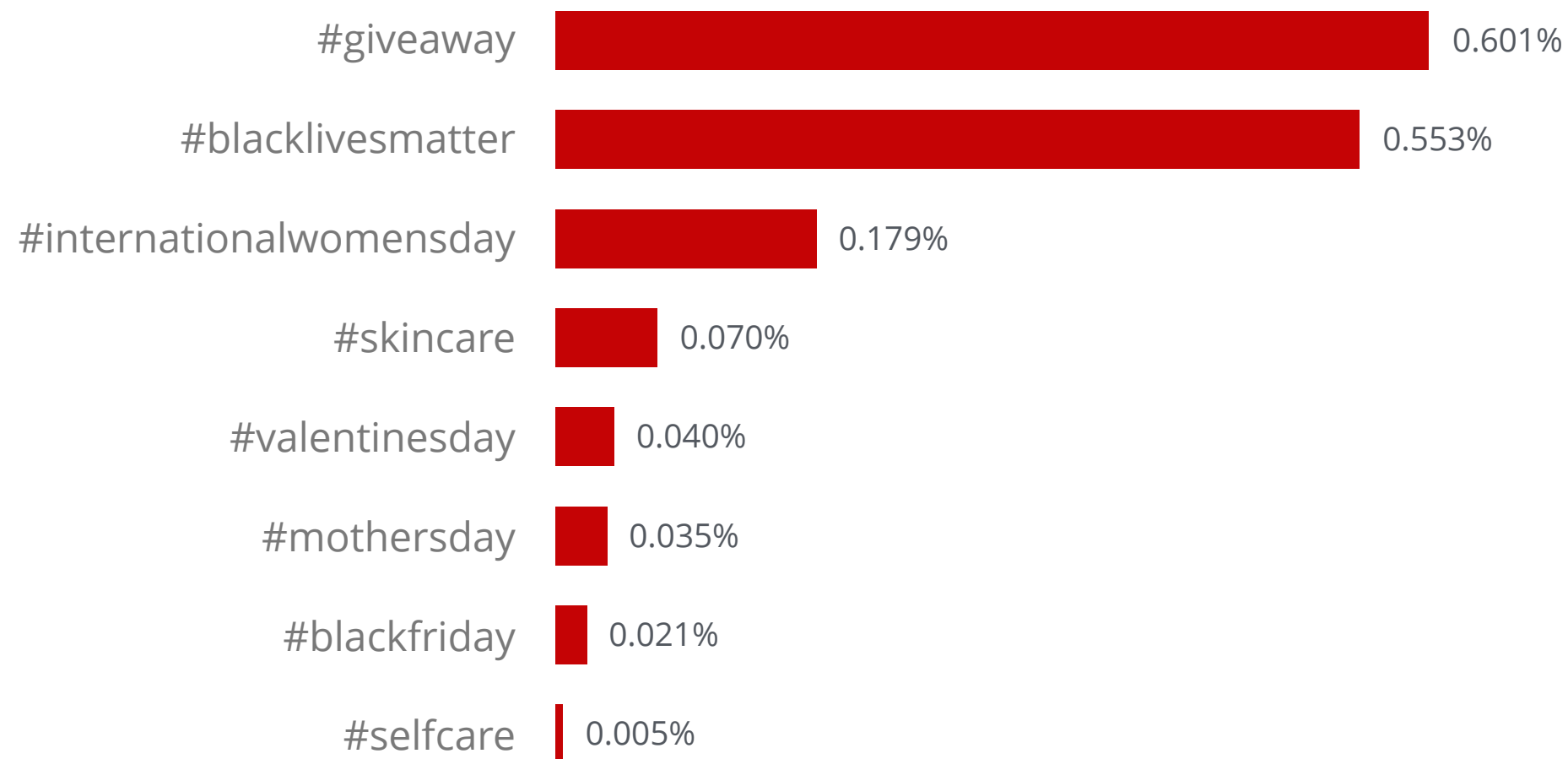


Health & Beauty brands were 7x as likely to tweet a photo as the next most frequent tweet type. This move is a smart one, since photo tweets garnered the highest engagement rates of any post type on Twitter.

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Nice to see social justice keeping pace with contests and giveaways for Health & Beauty brands on Twitter this year.



Rival
IQ



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT:
Higher Ed

HIGHER ED Overview

Higher Ed Aces It Again

Higher Ed rocked it with gold medals on Instagram and Twitter this year. Colleges and universities were some of the only handles we analyzed who were able to keep engagement rates steady during this tough year.

For even higher Higher Ed engagement rates:

- Keep focusing on Instagram and Twitter to meet your followers where they are.
- Try to post more of what works for you: more carousels on Instagram, and more statuses and videos on Twitter.



A few examples from Higher Ed



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

6.8

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.14%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

2.9

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

3.19%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

9.6

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.087%

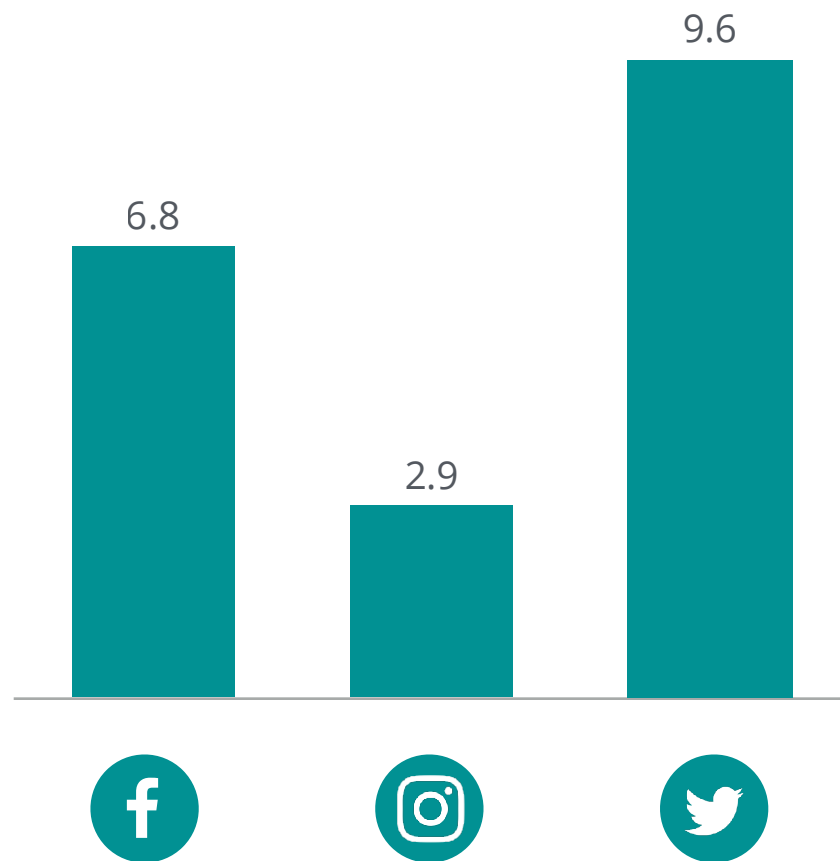
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

**Rival
IQ**

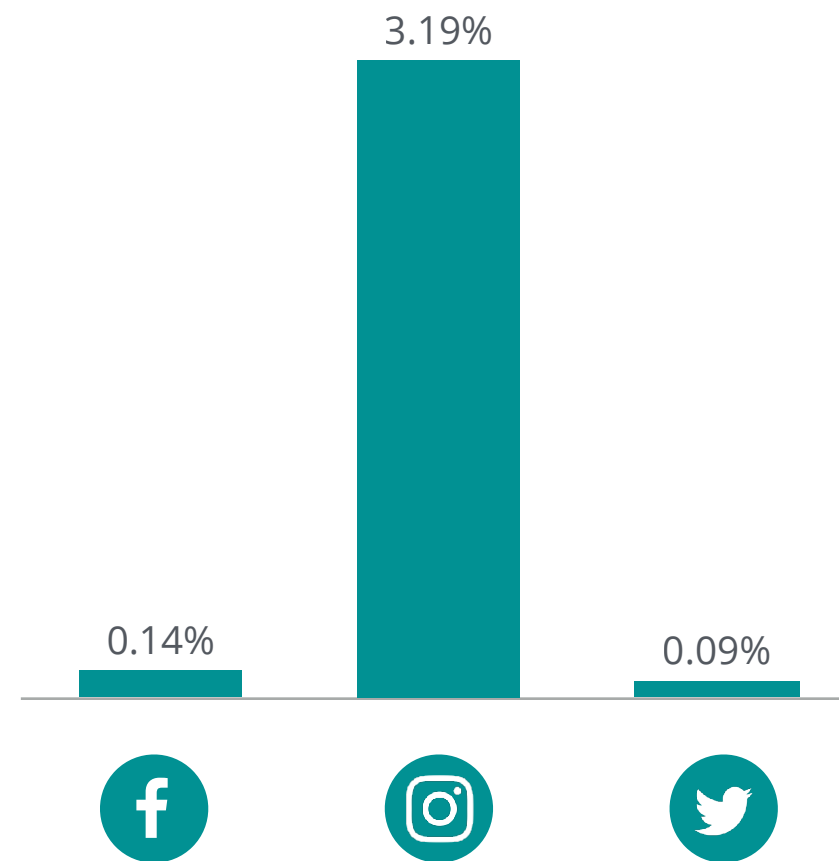
HIGHER ED

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

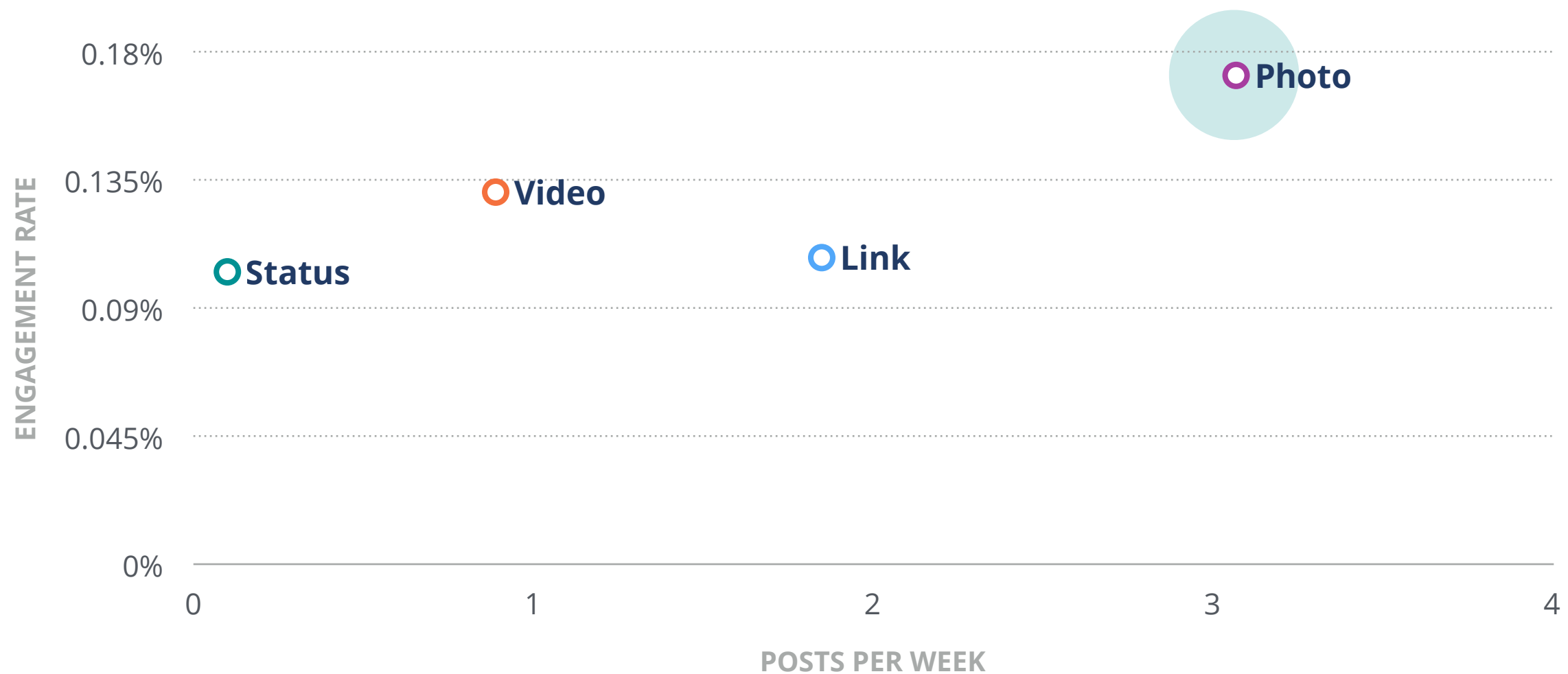


Higher Ed dominated with top Instagram and Twitter engagement rates, seeing rates that were 3x the median on Instagram and 2x the median on Twitter. 🔥

HIGHER ED

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



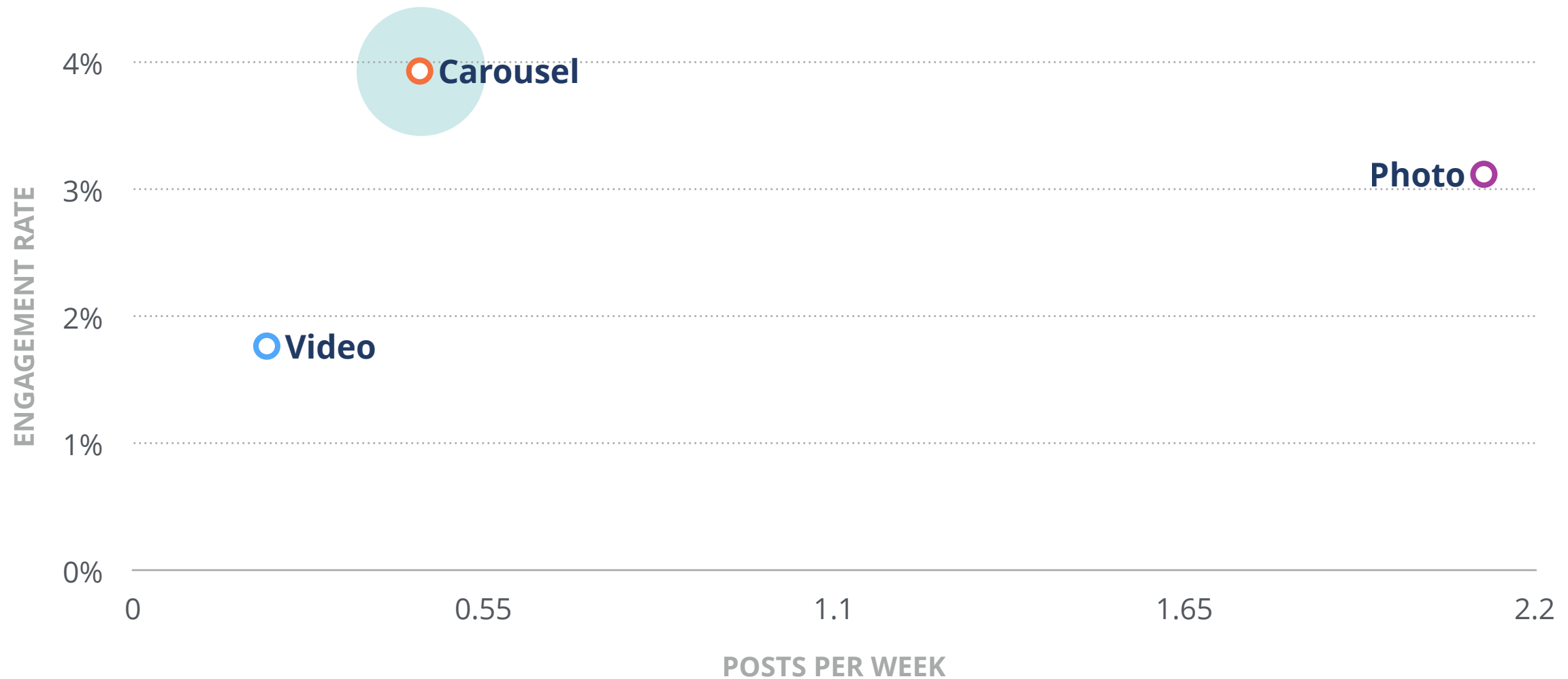
Higher Ed performs well consistently on Facebook thanks to lots of engaging photo posts.

Rival
IQ

HIGHER ED

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



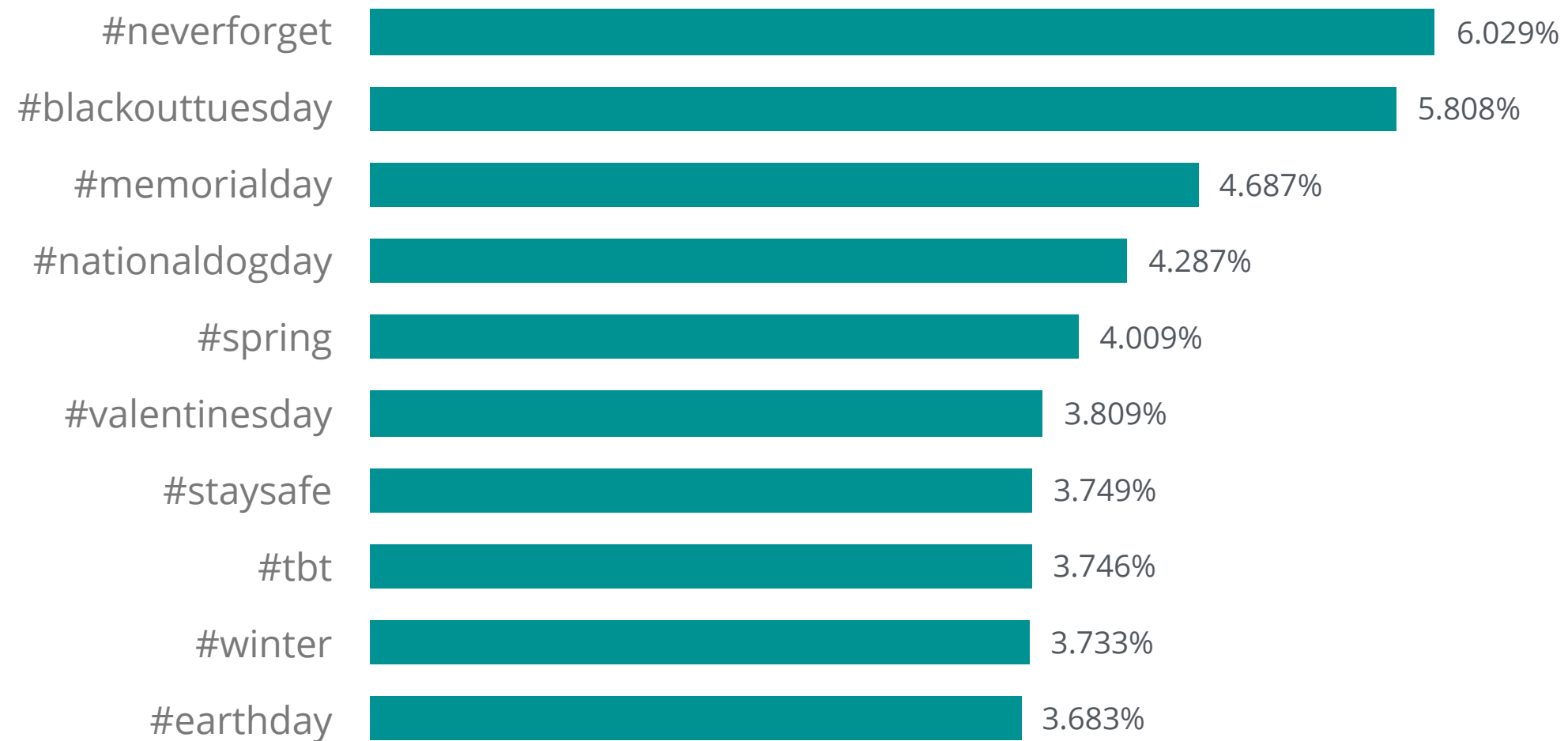
Higher Ed blew the doors off Instagram engagement rates, especially with carousel posts. Just look at James Madison University for some carousel inspo: their most engaging post of the year was a series of snowy campus glamour shots.

Rival
IQ

HIGHER ED

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



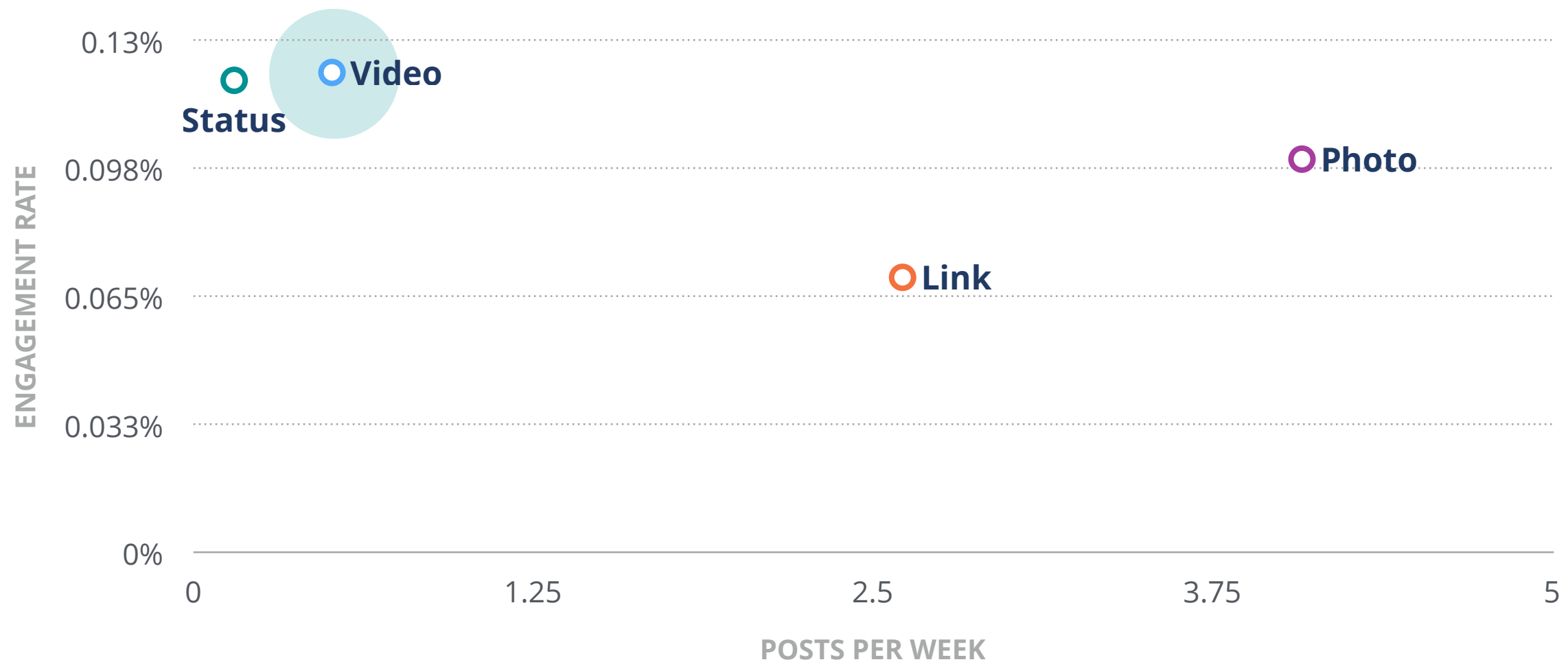
Higher Ed consistently sees the highest Instagram hashtag engagement rates of any industry we survey. These colleges and universities appealed to followers on Insta with social justice hashtags like #neverforget and #blackouttuesday.

Rival
IQ

HIGHER ED

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)



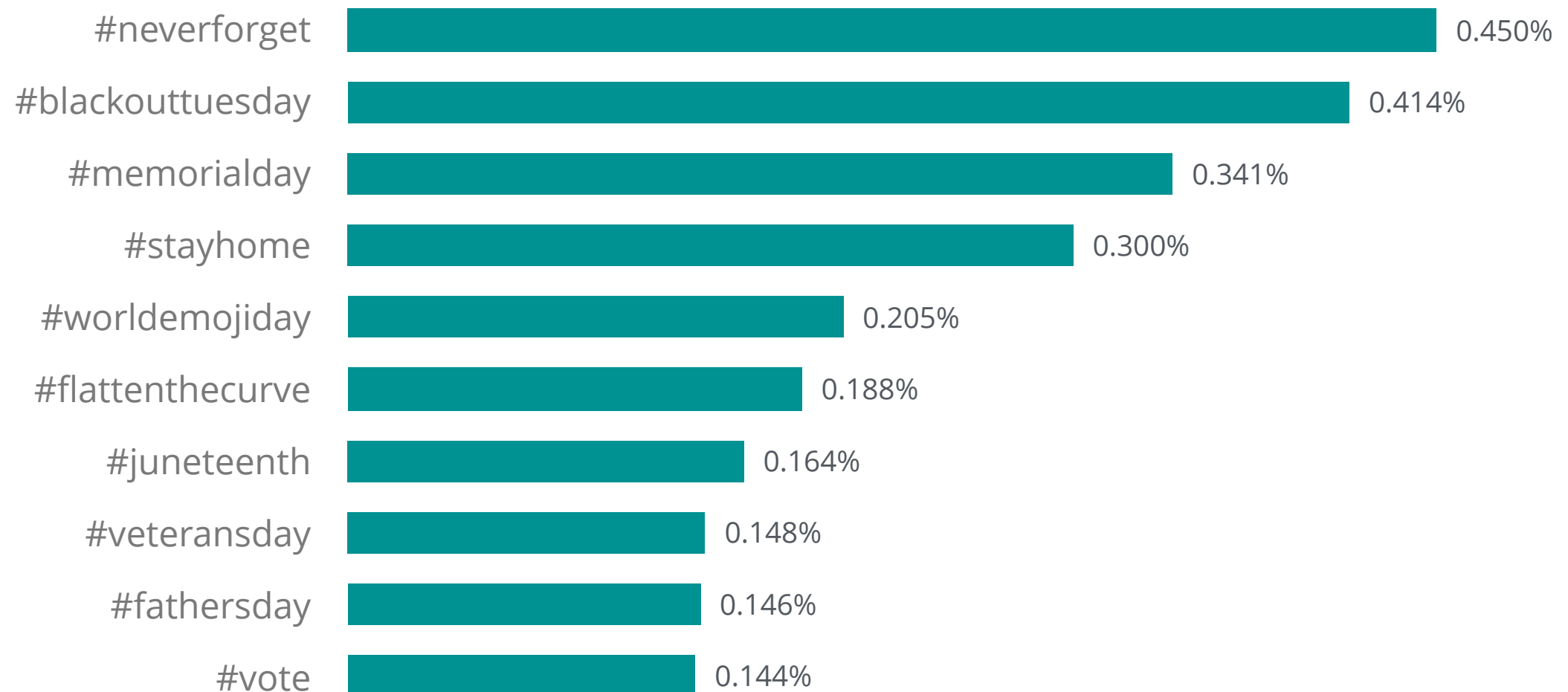
Higher Ed is a shining example of successful Twitter strategy, but these colleges and universities could succeed even more by tweeting more statuses and videos.

Rival
IQ

HIGHER ED

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Colleges and universities inspired their followers on Twitter with hashtags like #blackouttuesday, #juneteenth, and #vote.

Rival
IQ



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Home Decor



HOME DECOR Overview

Home Decor See Low Engagement Rates Again

Home Decor brands came in below the median engagement rates on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These brands weren't frequent posters on Facebook or Twitter, but definitely put more effort into Insta this year.

Some ideas for increasing engagement:

- Combine photos on Instagram into carousels.
- Bulk up your hashtag game on Twitter, and don't be afraid to take a page out of what's working on Instagram with interior design hashtags.



A few examples from
Home Decor companies



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

4.5

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.07%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

4.5

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

0.70%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

1.8

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.028%

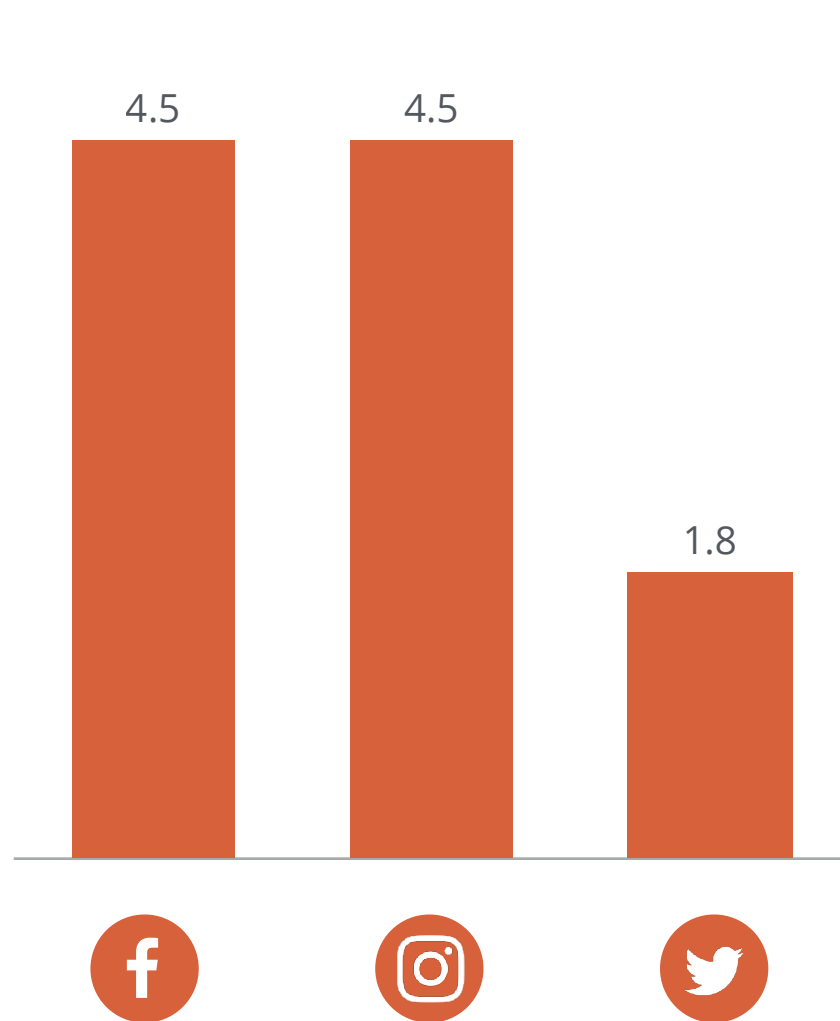
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

**Rival
IQ**

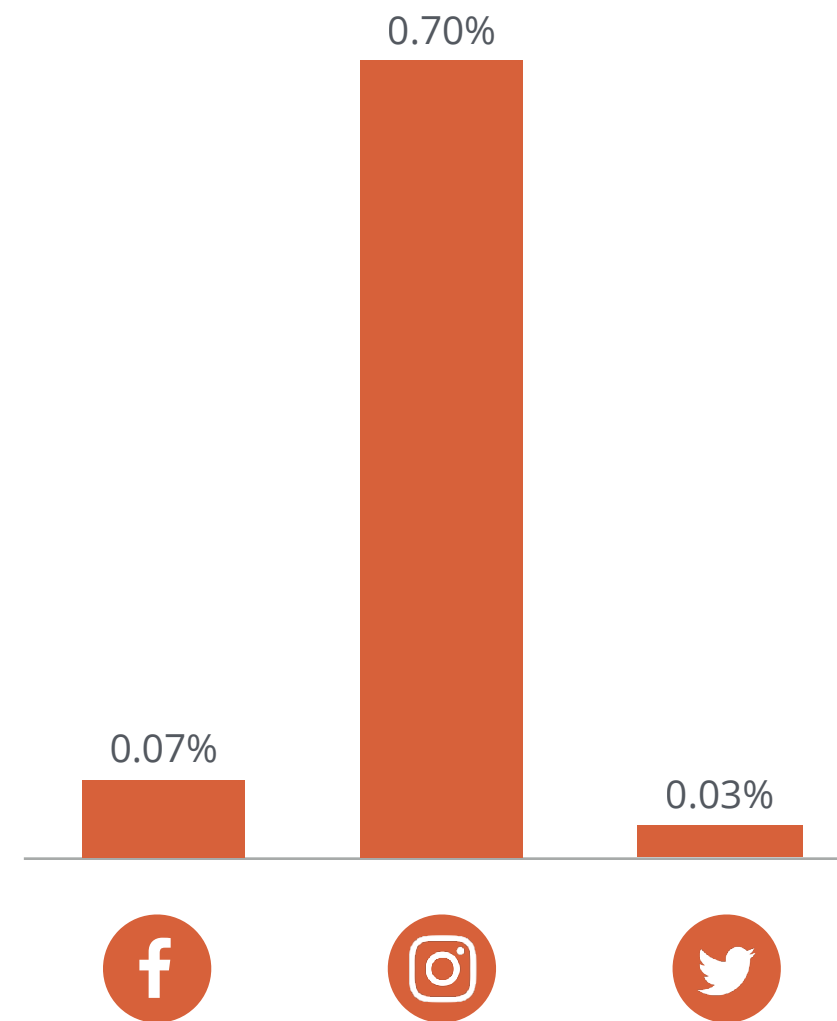
HOME DECOR

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

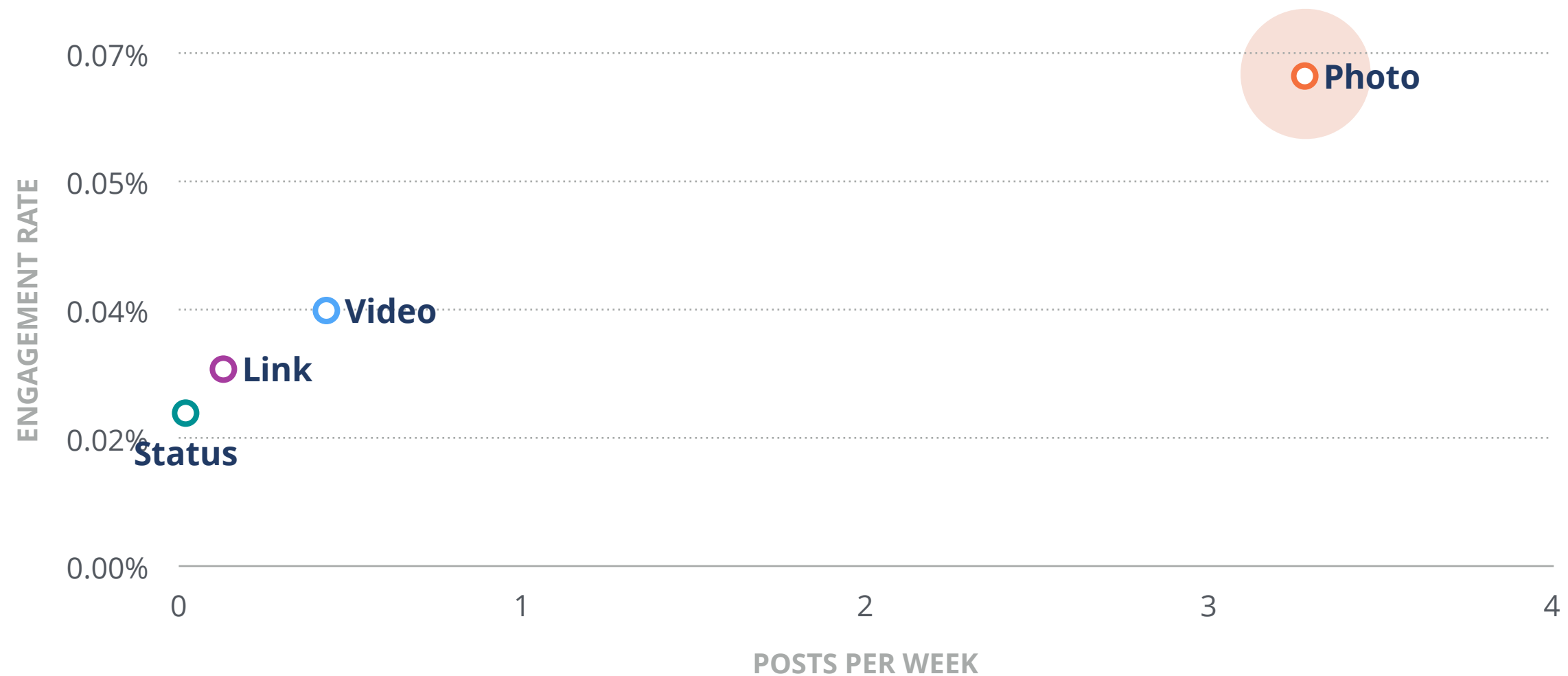


Home Decor brands stepped up their posting frequency on Instagram this year, but lagged behind the median engagement rates on all three channels.

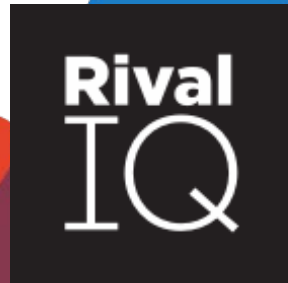
HOME DECOR

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



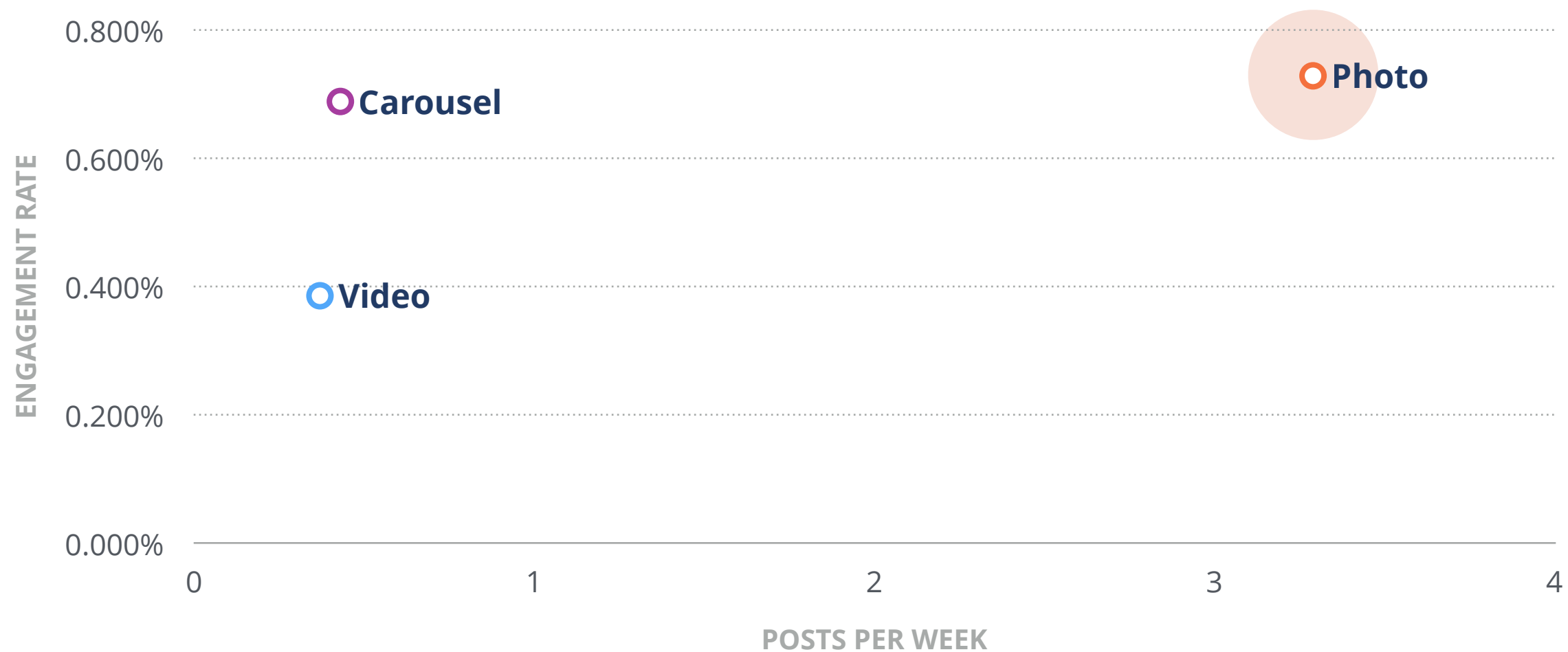
Photos won out over other post types on Facebook for Home Decor brands.



HOME DECOR

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



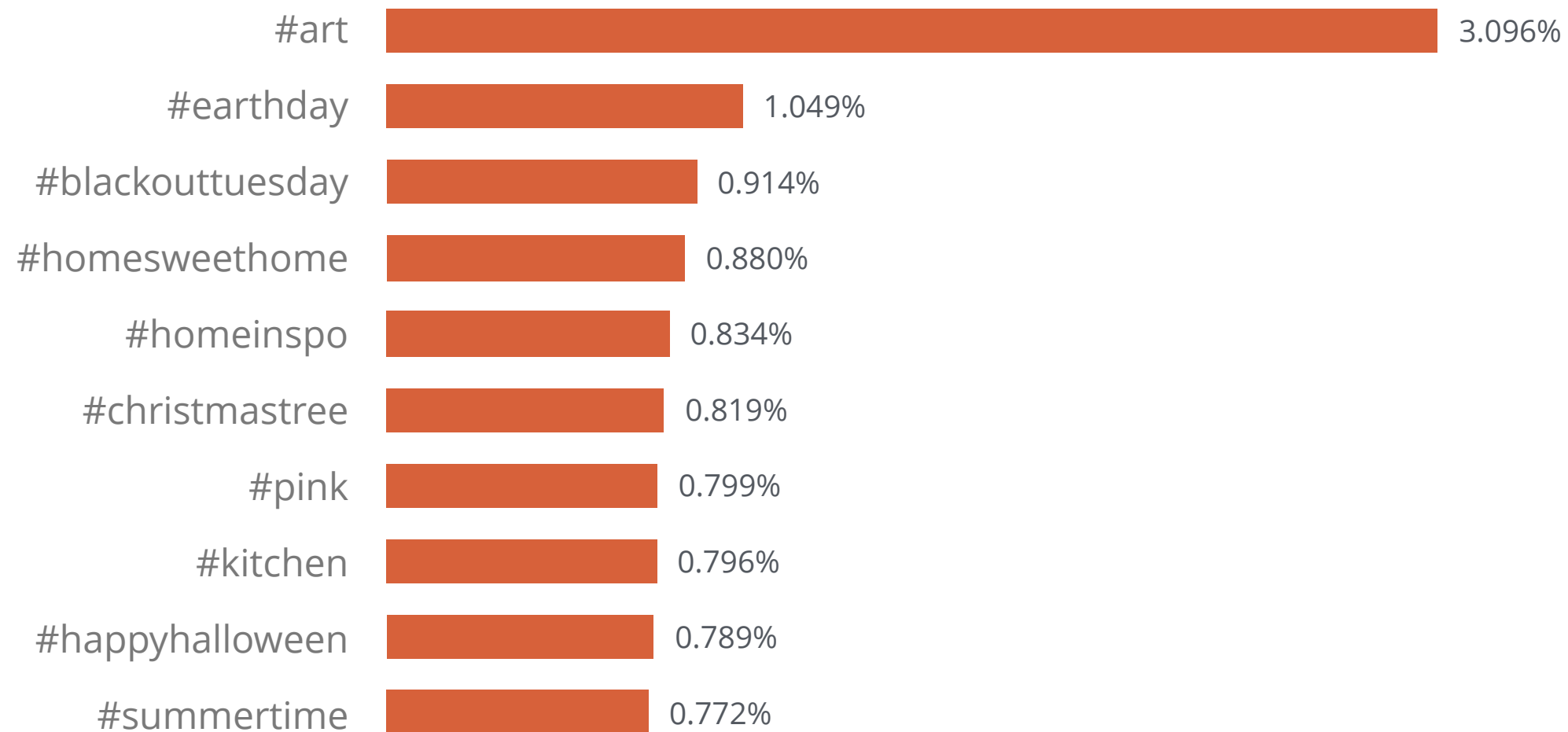
Home Decor stepped up its carousel posting frequency on Instagram this year, which is a smart move considering the consistently stellar engagement rates for that post type.

Rival
IQ

HOME DECOR

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

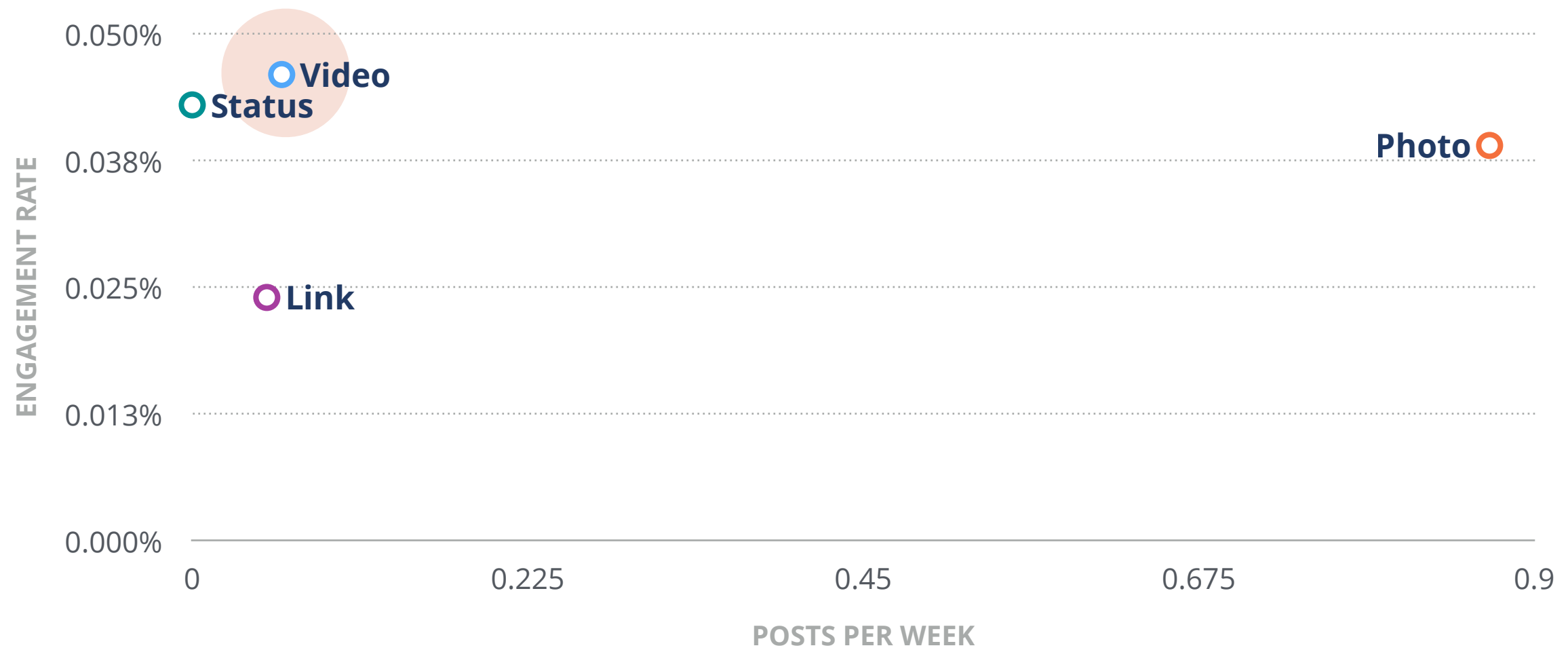


Home Decor's Insta hashtags like #homesweethome and #homeinspo were hyper-relevant to the industry. Fine Art America killed it with super-engaging posts featuring the #art hashtag.

HOME DECOR

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

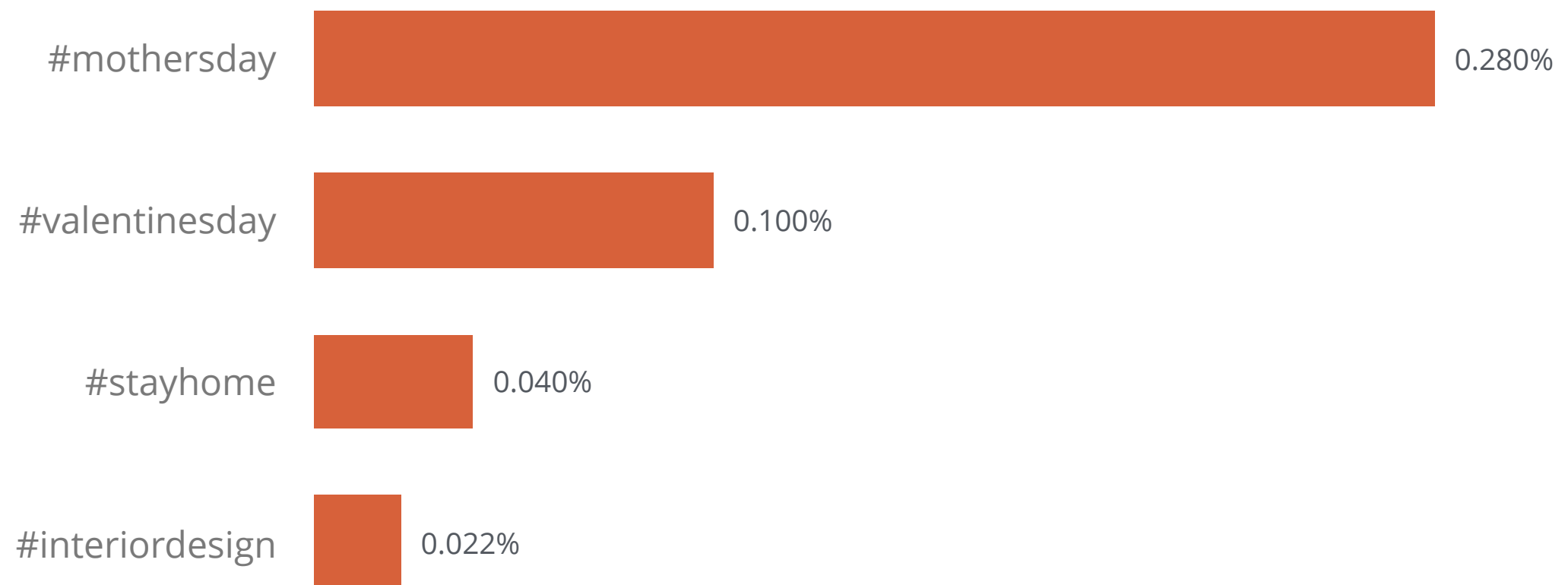


Home Decor brands tweeted fewer photos per week this year, and might want to look into increasing video tweets for a bigger engagement rate oomph.

HOME DECOR

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Home Decor brands were all over the map with Twitter hashtags this year, which is why there are just a few on this list used by 15 or more companies in the study.

Rival
IQ

INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Hotels & Resorts

HOTELS & RESORTS

Overview

Hotels & Resorts Holding Steady

Hotels & Resorts pulled off the impossible in a year of challenging times for social media (and especially travel brands): they increased engagement slightly on Facebook and Twitter while holding steady on Instagram.

A few suggestions to grow engagement:

- Visuals are key for helping followers dream about their next vacation, so focus on photos and videos.
- Posting frequency was below-median across the board, so experiment with an uptick here to see if you can increase your current engagement rates.



A few examples from
Hotels & Resorts



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

3.2

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.14%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

2.9

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.01%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

1.5

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.049%

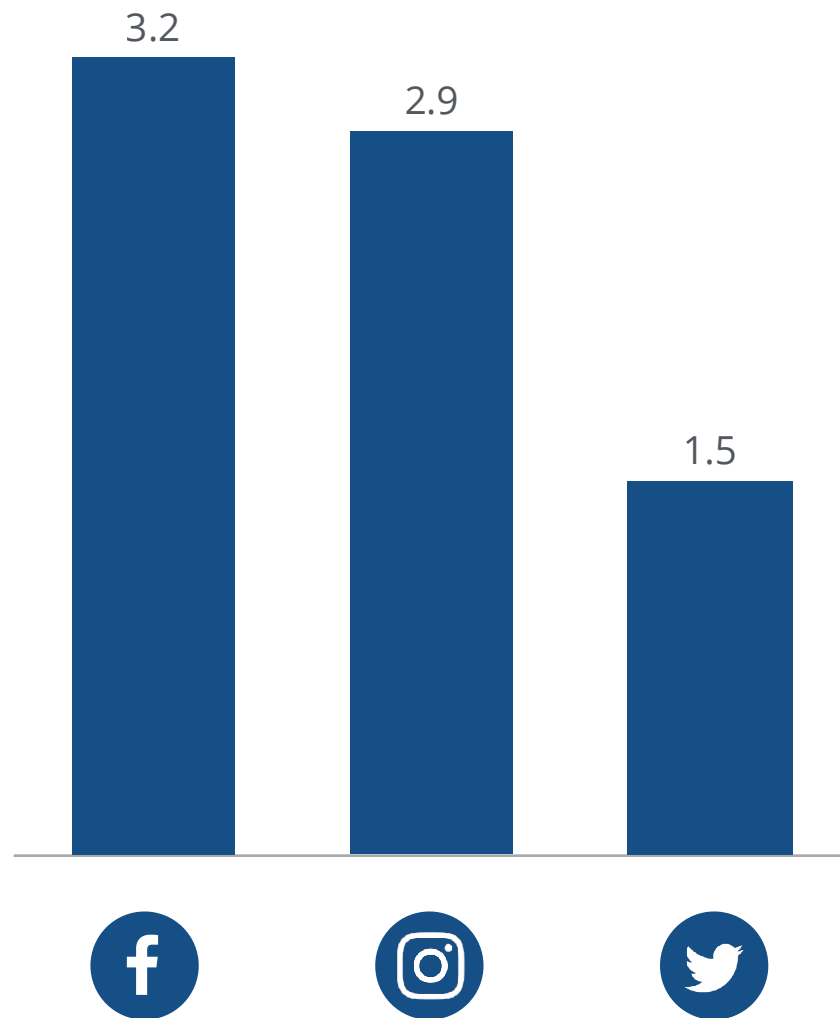
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

**Rival
IQ**

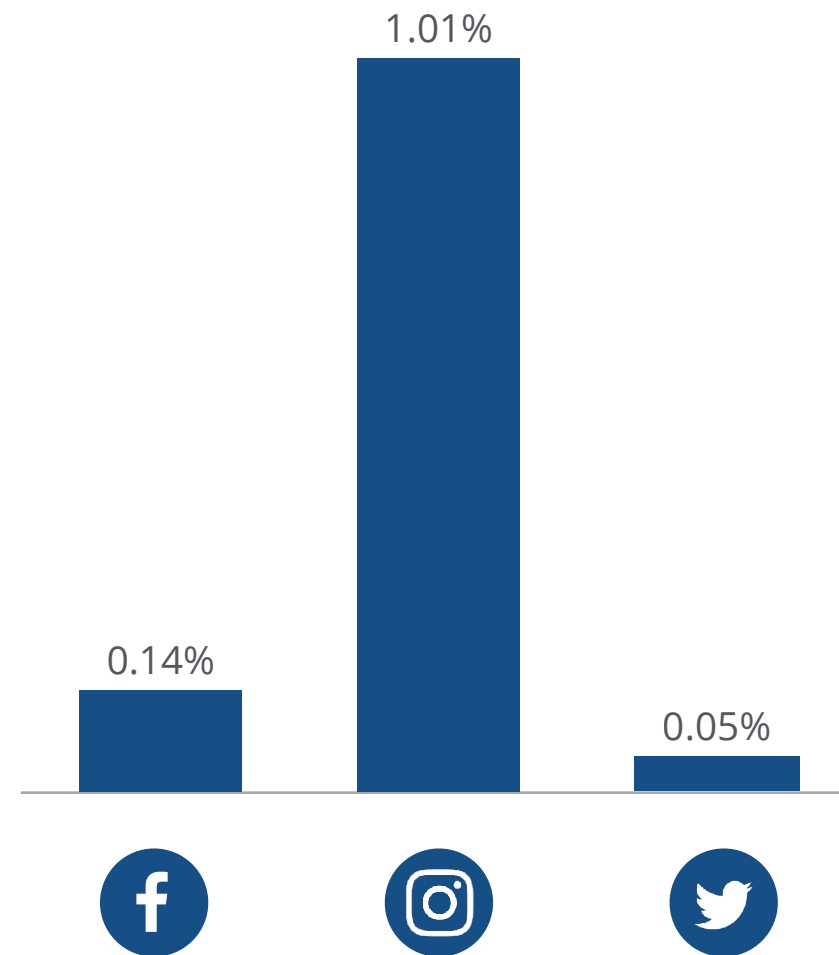
HOTELS & RESORTS

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



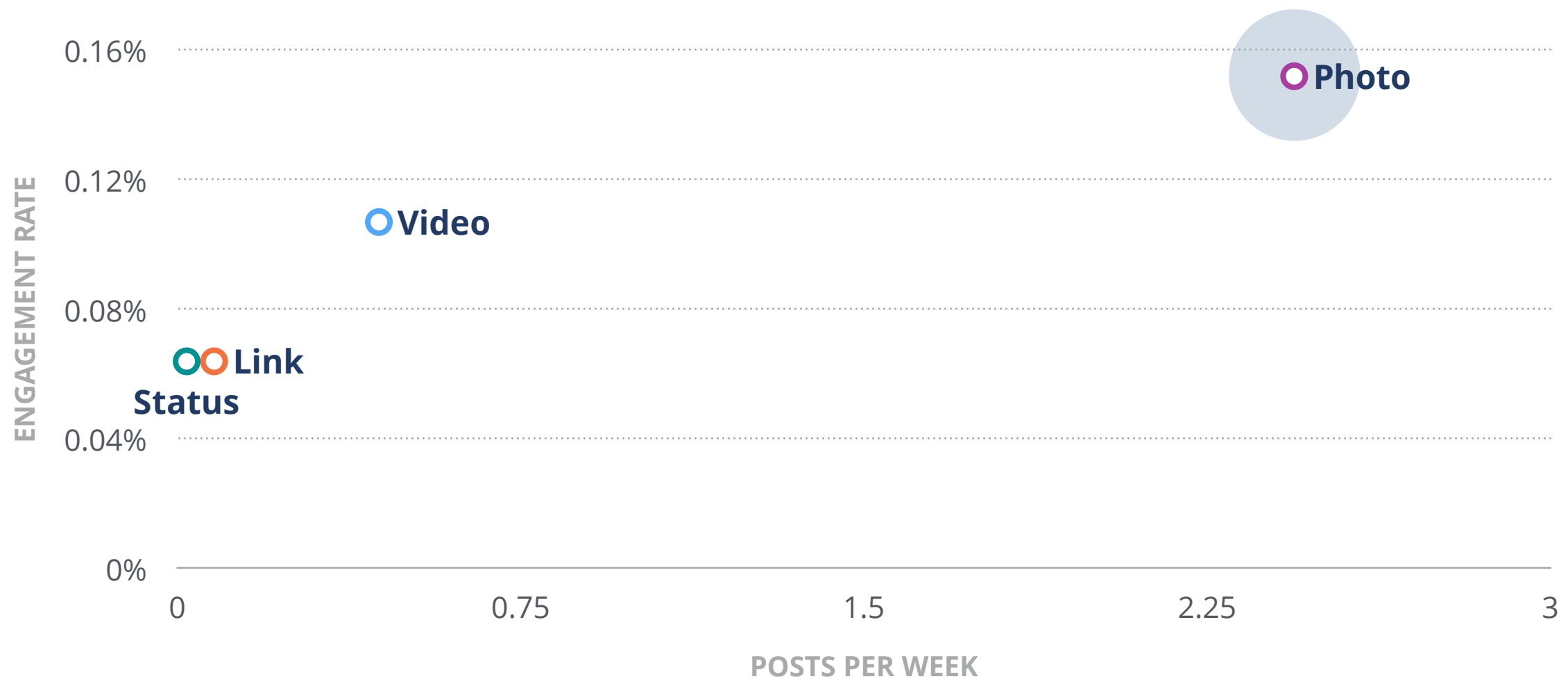
Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



Hotels & Resorts came in at or above median for engagement rates across all three channels.

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

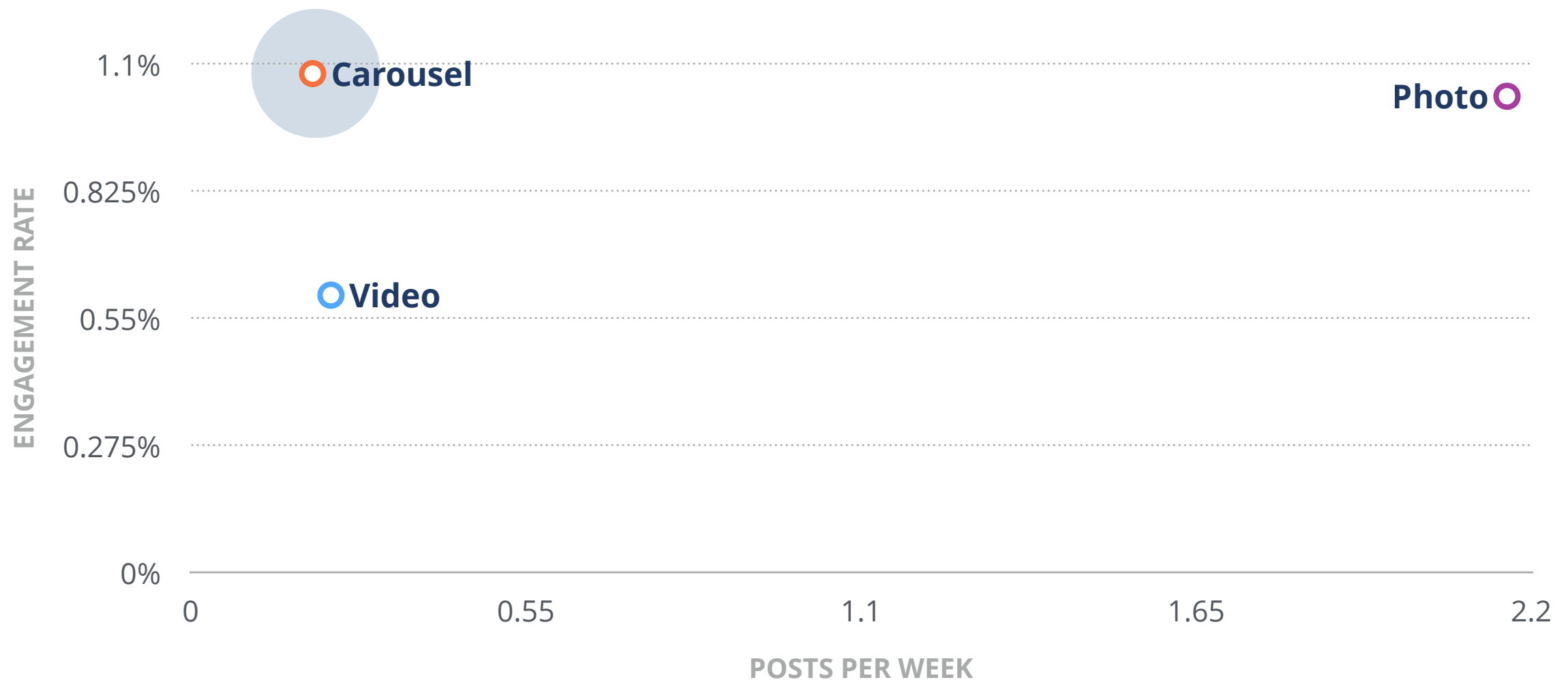


Photos inspired followers to dream about their next vacation this year on Facebook.

HOTELS & RESORTS

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

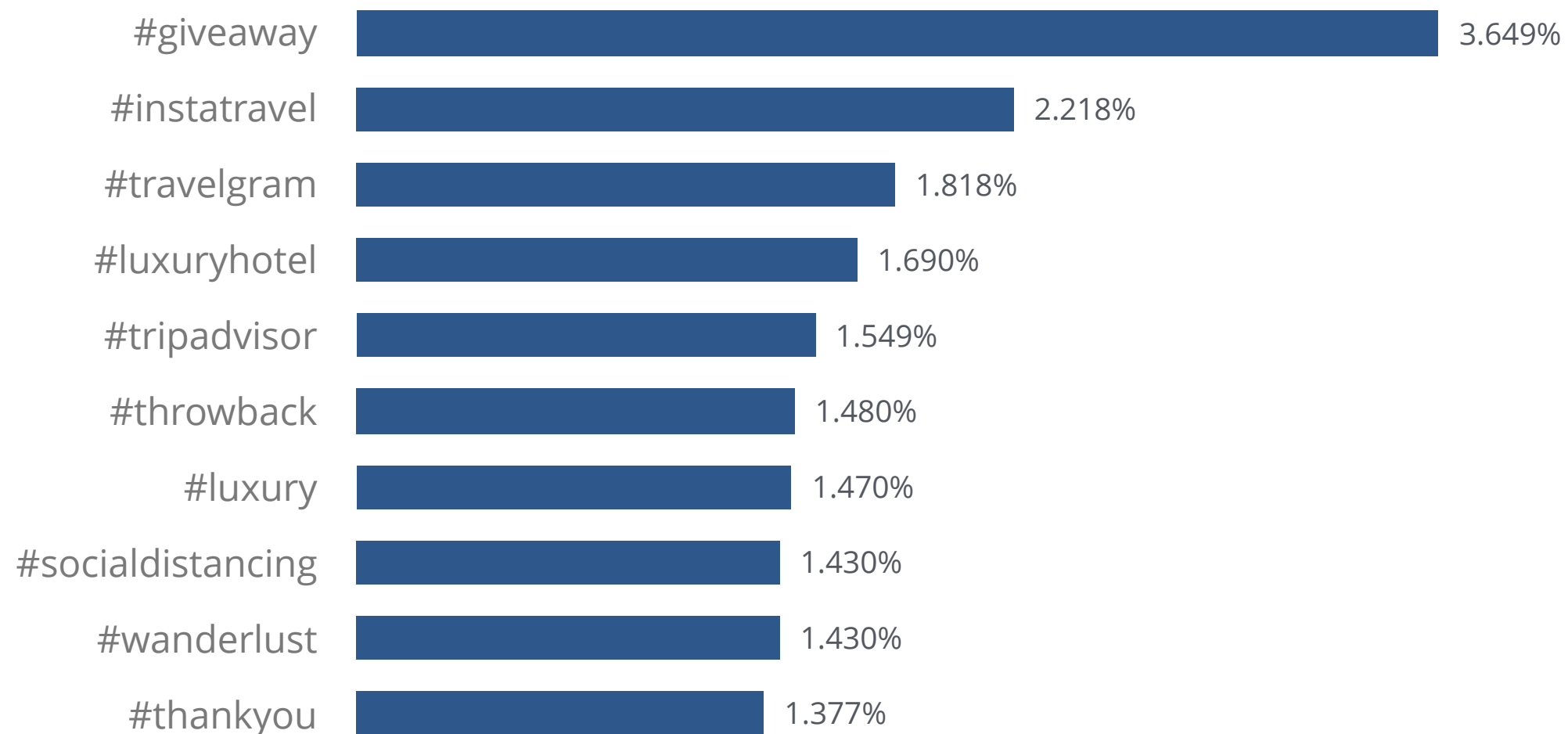


Hotels & Resorts saw an engagement rate increase for carousel posts this year, so they should consider combining more photos into carousels to boost their Insta engagement.

HOTELS & RESORTS

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

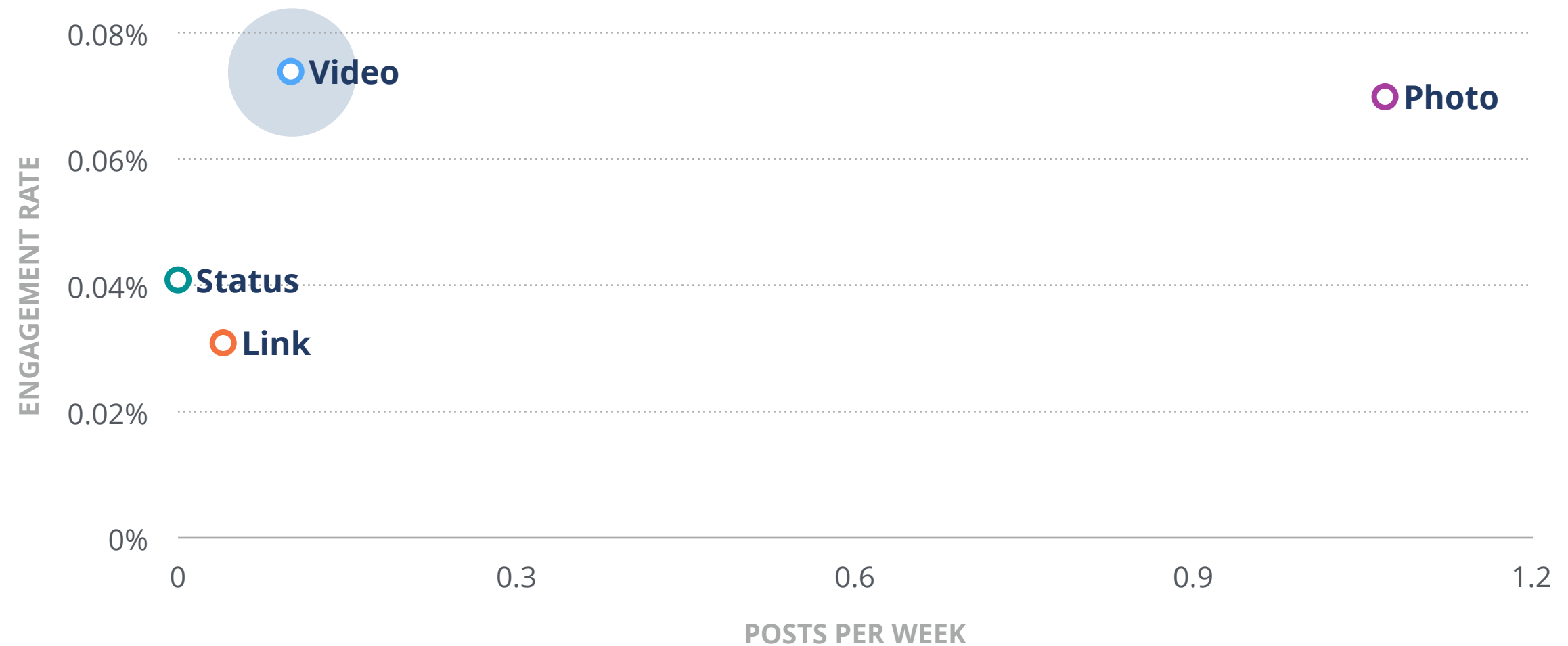


Contests and giveaways captured the attention of many Hotels & Resorts followers this year on Instagram. Hashtags that helped followers imagine relaxing getaways like #throwback and #wanderlust also performed well.

HOTELS & RESORTS

🐦 Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

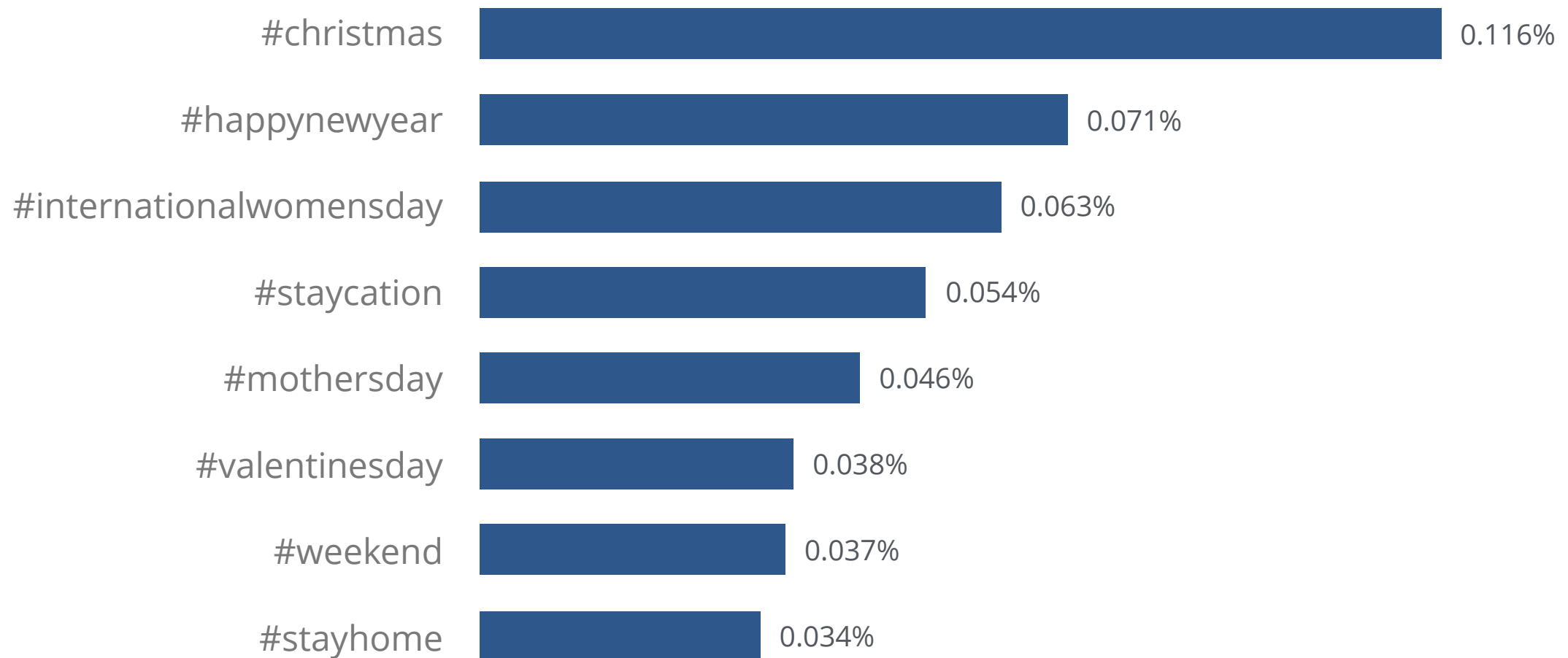


Hotels & Resorts saw an increase in engagement rates for both photo and video tweets this year despite a tough year for travel. These tweet types are an especially good place to put effort this year.

HOTELS & RESORTS

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Twitter hashtags for Hotels & Resorts were all about the holidays this year to help followers plan (or dream of) holiday getaways.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Influencers





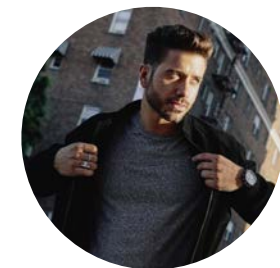
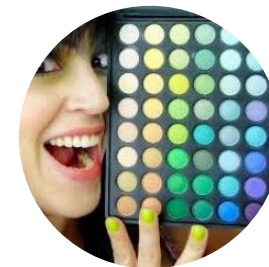
INFLUENCERS Overview

Influencers Dominating on Facebook

Influencers doubled the median engagement rate on Facebook for a first-place win, and also killed it on Instagram with engagement rates 50% higher than the median. Their posting frequency trended below the median as well, suggesting they've dialed in how often to post on social.

Ideas to boost that engagement even more:

- Photos on Facebook are your best friend, so keep up the momentum there.
- Don't be afraid of an Instagram #ad with great content.



A few examples from Influencers



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

4.9

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.19%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

3.6

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.42%



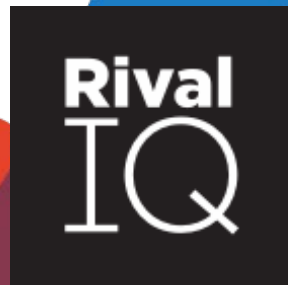
TWEETS
PER WEEK

3.7

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.036%

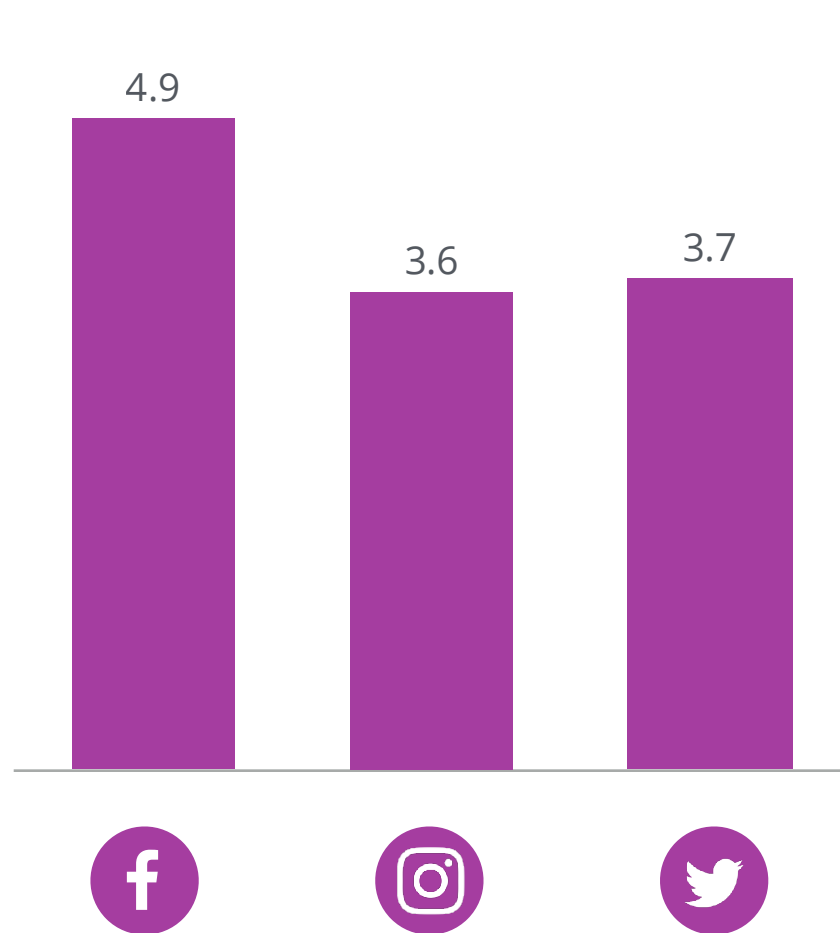
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►



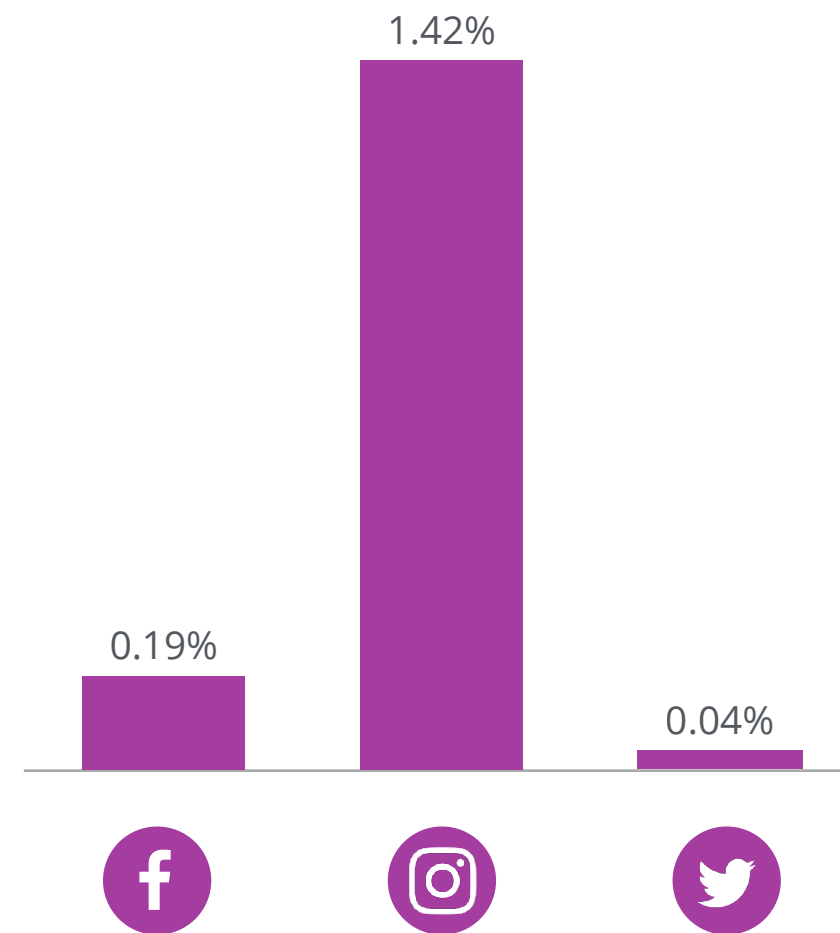
INFLUENCERS

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

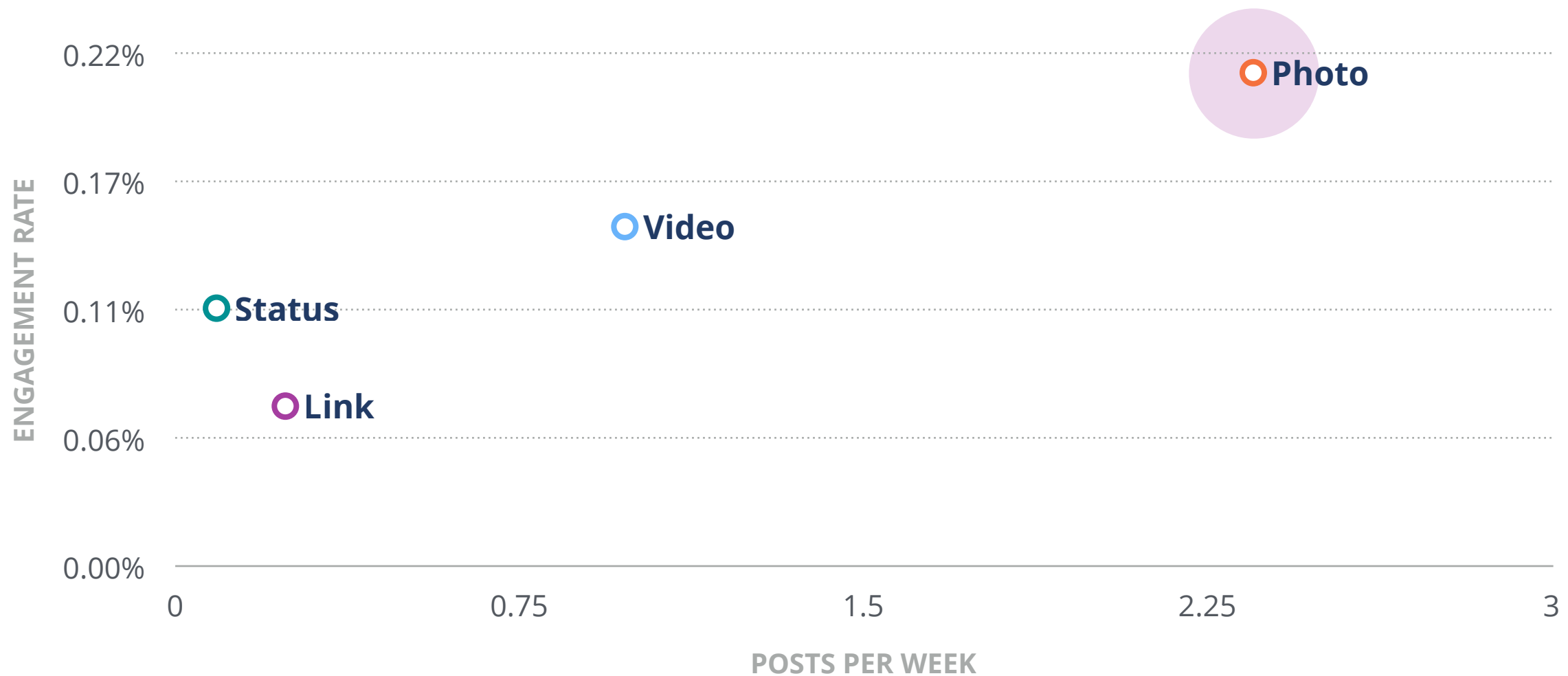


Influencers won the day on Facebook once again with 2x the median engagement rate.

INFLUENCERS

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

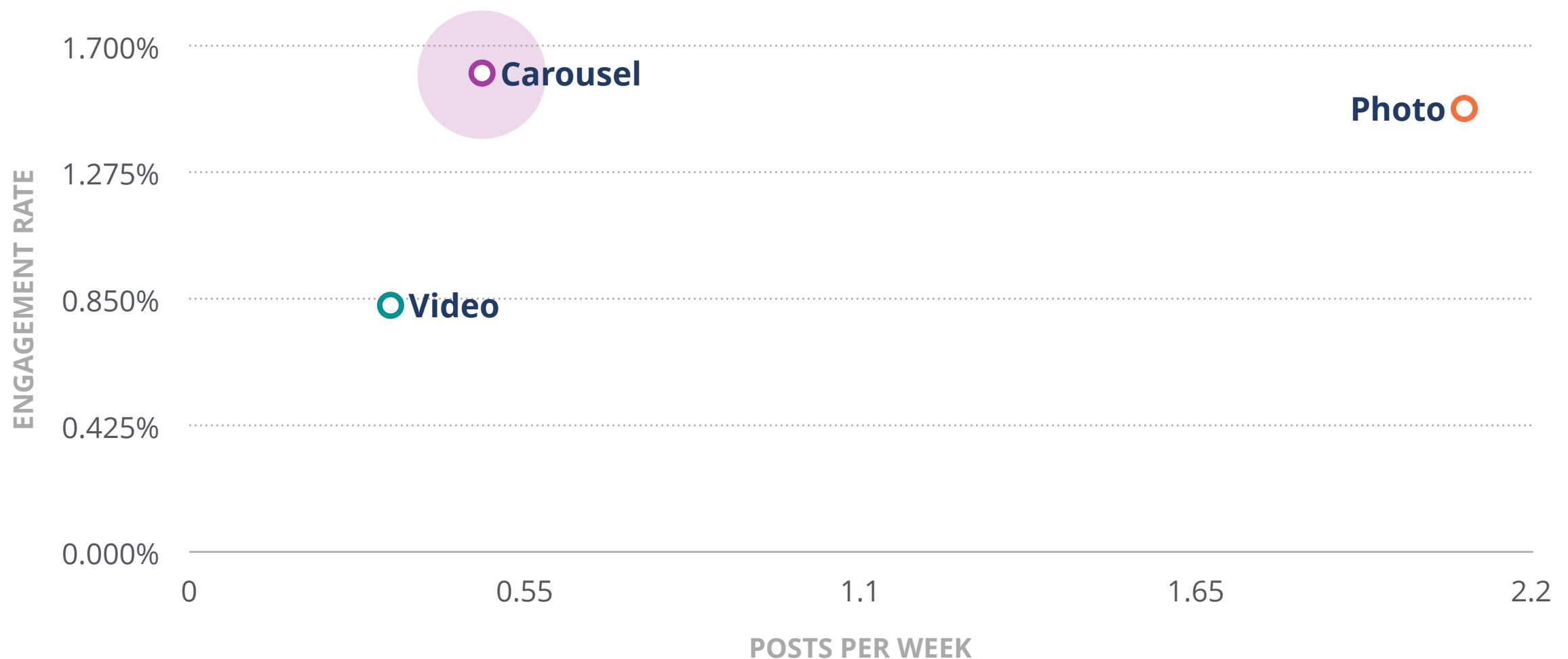


A 30% increase in photo engagement helped Influencers boost Facebook engagement rates this year.

INFLUENCERS

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

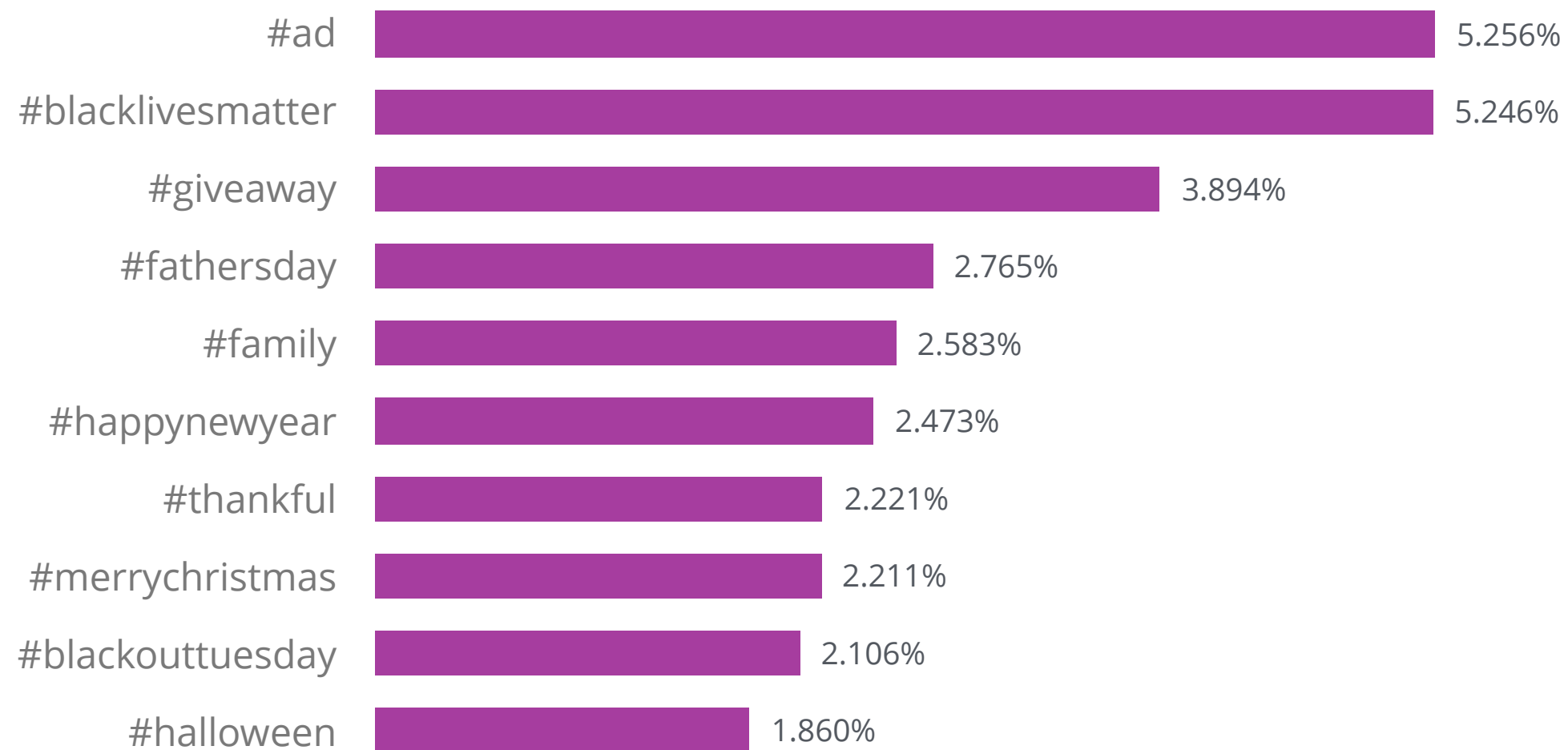


Influencers saw a decrease in engagement rates for every post type on Instagram this year, and might want to put a little more energy behind high-performing carousels.

INFLUENCERS

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

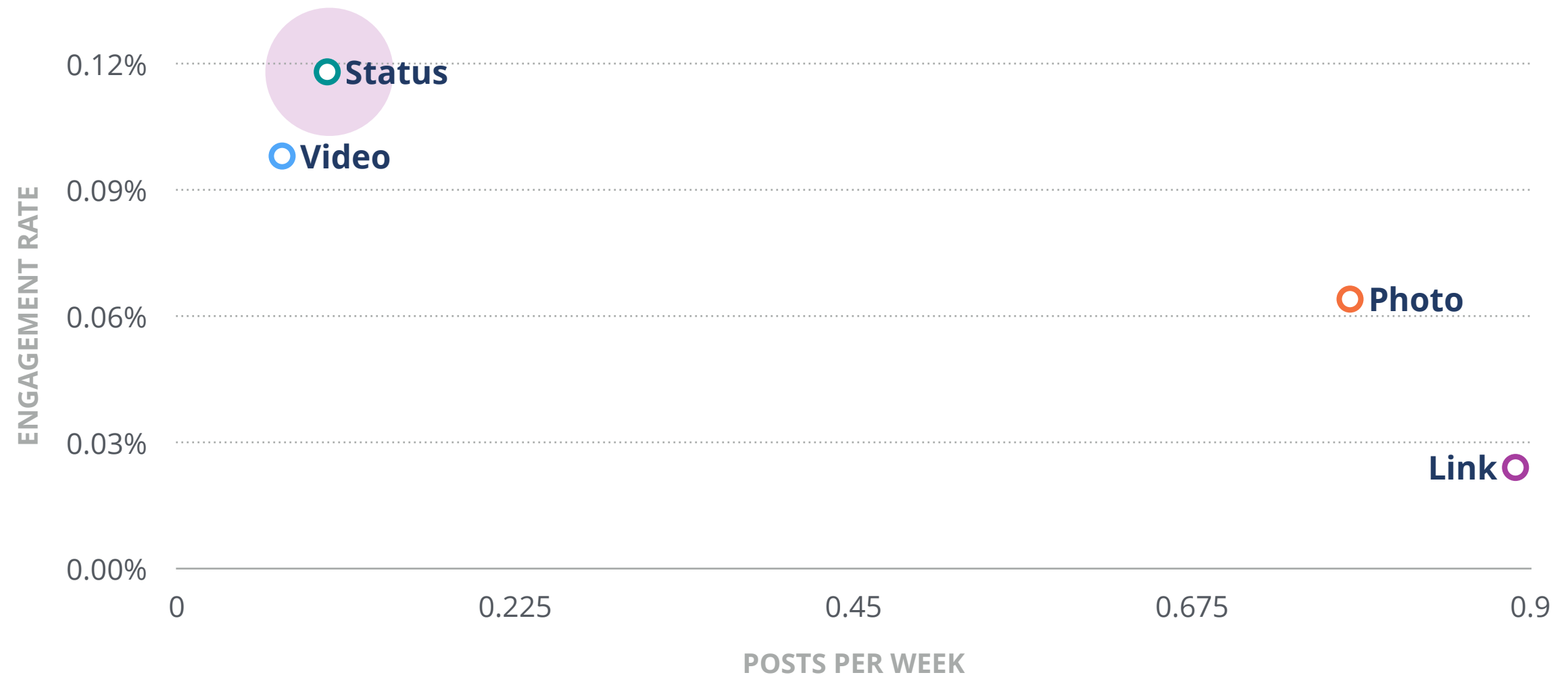


Influencers saw stellar engagement rates on Instagram this year with hashtags ranging from commercial (#ad) to activist (#blacklivesmatter).

INFLUENCERS

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

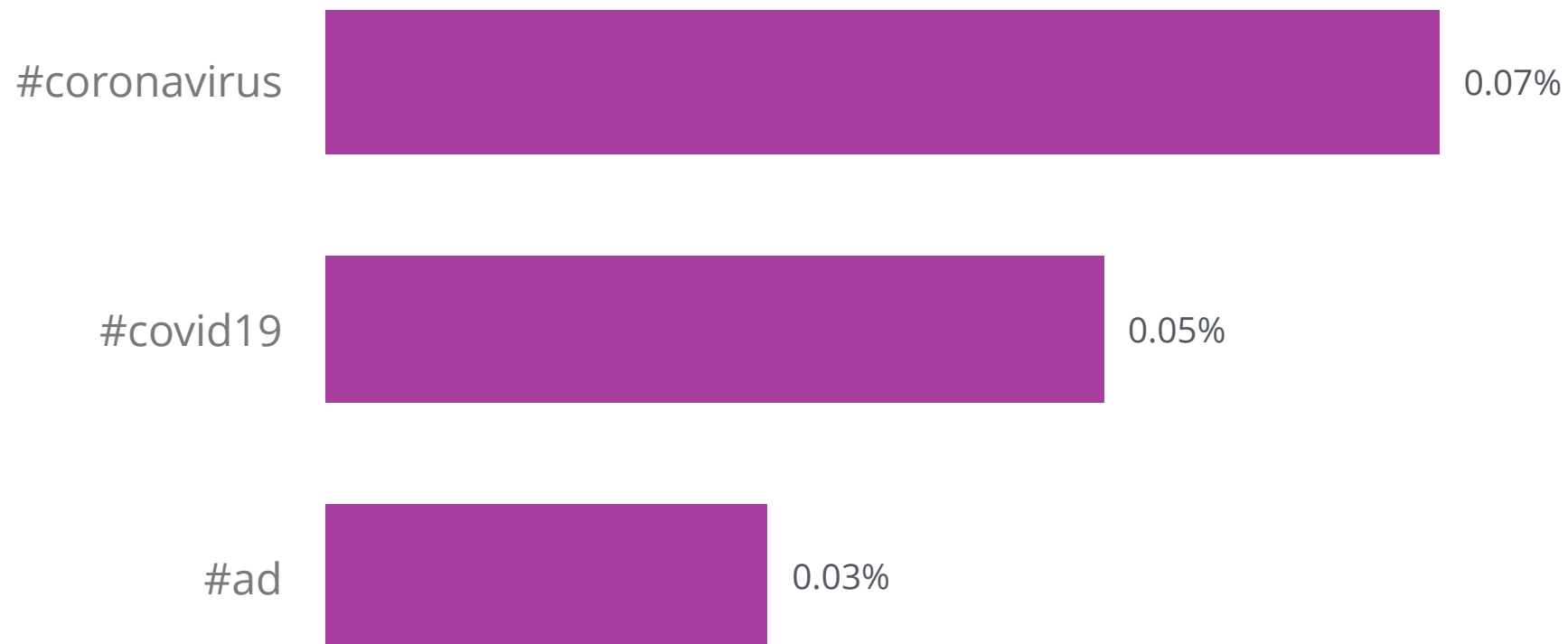


Status updates were the most engaging tweet type for Influencers this year but were tweeted infrequently.

INFLUENCERS

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Influencers saw diverse hashtag success on Twitter this year with just three hashtags shared between 15 or more influencers on Twitter. Interesting to see #ad working better for Influencers on Instagram than on Twitter.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Media



MEDIA

Overview

Media Companies Top Posters (by frequency)

Media saw the highest posting frequency again this year while still garnering below-median engagement rates. Posting so often drives down any industry's engagement rates because there are only so many impressions to go around.

A few ideas to improve engagement rates:

- Followers loved the #throwback, so don't be afraid to go beyond current events.
- Visual posts like photos and videos topped the Media charts for every social channel, so try shaking up the links and statuses.



A few examples from Media companies



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

53.5

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.05%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

6.5

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

0.82%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

52.7

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.012%

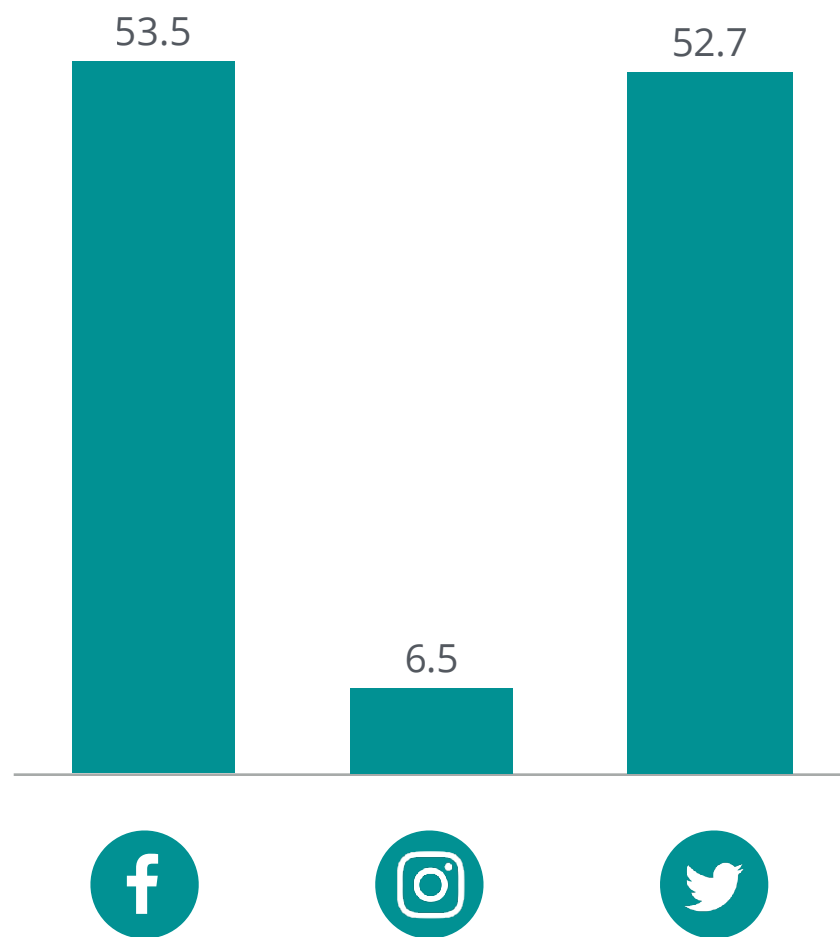
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

Rival
IQ

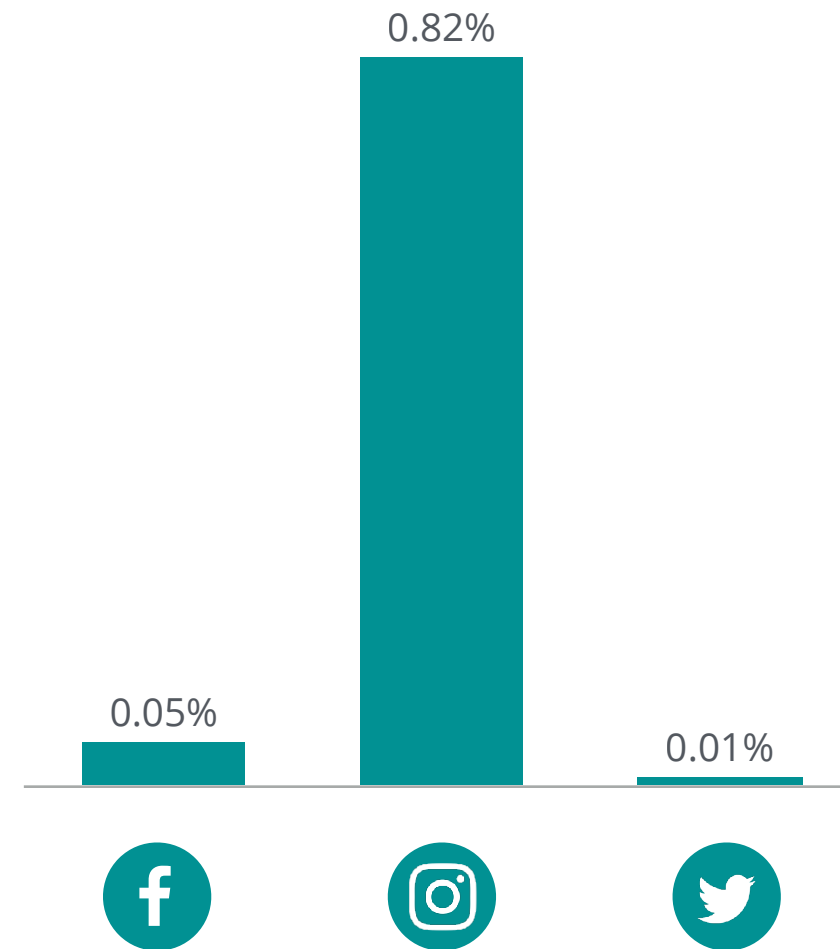
MEDIA

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



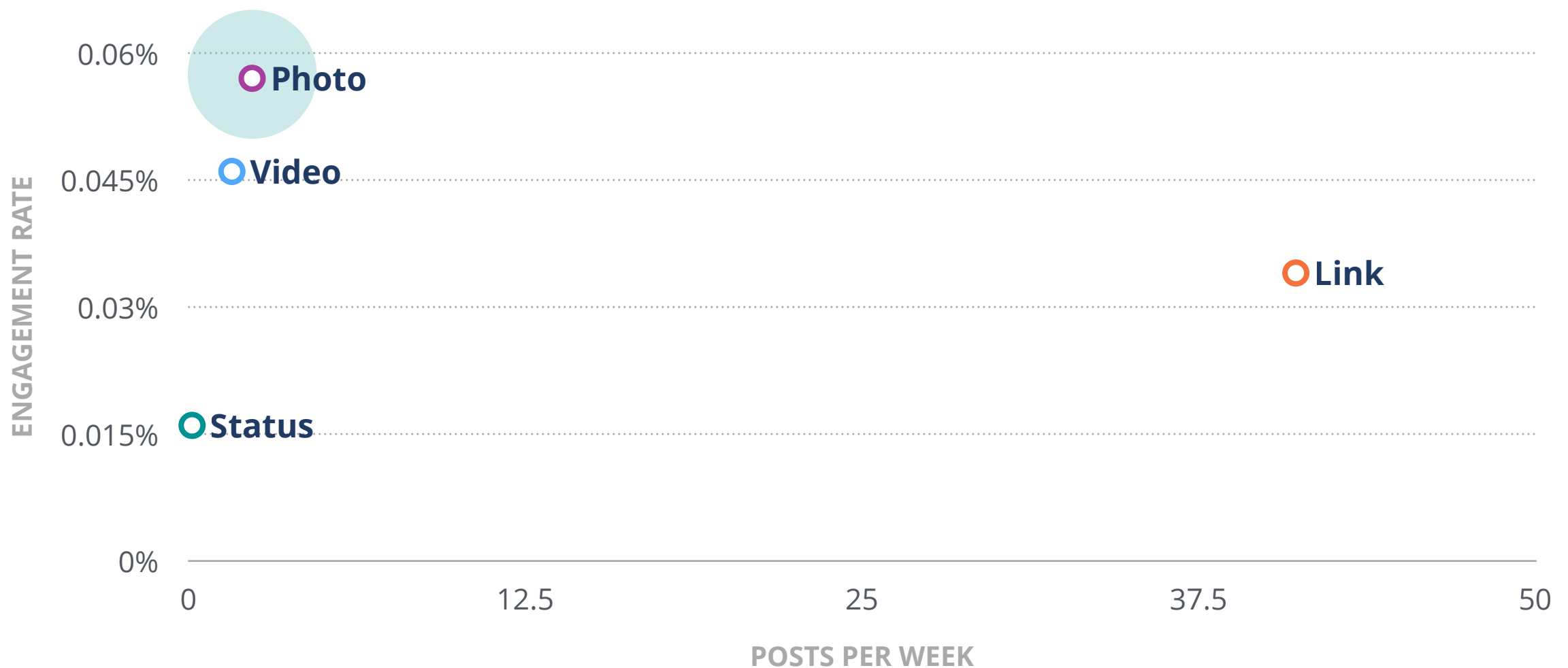
Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



As usual, Media brands had a lot to say on social this year, especially on Facebook and Twitter.

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

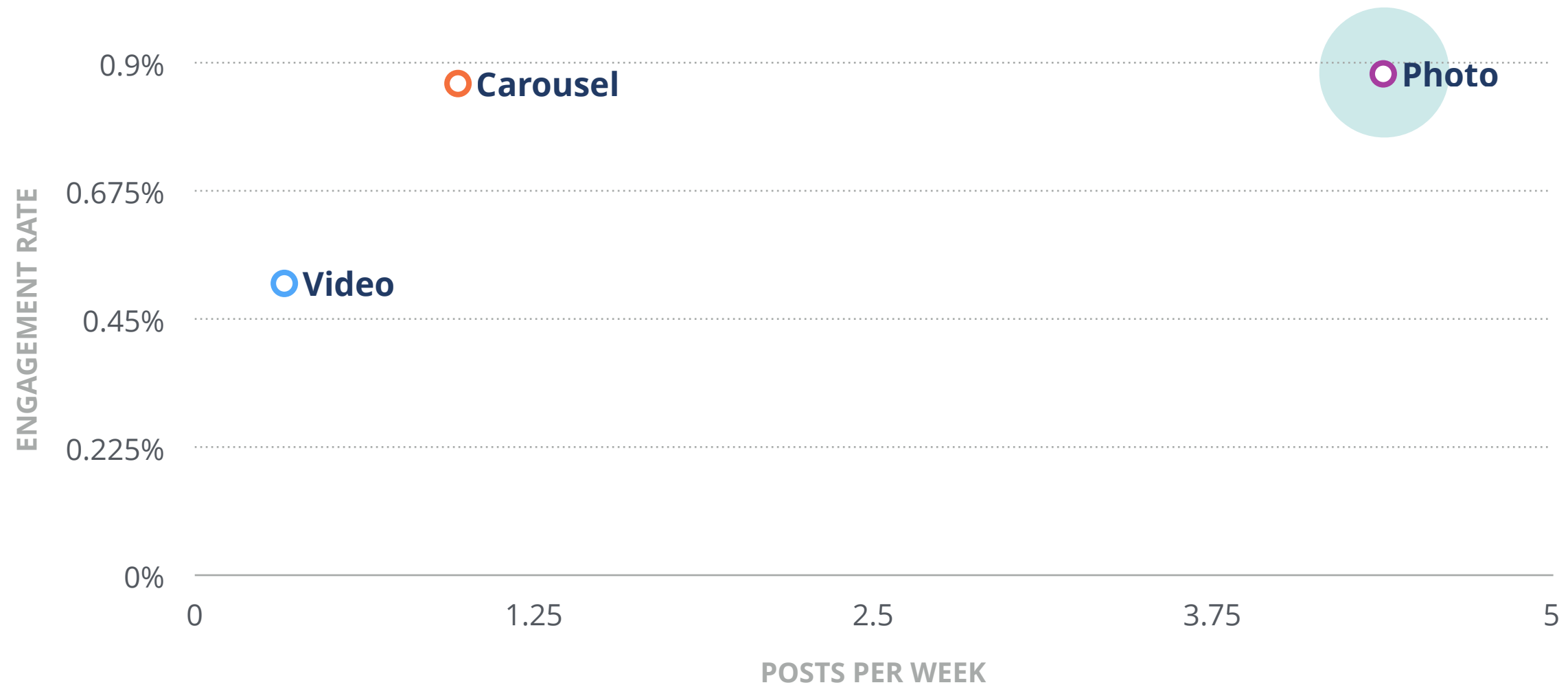


Facebook engagement rates by post type stayed pretty consistent for Media brands this year with the exception of links, which dropped in engagement.

MEDIA

Instagram engagement by post type

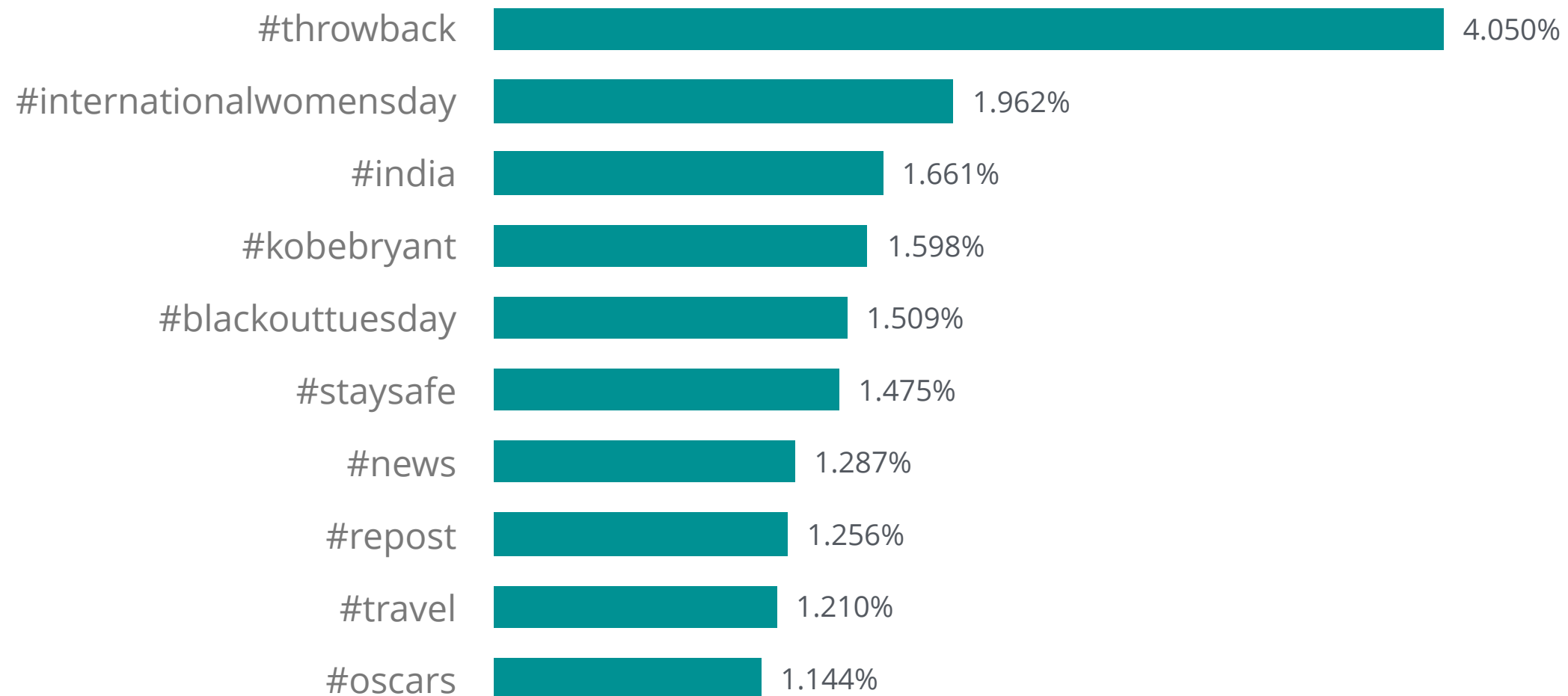
Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



Media ranked below the median engagement rate on Instagram this year despite posting twice as often as the median industry. Try bulking up carousel posting to get ahead on this ultra-visual channel.

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

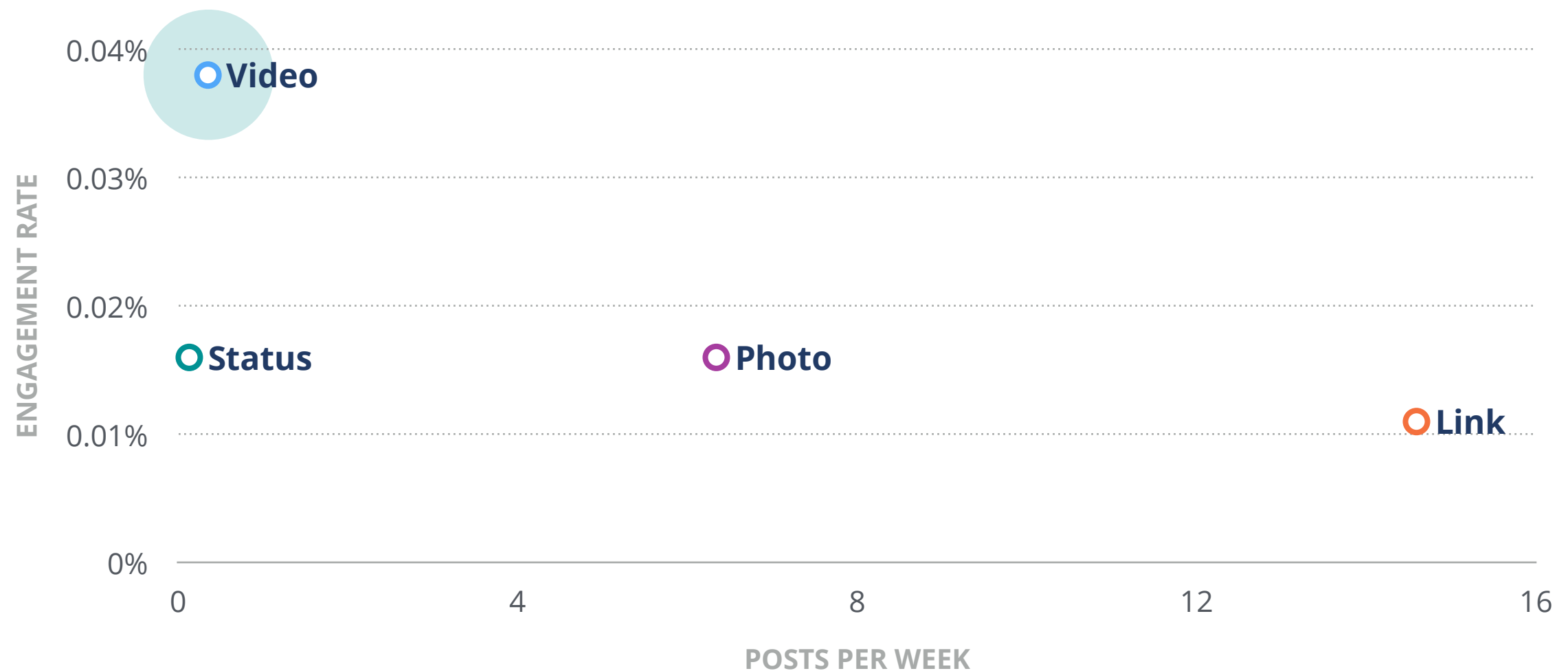


Media brands saw twice the engagement rates of the next most engaging hashtag by throwing it back to pre-pandemic times on Instagram this year.

MEDIA

🐦 Twitter engagement by tweet type

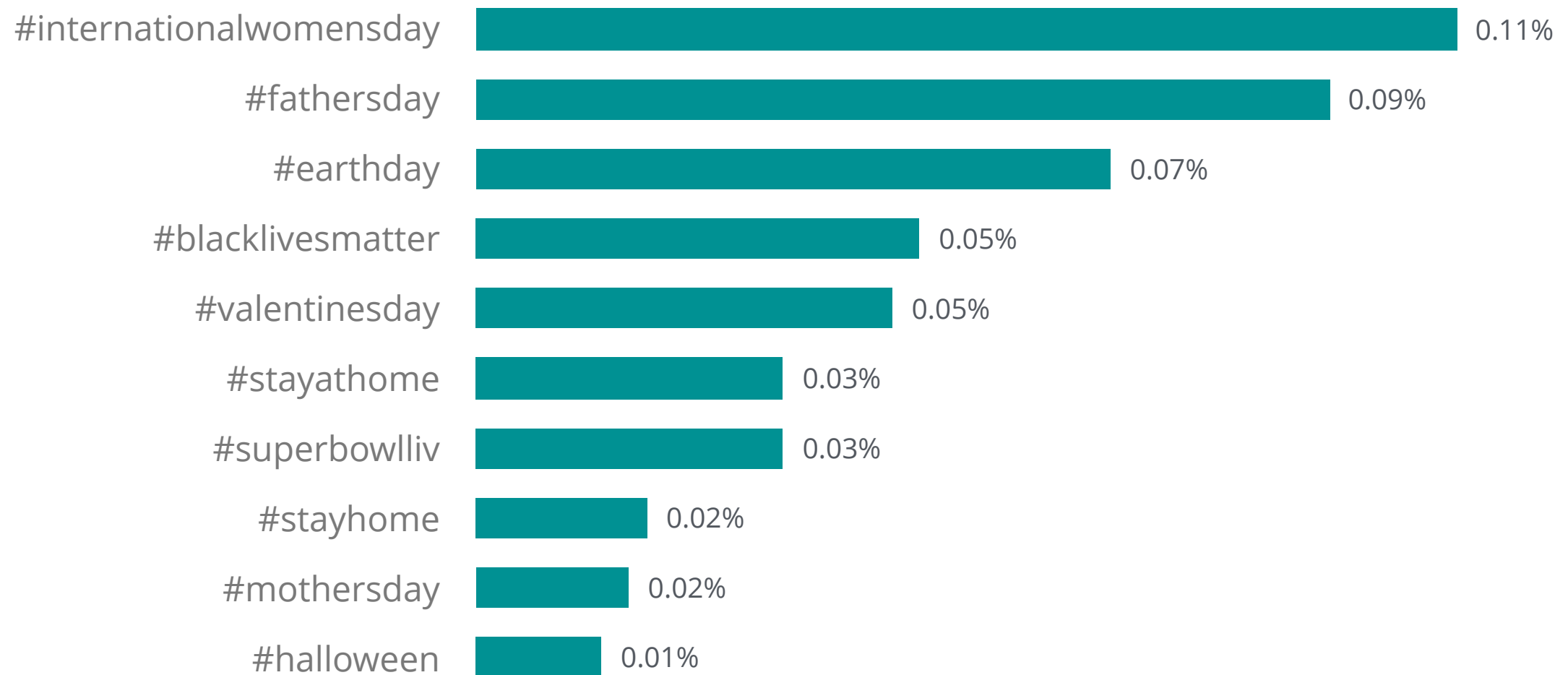
Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)



Media brands dropped their photo tweet type frequency this year and put more muscle behind posting links on Twitter. Media brands shouldn't sleep on video—they perform 3x as well as other tweet types.

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



More than half of Media's most engaging hashtags on Twitter were about holidays.

The Rival IQ logo is displayed in white text on a black rectangular background. The word "Rival" is positioned above the letters "IQ".

Rival
IQ

A solid red vertical bar is located on the left side of the page, partially overlapping the text.

INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Nonprofits

NONPROFITS Overview

Nonprofits Rocking It Across the Board

Nonprofits saw above-median engagement rates across all social channels this year, with flat engagement on Facebook and Twitter and a slight dip on Instagram.

Suggestions for Nonprofits:

- Try experimenting with posting frequency, especially on Facebook and Twitter, where Nonprofits are well above the frequency median.
- Video is a sure bet on Facebook and Twitter, so concentrate efforts there if video is on the strategy list this year.



A few examples from Nonprofits



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

9.2

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.13%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

4.0

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.41%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

11.1

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.055%

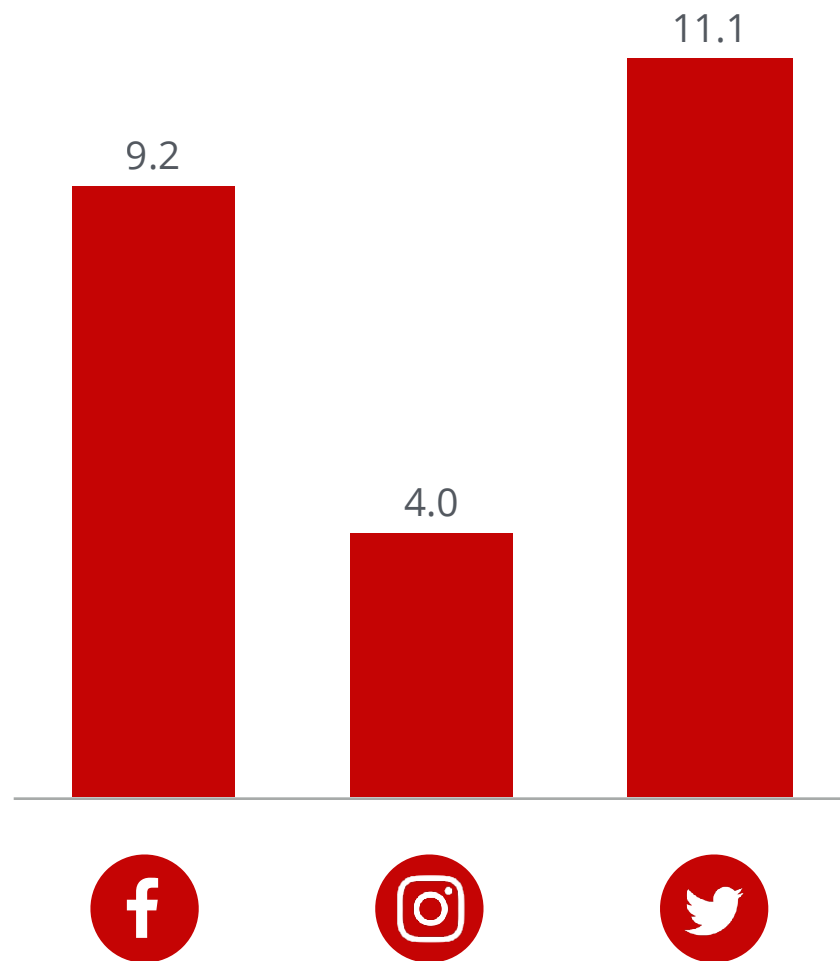
SEE WHERE YOU RANK WITH A FREE TRIAL OF RIVAL IQ ►

Rival
IQ

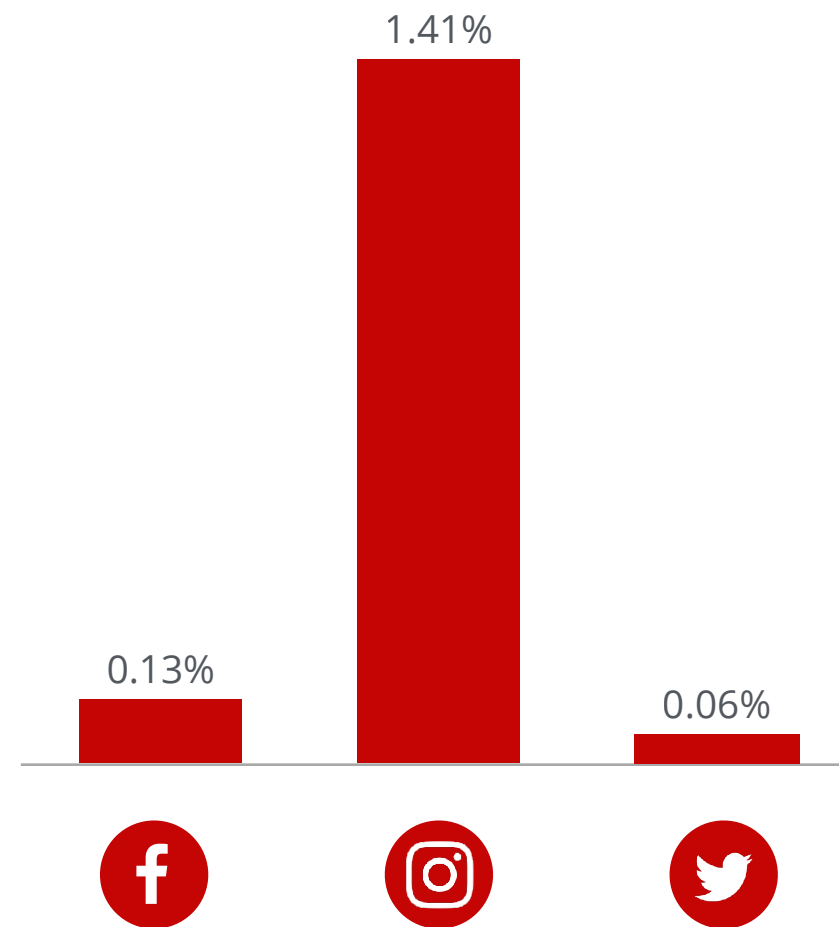
NONPROFITS

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

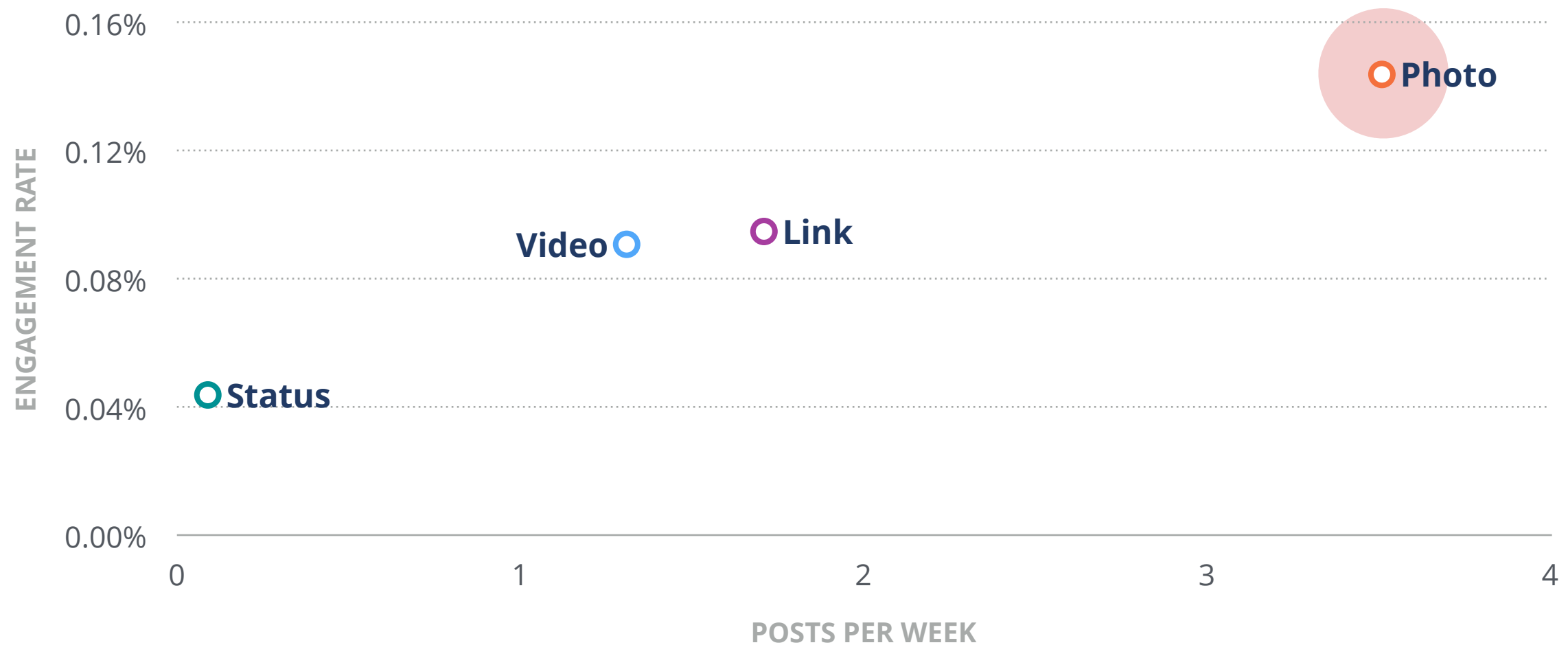


Nonprofits saw great engagement rates and were at or above the posting frequency median on all three channels this year, suggesting their considerable efforts are being rewarded.

NONPROFITS

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



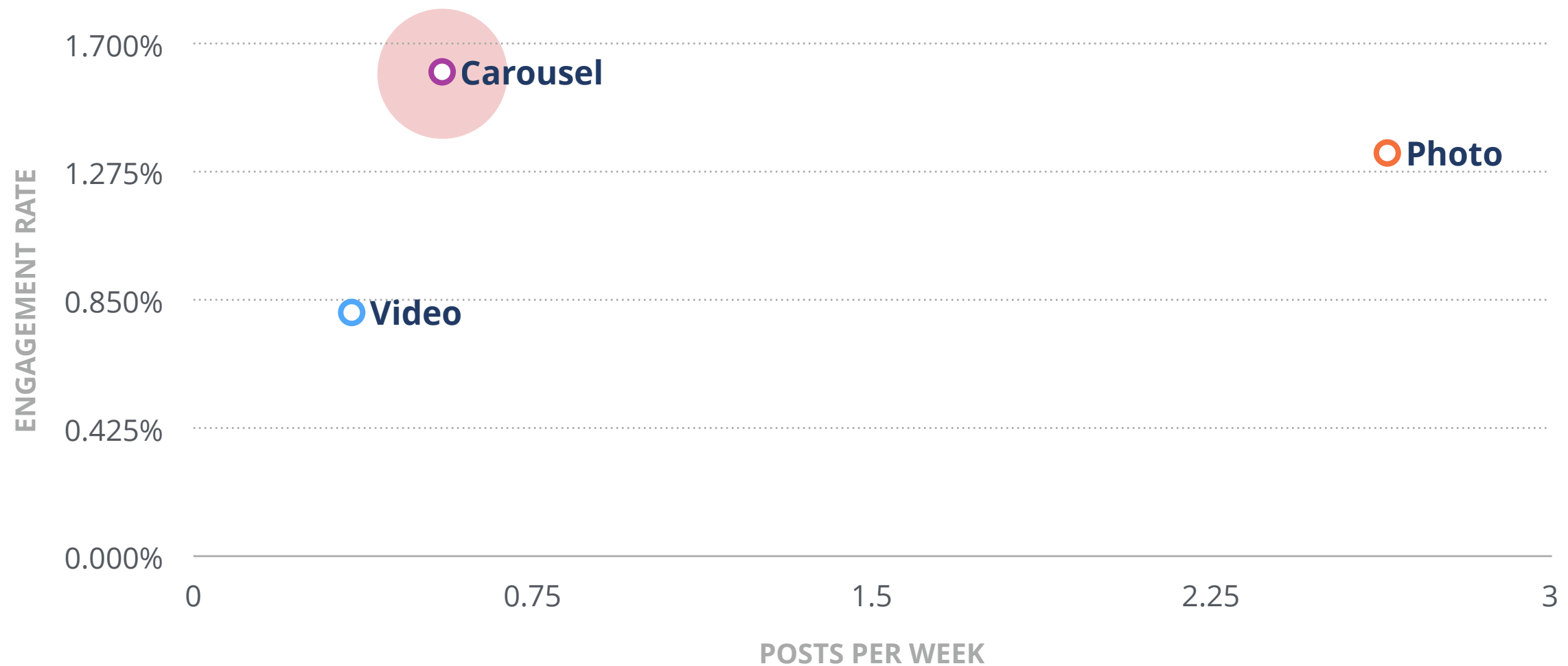
Nonprofits increased their photo and video posts on Facebook this year and saw increased engagement rates for both.

Rival
IQ

NONPROFITS

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

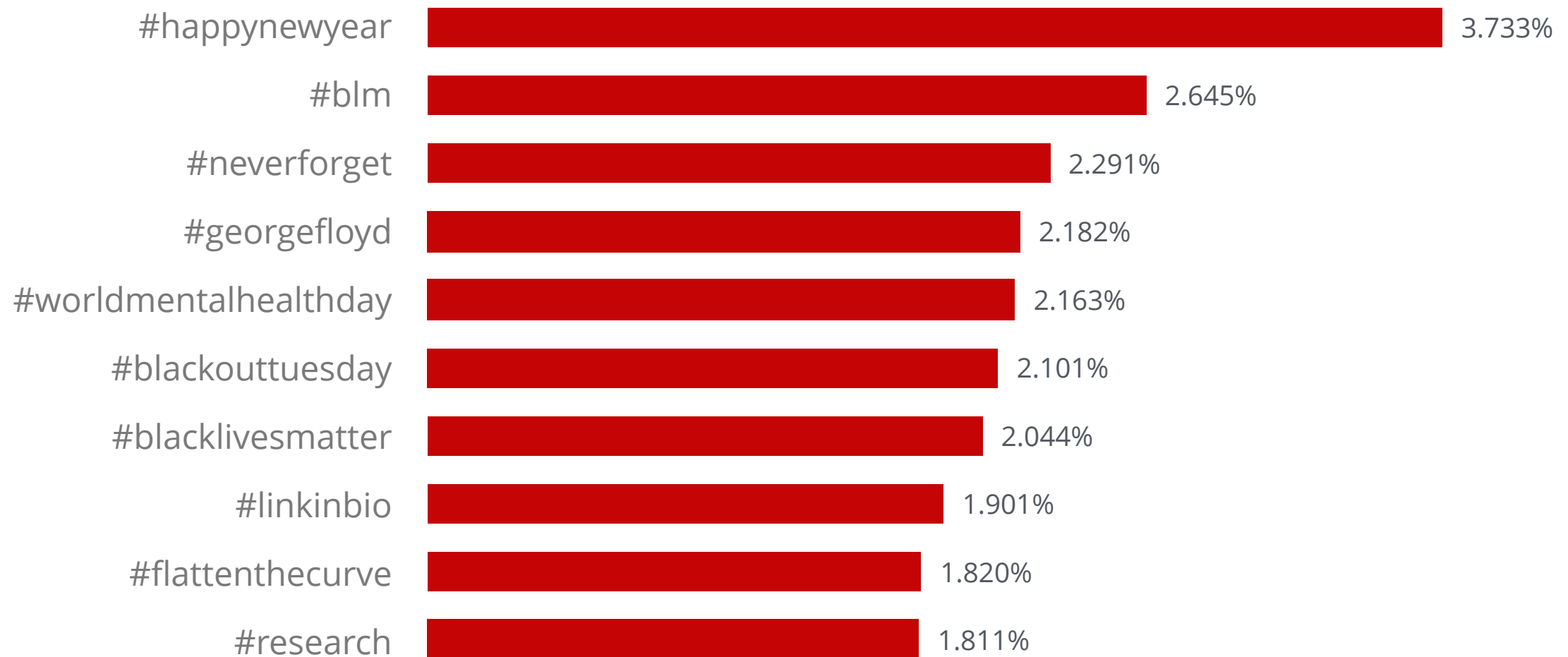


Carousels performed twice as well as video posts for Nonprofits on Instagram this year, so that's a great place for social media efforts. Nonprofits like The Borgen Project made great use of carousels to educate followers using the extra real estate from multiple views.

NONPROFITS

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

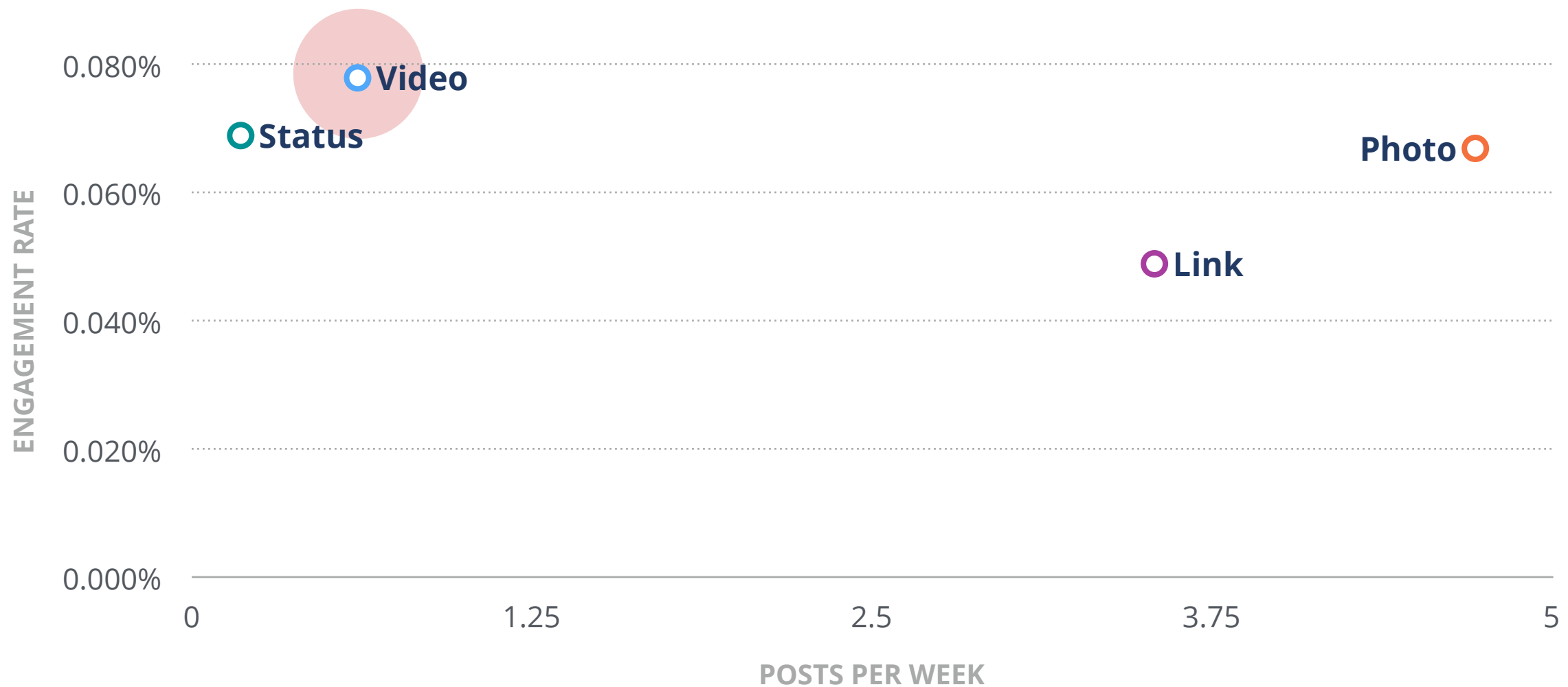


Nonprofits like American Ballet Theatre saw great success with #happynewyear thanks to fun photos and videos to help their followers celebrate.

NONPROFITS

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

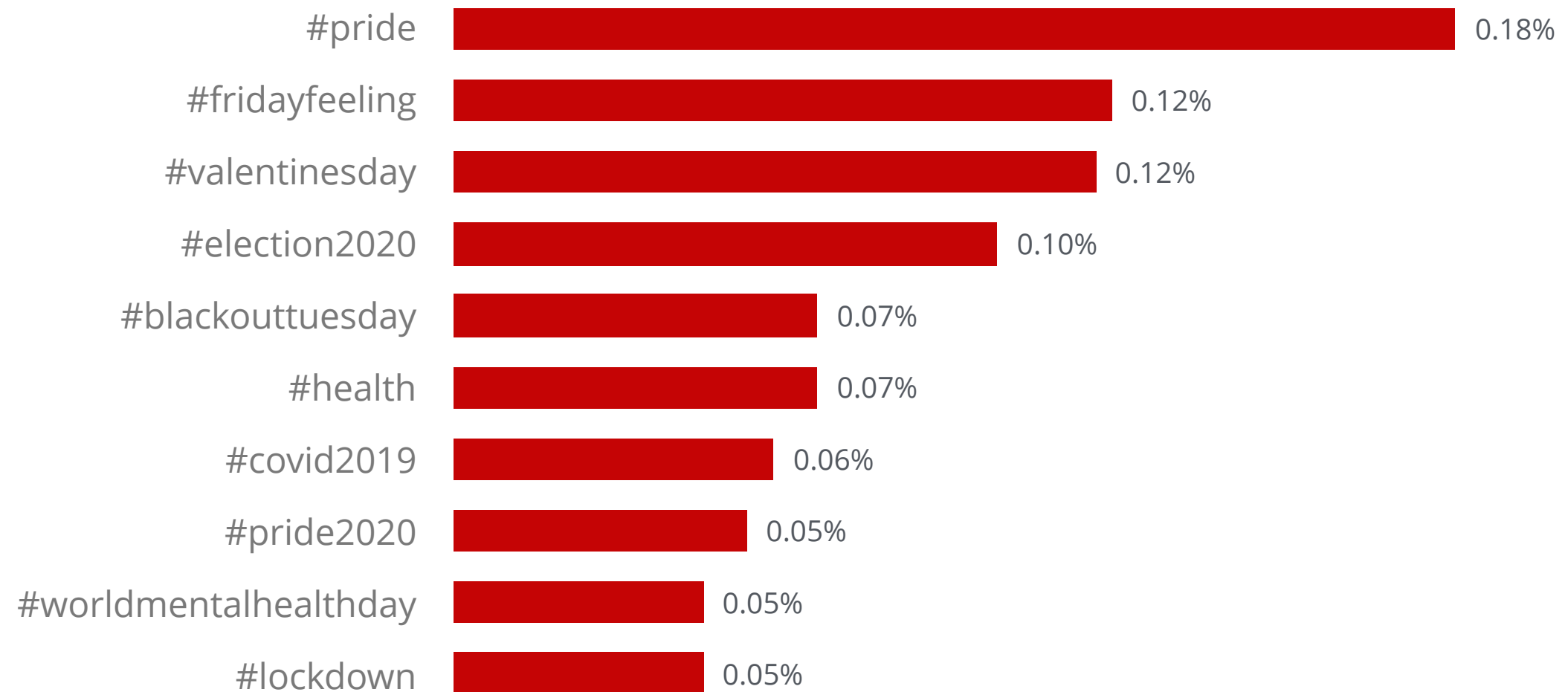


Status updates and photos performed slightly better for Nonprofits this year, but videos still came out on top for engagement rates.

NONPROFITS

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



No surprise that Nonprofits saw success on Twitter keeping their followers up to date on the latest coronavirus news with hashtags like #covid2019 and #lockdown.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT
Retail



RETAIL

Overview

Retail Fighting Back on Twitter

Retail saw a bump in Twitter engagement rates this year that helped these brands come in right at the median for this channel, while continuing to lag on Instagram and Facebook.

Some ideas for improving social performance this year:

- Experiment with posting frequency, and try bulking up how often you tweet.
- Stick with what works for hashtags, like shopping-themed hashtags on Insta and holidays on Twitter.



A few examples from Retail brands



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

6.1

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.06%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

5.5

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

0.6%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

2.0

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.049%

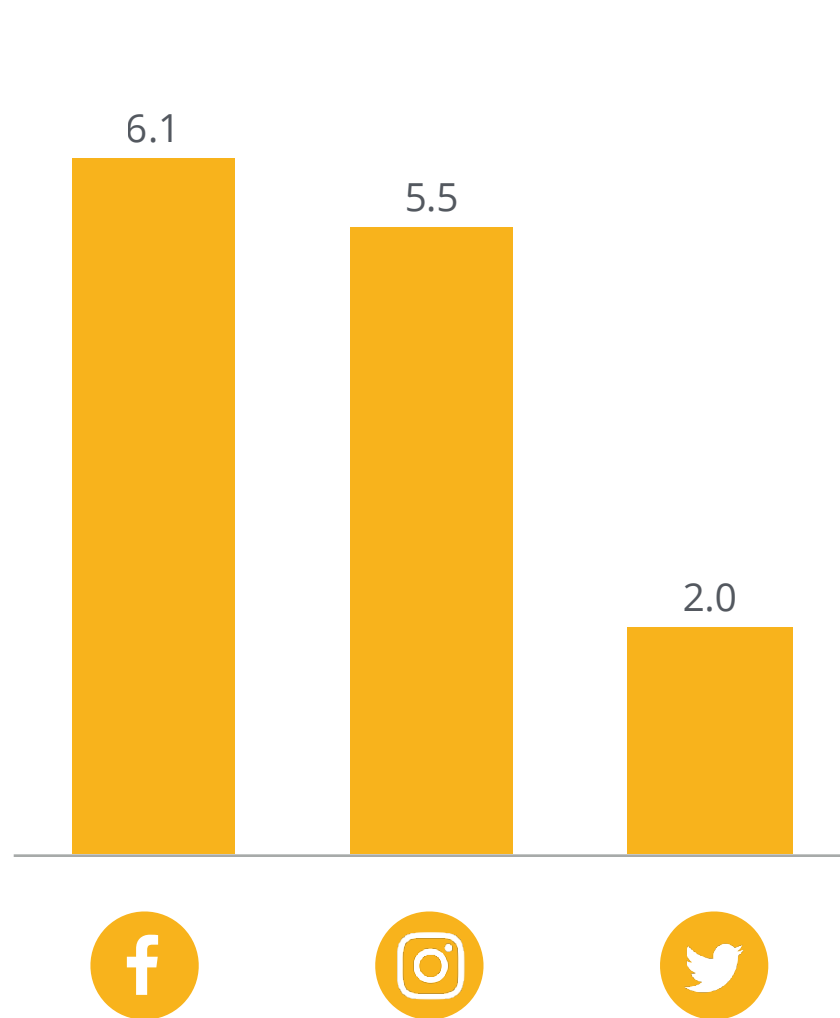
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Rival
IQ

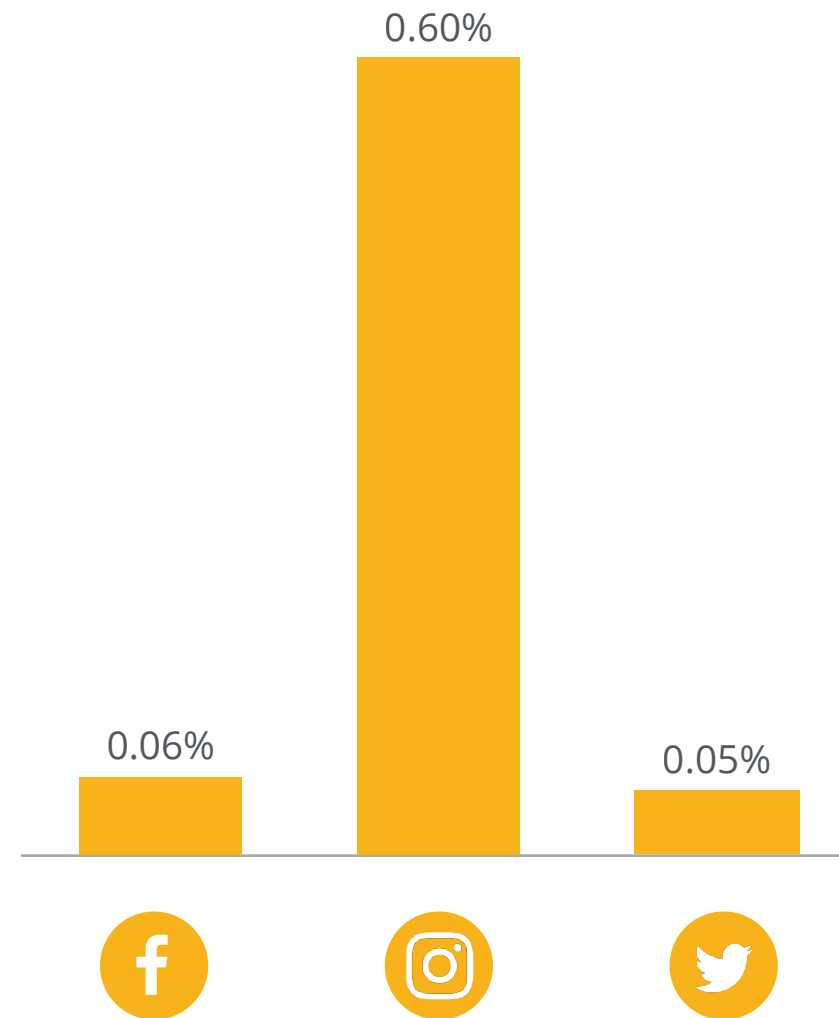
RETAIL

Posts Per week & Engagement Rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)

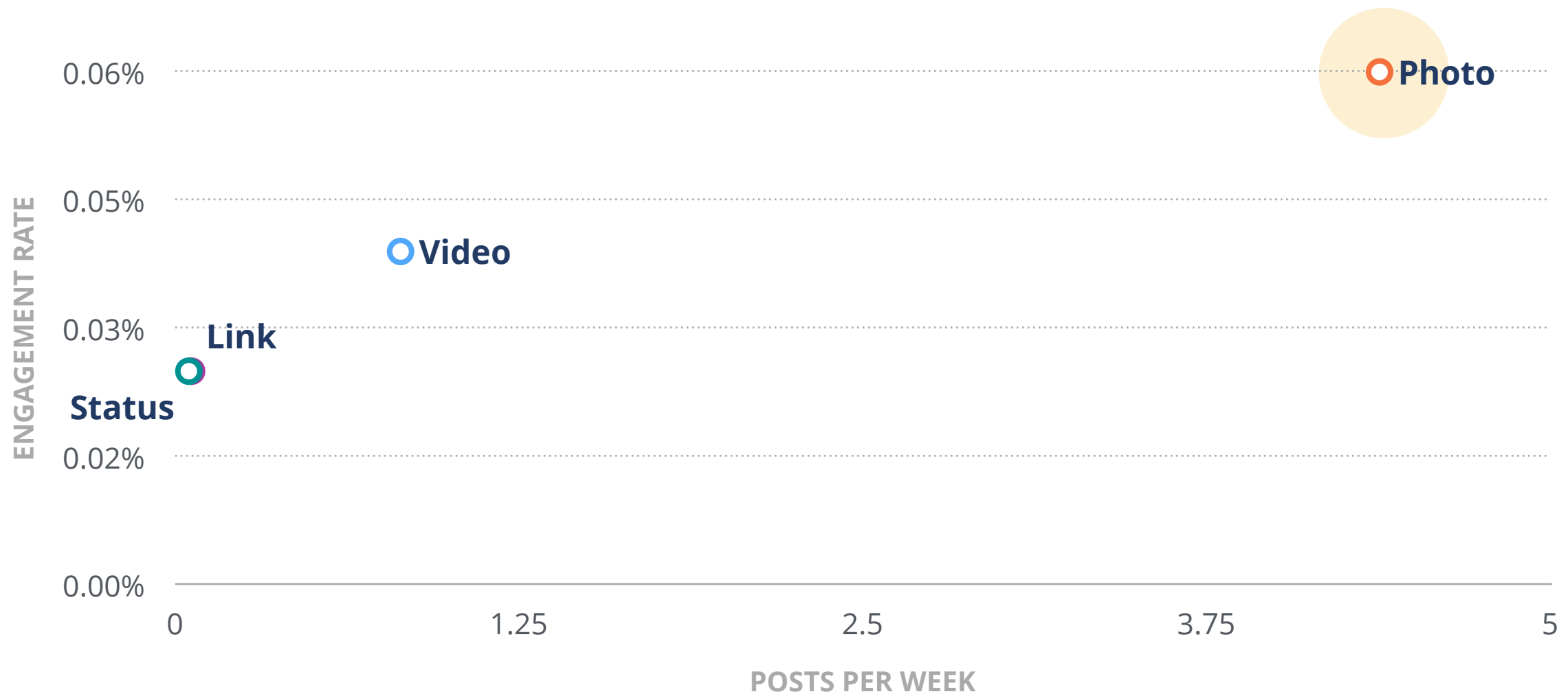


Thanks to a 50% increase in engagement rate on Twitter, Retail brands sat squarely in the middle of the pack on Twitter this year.

RETAIL

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

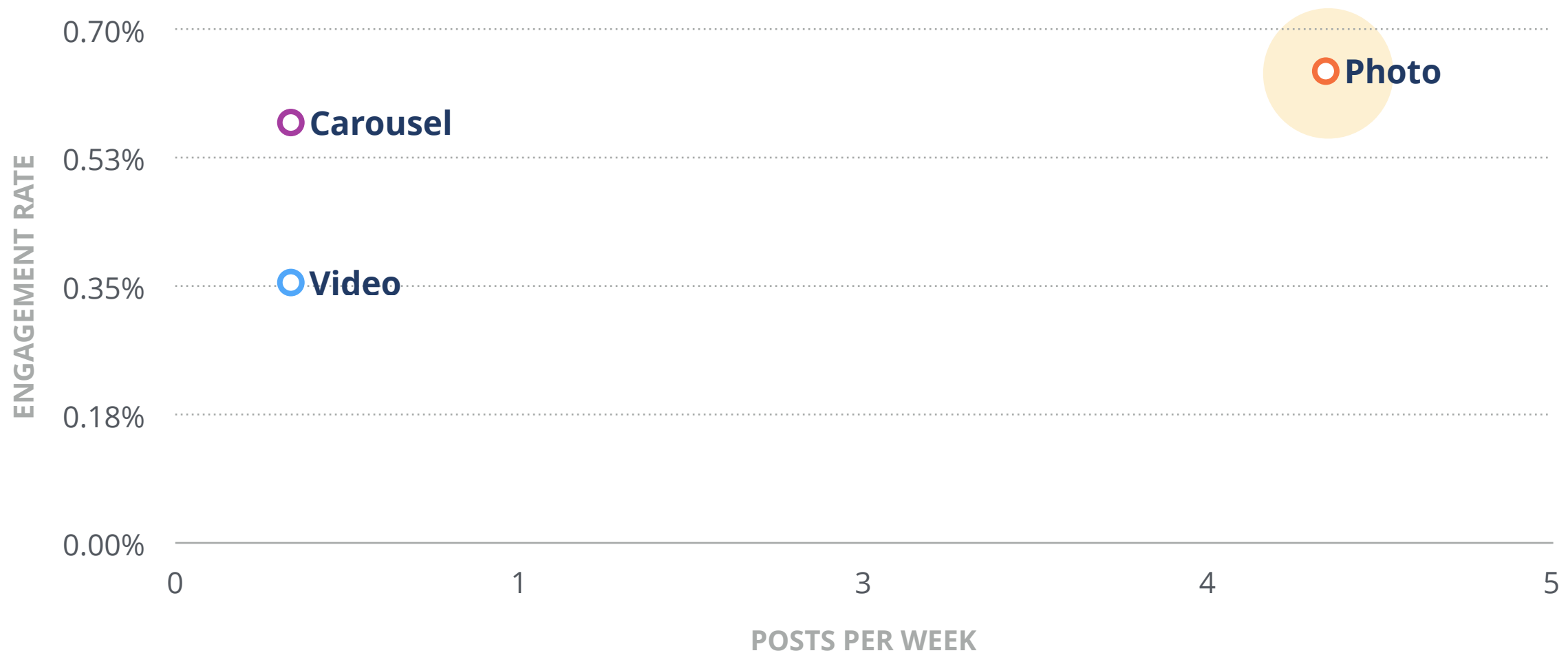


Retail brands put their posting efforts on Facebook where they mattered most: photo posts.

RETAIL

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

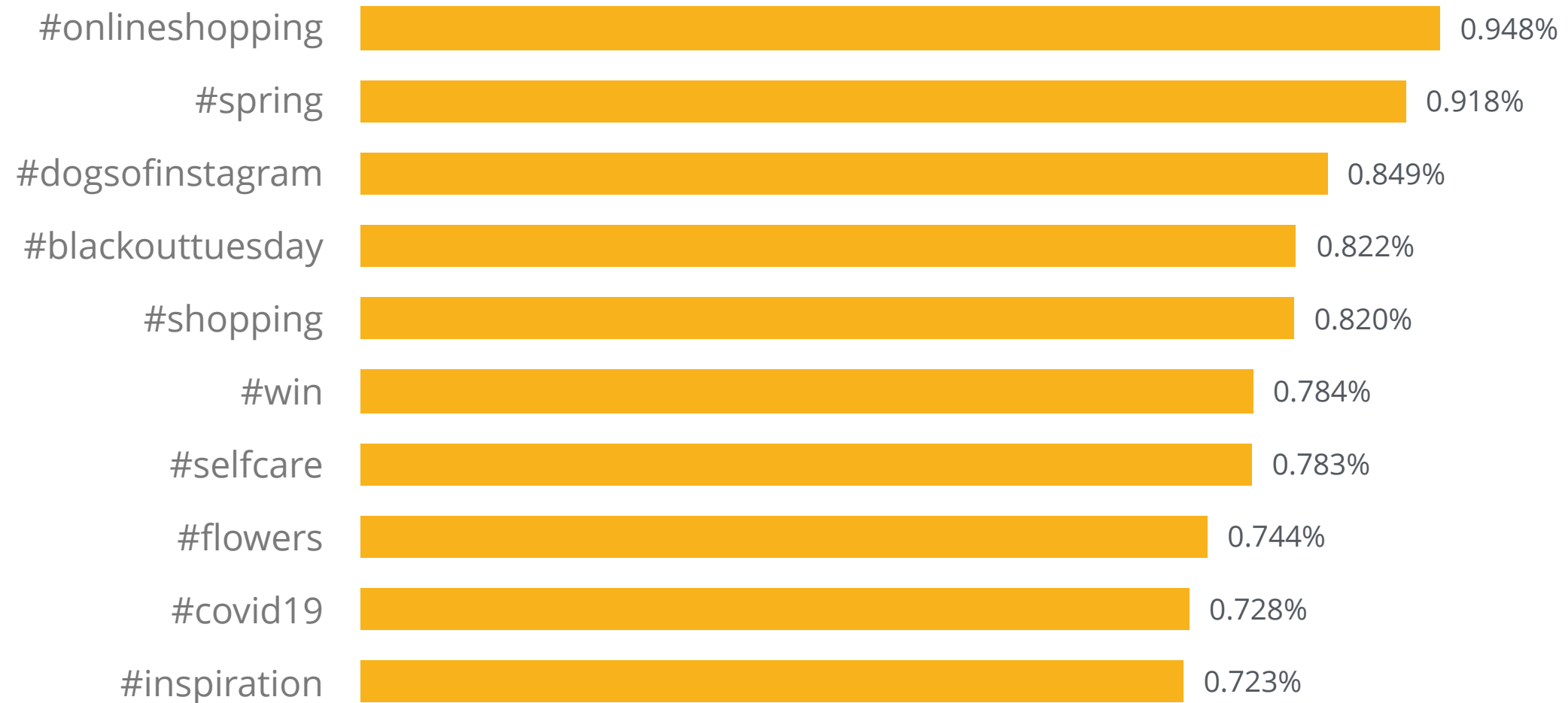


Retail brands saw engagement rates fall with every post type on Instagram, which helps explain their second-to-last place finish on Instagram. Cowboy gear brand Sheplers grabbed the retail Instagram engagement rate gold this year with timeless photo posts.

RETAIL

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

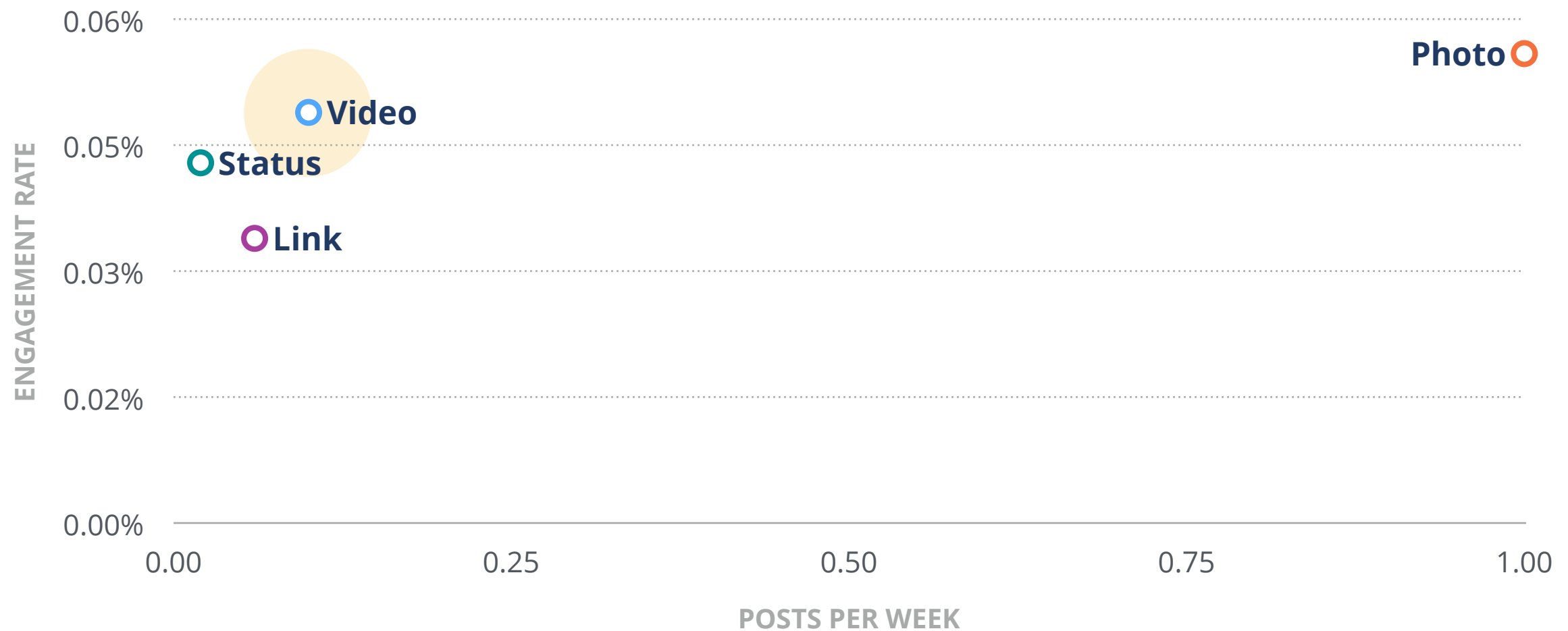


No surprises here that consumer-focused Retail brands saw lots of Instagram success with hashtags like #onlineshopping, #win, and #shopping hashtags this year.

RETAIL

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

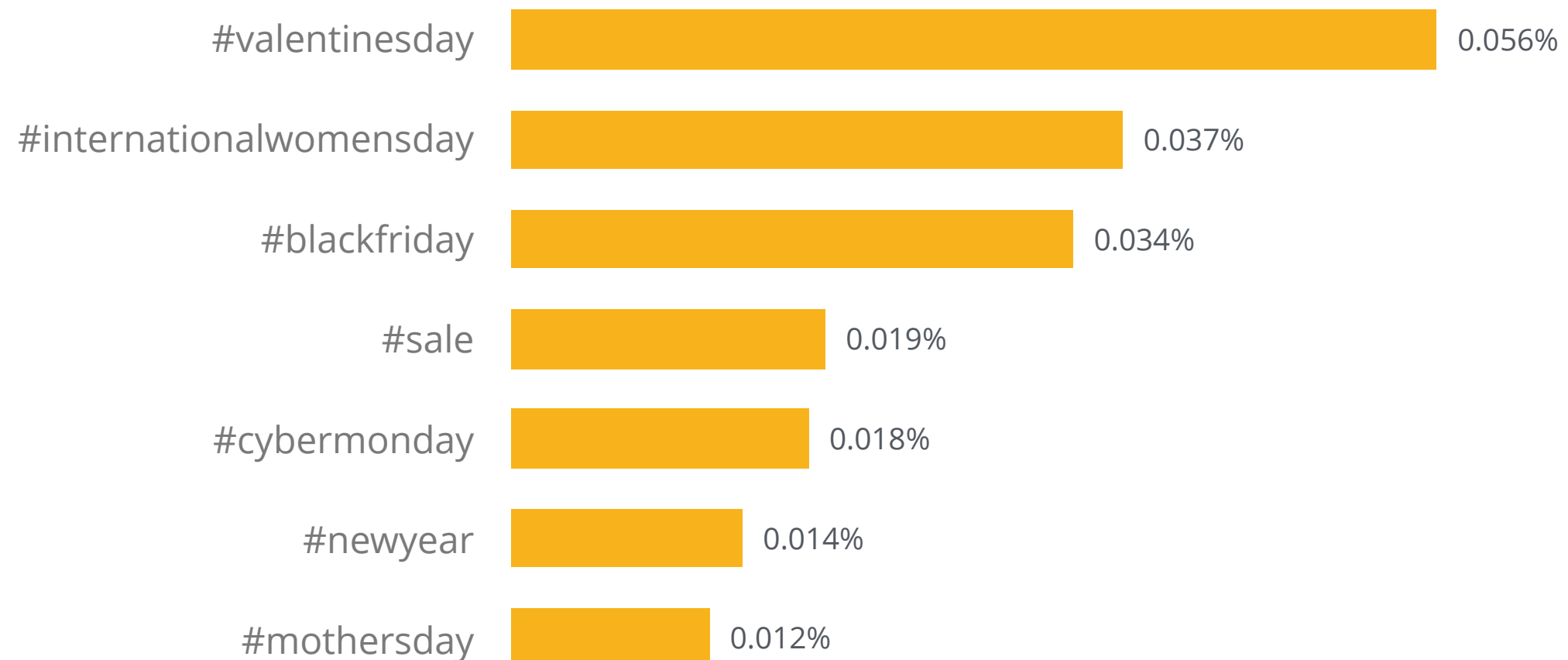


Retail brands were more than 4x as likely to tweet a photo than any other tweet type.

RETAIL

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

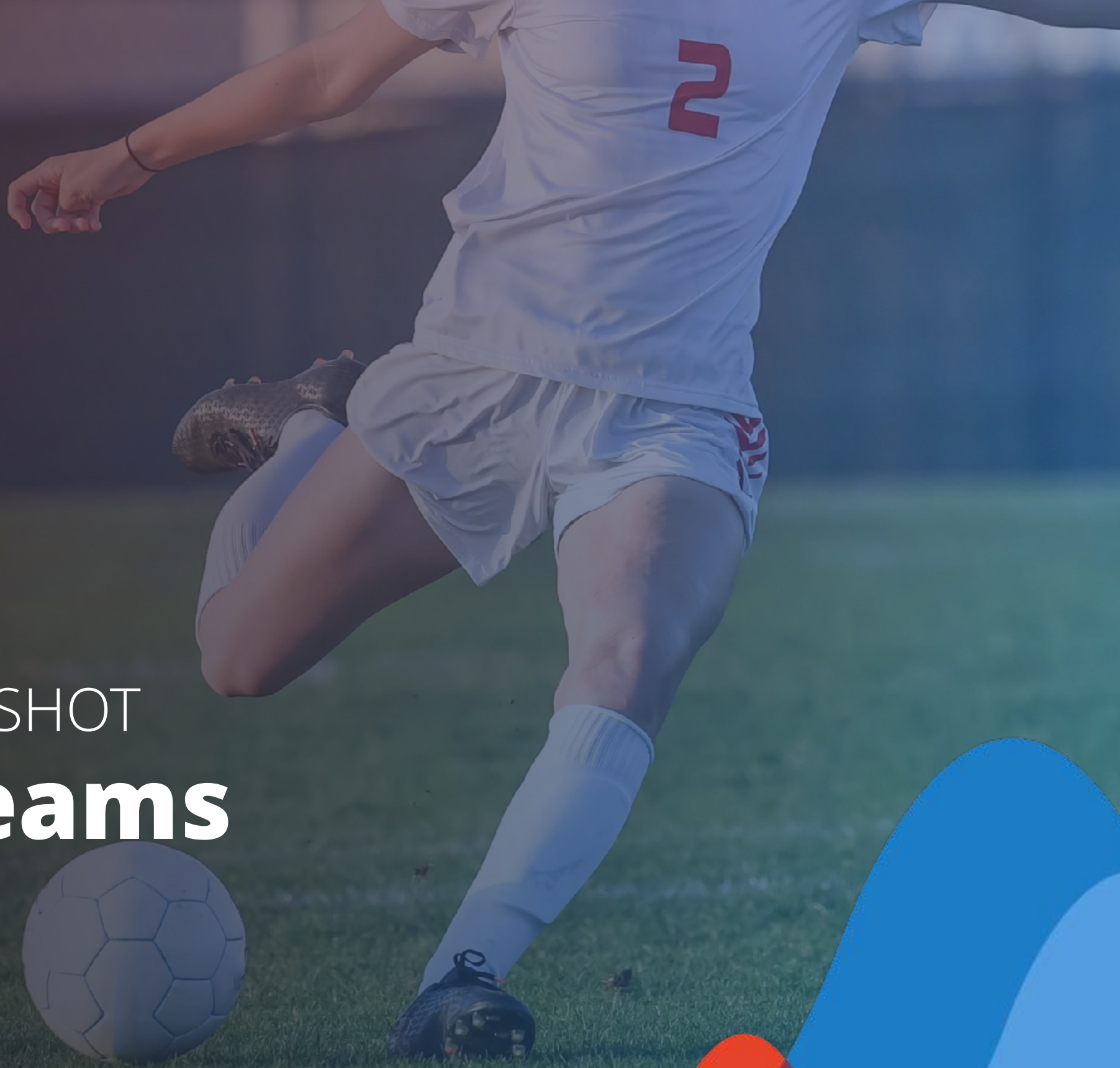
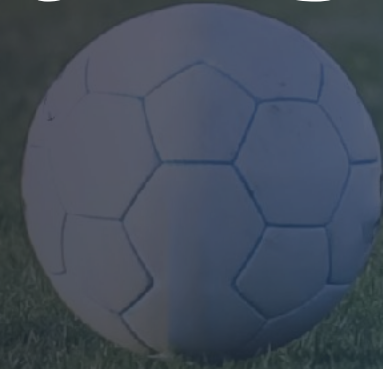


Like so many other industries, Retail was all about the holidays on Twitter this year.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Sports teams



SPORTS TEAMS Overview



Sports Teams Go for the Silver

Sports Teams saw second-place engagement rates on all three channels this year. They were also frequent posters, especially on Instagram and Twitter as compared to other industries.

Some ways to improve engagement rates even more:

- That high posting frequency is working, so keep it up.
- Keep giving fans what they want in the form of bite-sized visuals like photos and carousels.



A few examples from Sports Teams



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

18.9

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.18%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

10.2

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.79%



TWEETS
PER WEEK

35.7

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.071%

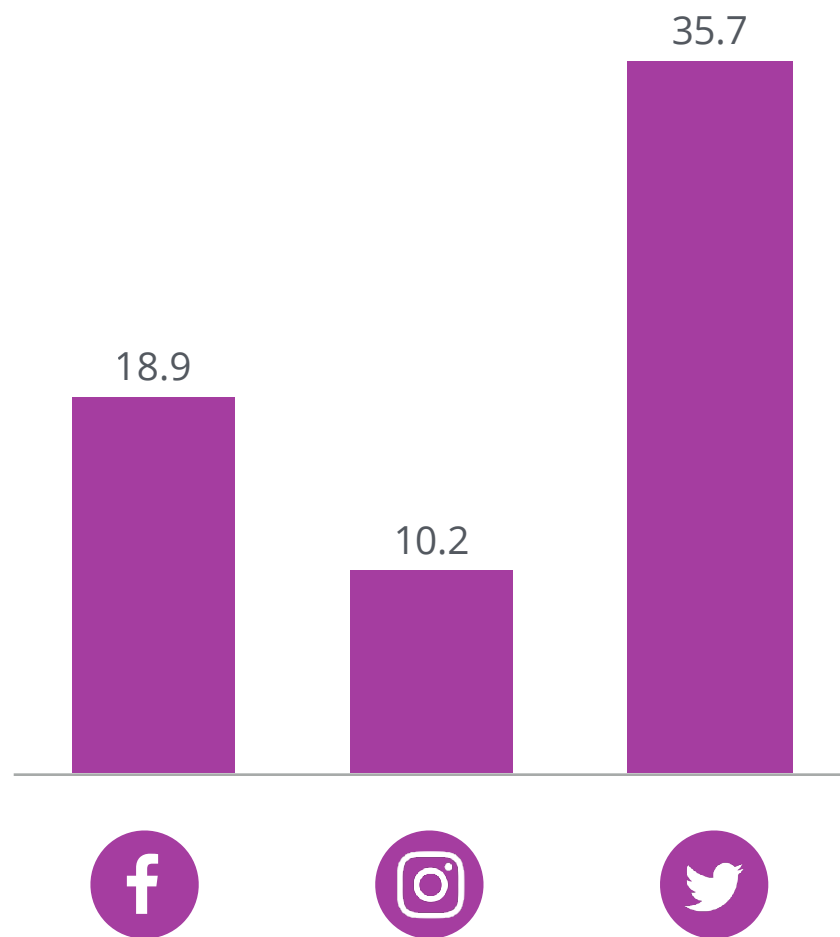
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Rival
IQ

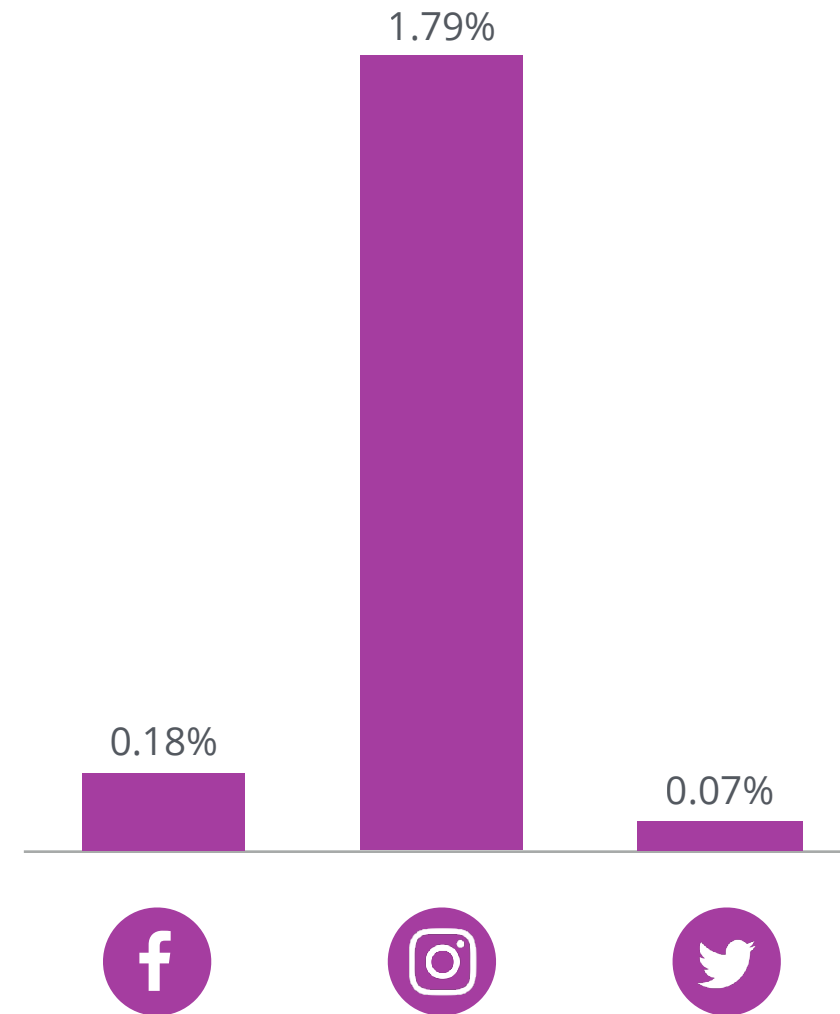
SPORTS TEAMS

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



In a year of uncertainty and way fewer sporting events, Sports Teams were able to snag the engagement rate silver on all three channels.

f Facebook engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

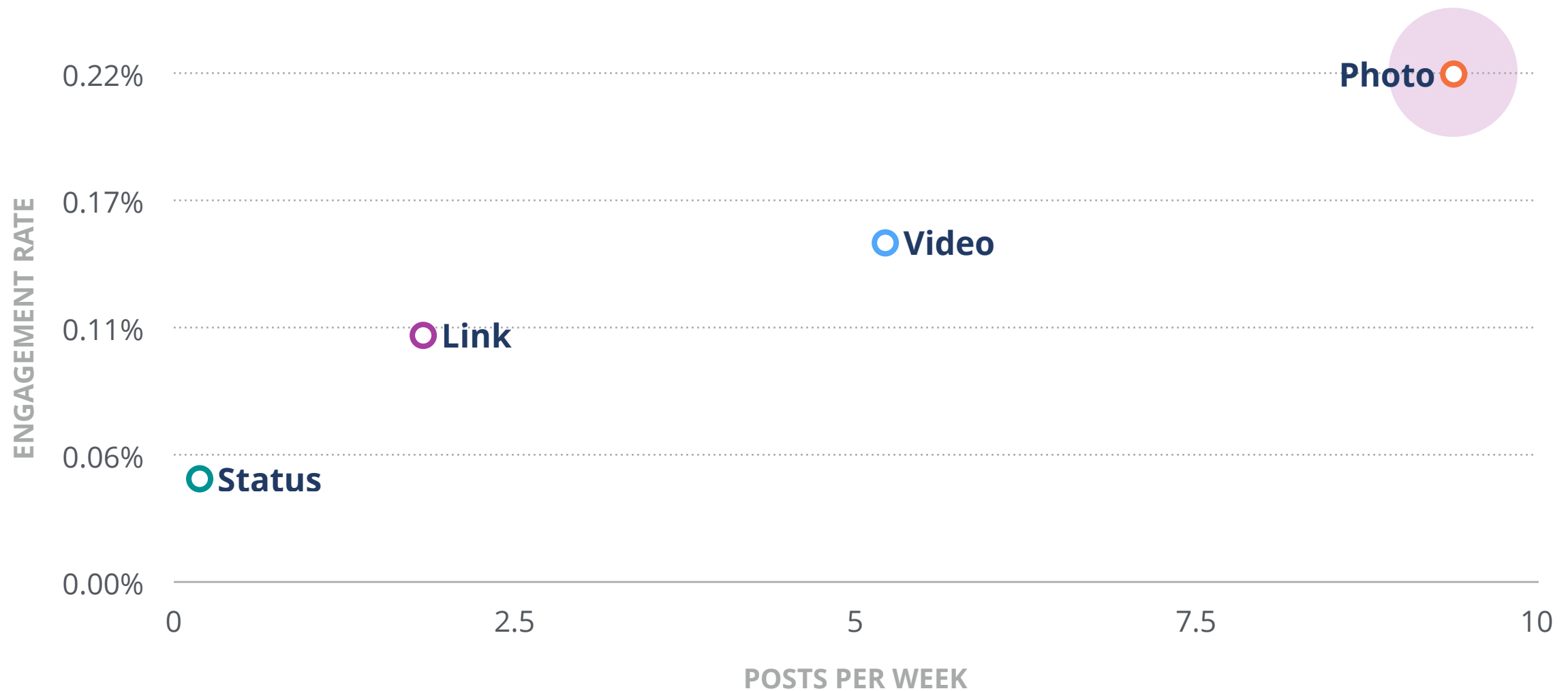
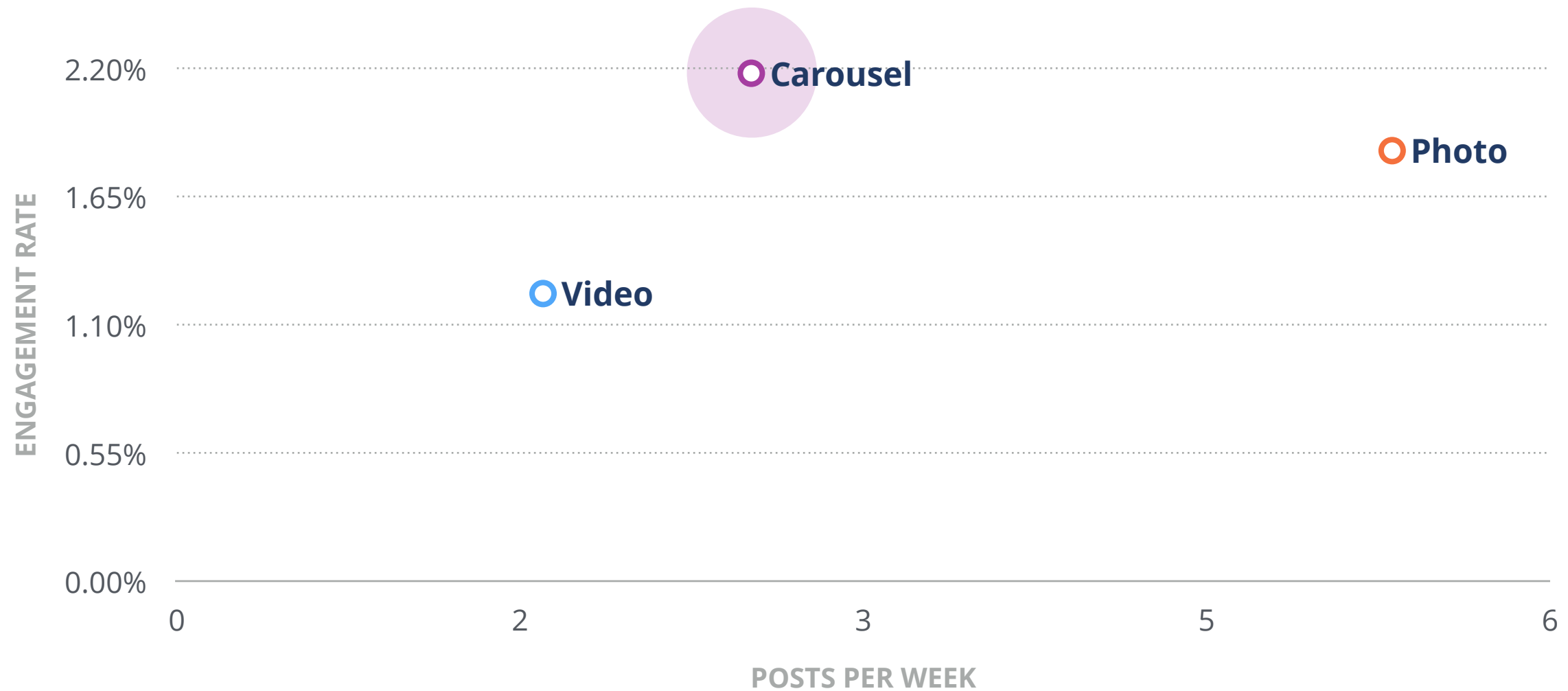


Photo posts on Facebook helped Sports Teams earn more than 2x the median engagement rate on this channel, putting these brands comfortably in second place.

SPORTS TEAMS

Instagram engagement by post type

Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)

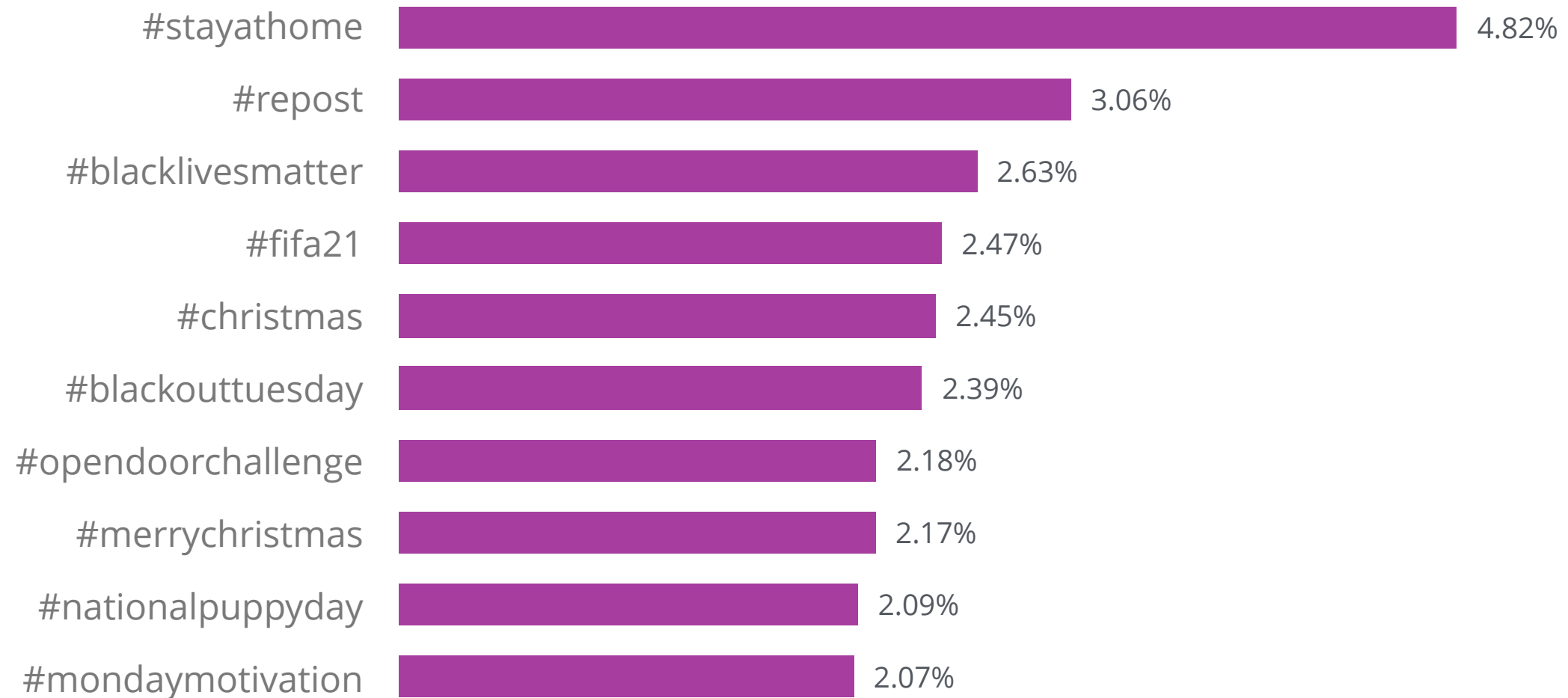


Sports Teams like overall Instagram winner and Greek soccer team Paok FC combined high-performing carousels with contest posts for the ultimate in Instagram engagement.

SPORTS TEAMS

Instagram hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)

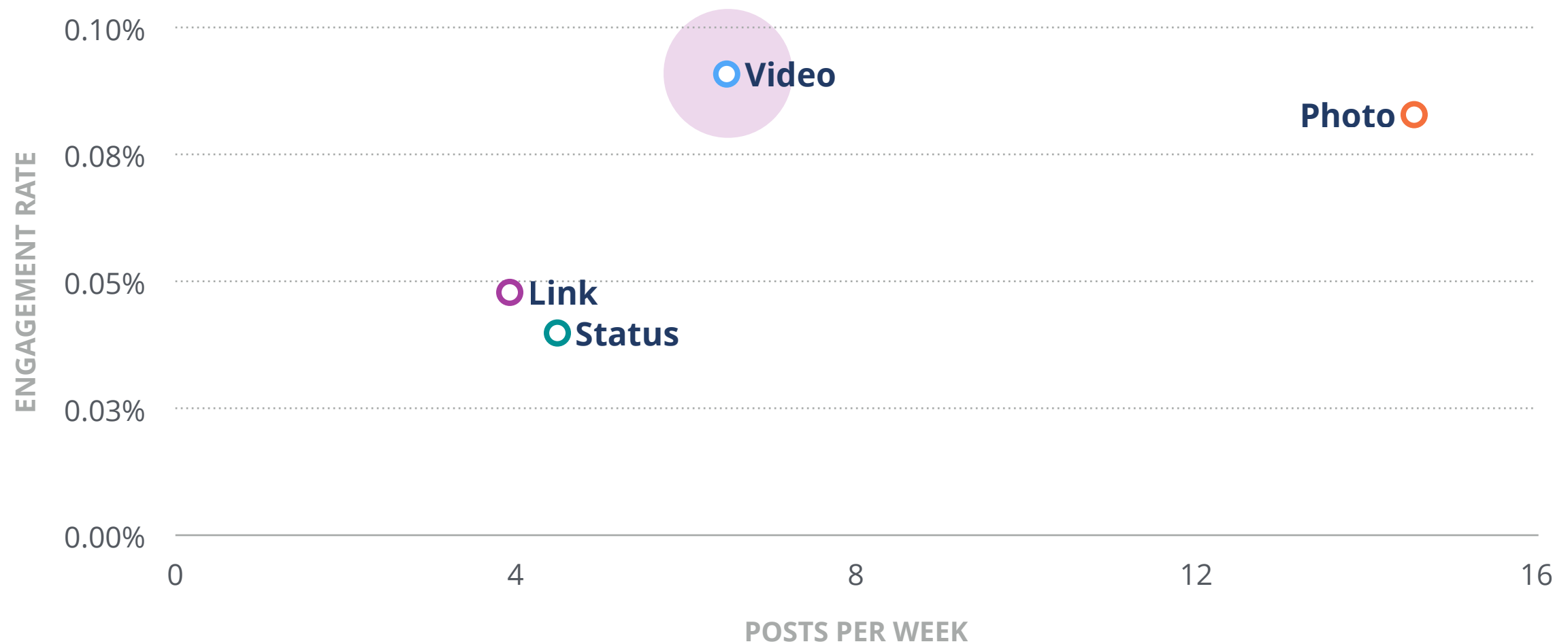


Sports Teams saw high Instagram hashtag performance with a mix of sports-themed hashtags like #FIFA21 and more social justice-themed hashtags like #blacklivesmatter and #blackouttuesday.

SPORTS TEAMS

Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

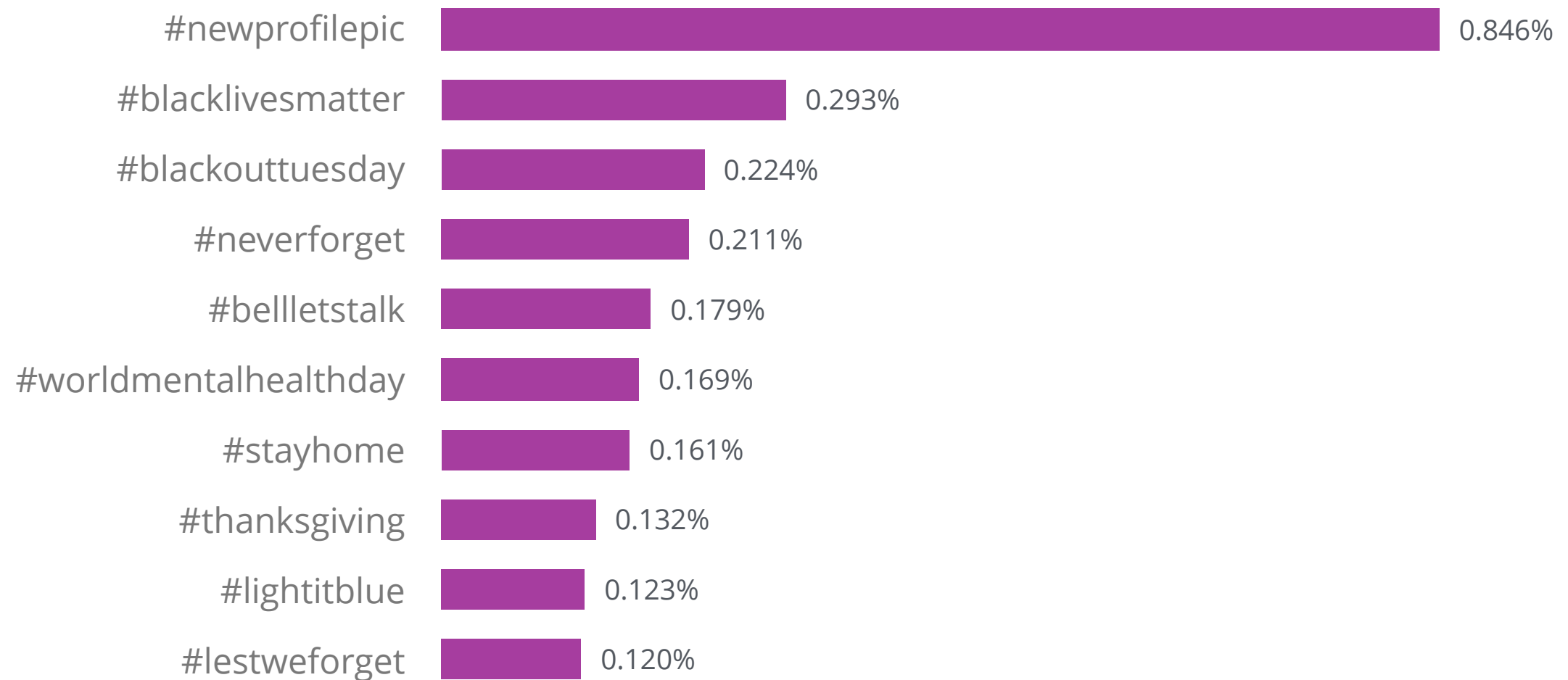


Sports Teams decreased their photo tweets by 30% this year but saw a 30% increase in engagement for that tweet type, suggesting working smarter not harder is the move.

SPORTS TEAMS

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Fans loved when Sports Teams used the #newprofilepic to signal a new theme or avatar to the tune of almost 3x the next most popular Twitter hashtag.



INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Tech & Software



TECH & SOFTWARE

Overview



Tech & Software Pulling Ahead on Instagram

Despite coming in last on Facebook and second-to-last on Twitter, Tech & Software brands made some inroads this year with median performance on Instagram and slight growth on Twitter.

Here are two ideas for improving engagement rates:

- Save photos for Facebook and Instagram, where they really count.
- Followers on both Instagram and Twitter loved seeing a little #MondayMotivation from their favorite Tech & Software brands, so don't be afraid to get inspirational.



A few examples from Tech & Software



FACEBOOK
POSTS PER WEEK

5.5

FACEBOOK
ENG RATE / POST

0.02%



INSTAGRAM
POSTS PER WEEK

1.9

INSTAGRAM
ENG RATE / POST

1.00%



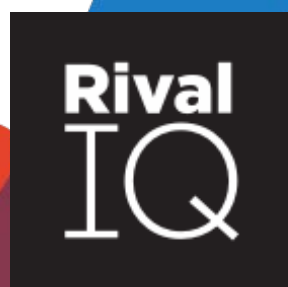
TWEETS
PER WEEK

8.2

TWITTER
ENG RATE / TWEET

0.027%

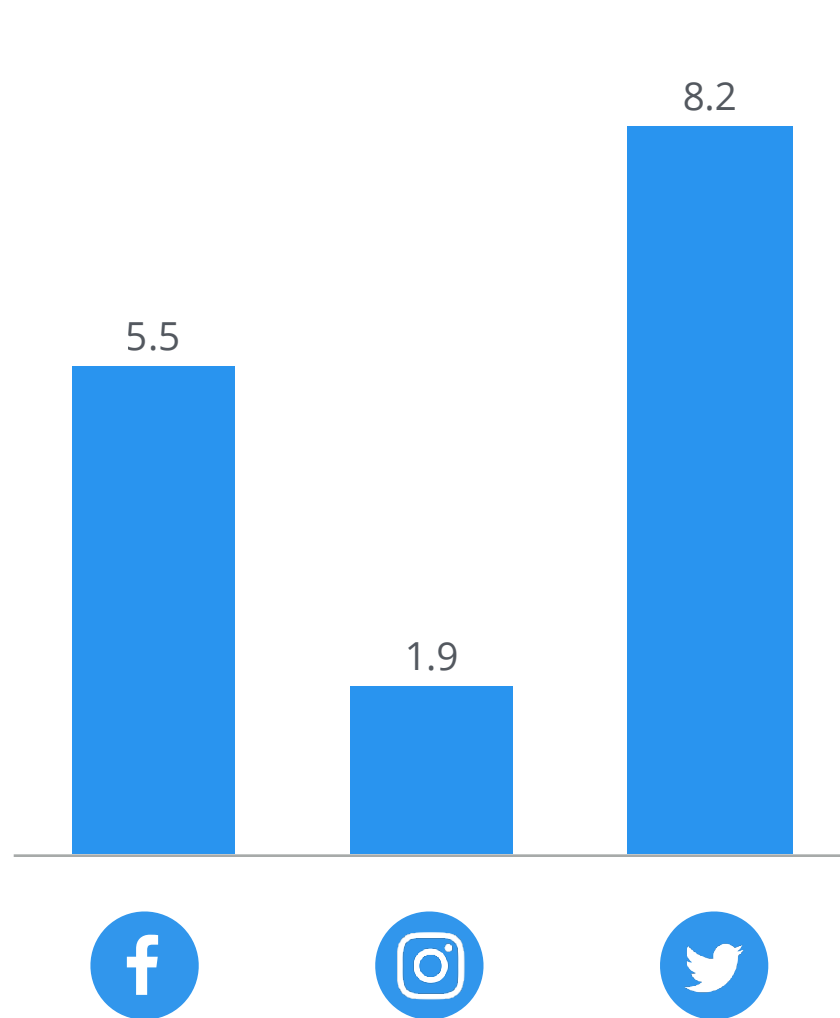
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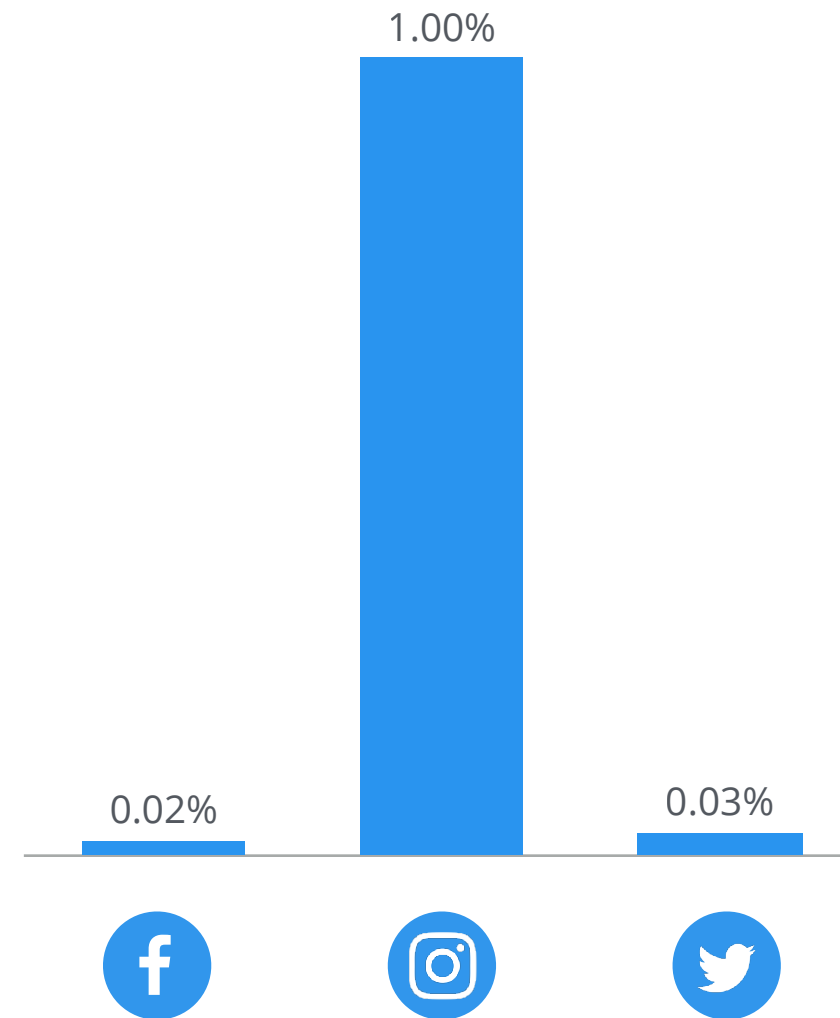
TECH & SOFTWARE

Posts per week & engagement rate

Posts / Week



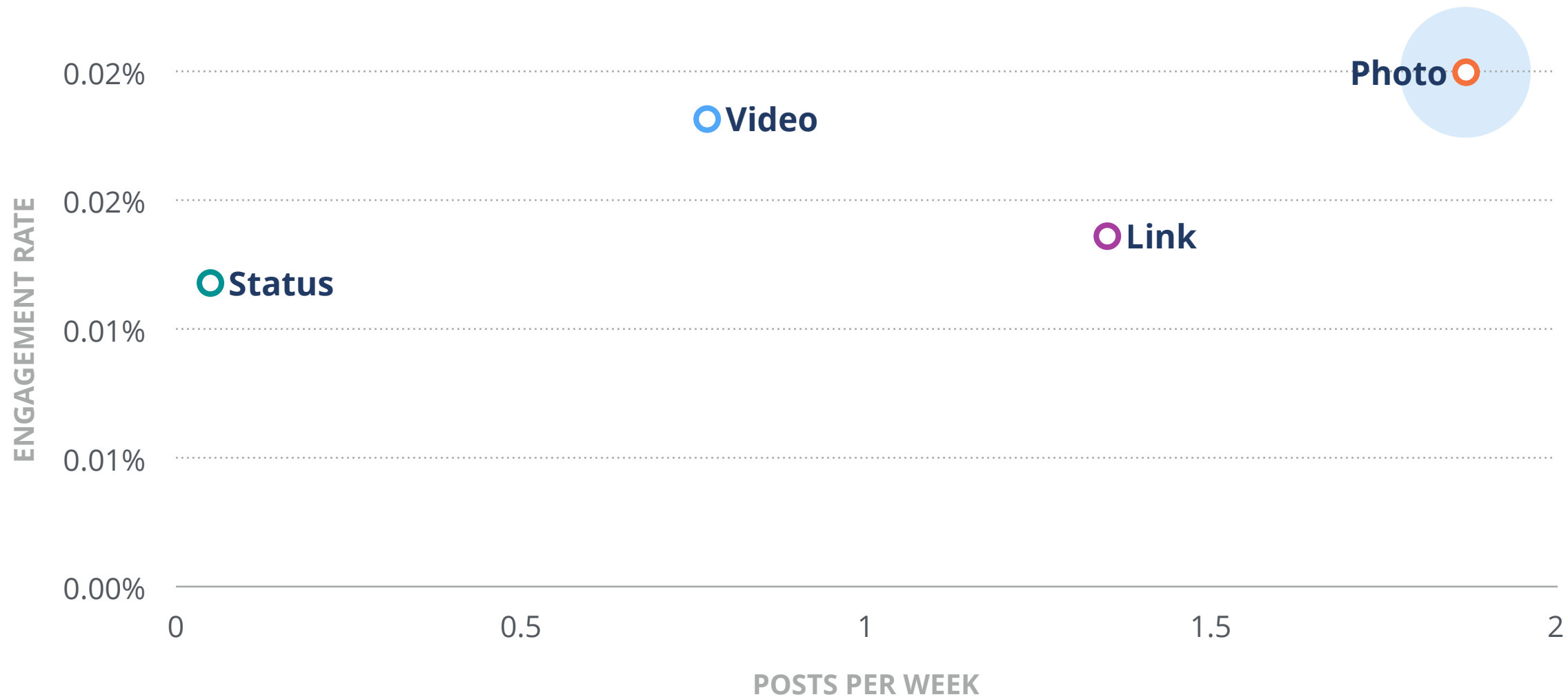
Engagement Rate / Post (by follower)



Despite a small decrease in Instagram engagement rates this year and infrequent posting, Tech & Software saw above-median engagement rates on this channel.

f Facebook engagement by post type

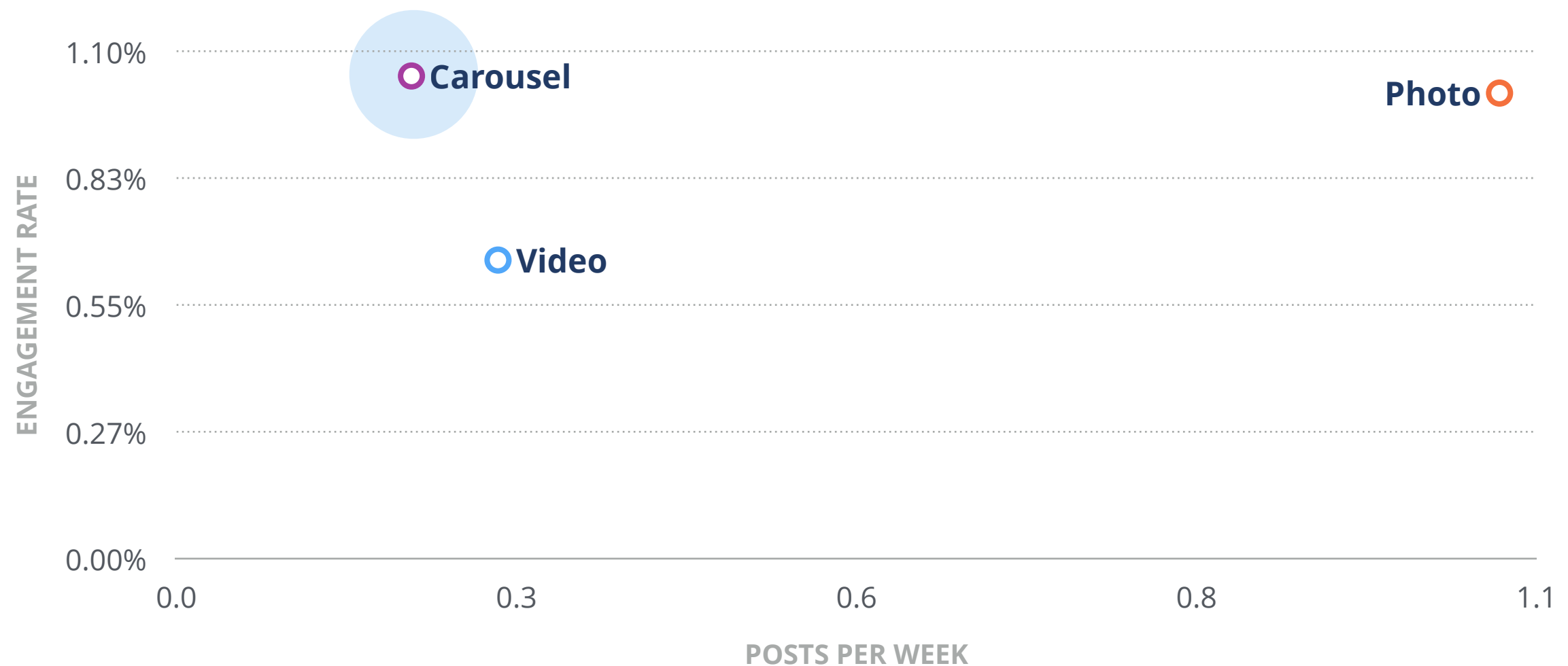
Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



Photos were a top performer on Facebook for Tech & Software companies, but CRM Pipedrive won top marks for Facebook engagement rates with links. The lesson? Find what works for your brand with research and experimentation.

Instagram engagement by post type

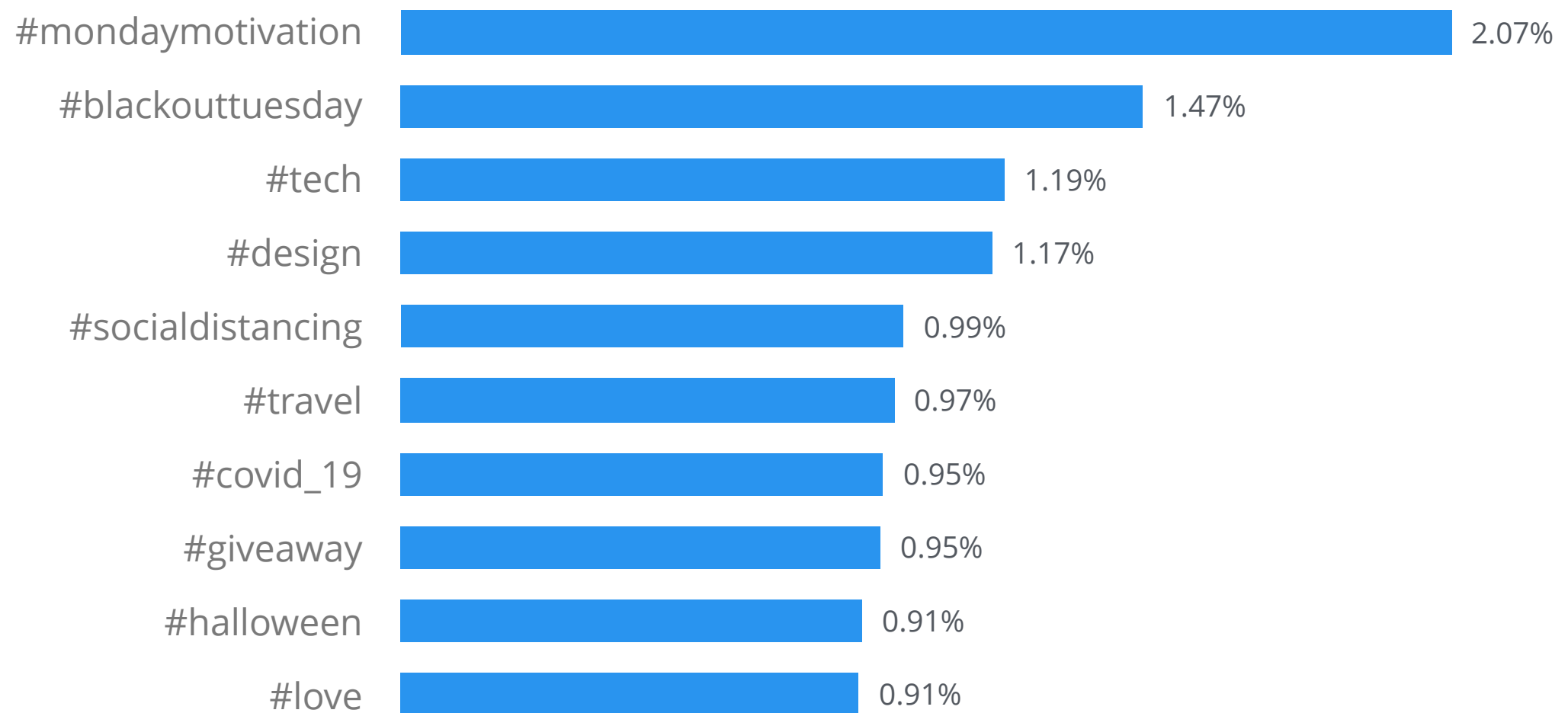
Posts / week and engagement rate / post (by follower)



For the second year in a row, photos and carousels had very similar engagement rates on Instagram, while video lagged behind.

Instagram hashtags

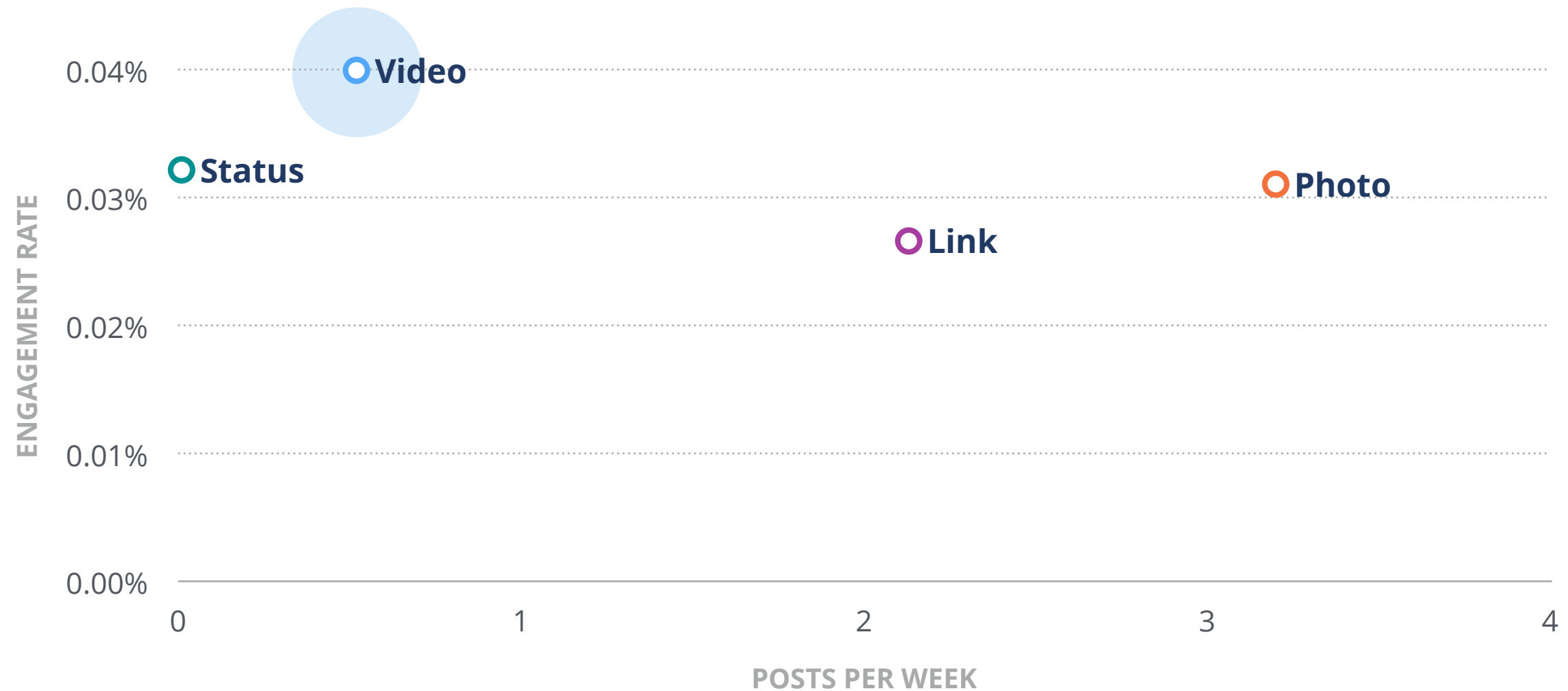
Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Top 'grammers like Roblox and Acronis made the most of the #mondaymotivation hashtag to inspire followers, while other Tech & Software brands stuck with tried-and-true hashtags like holidays and giveaways.

🐦 Twitter engagement by tweet type

Tweets / week and engagement rate / tweet (by follower)

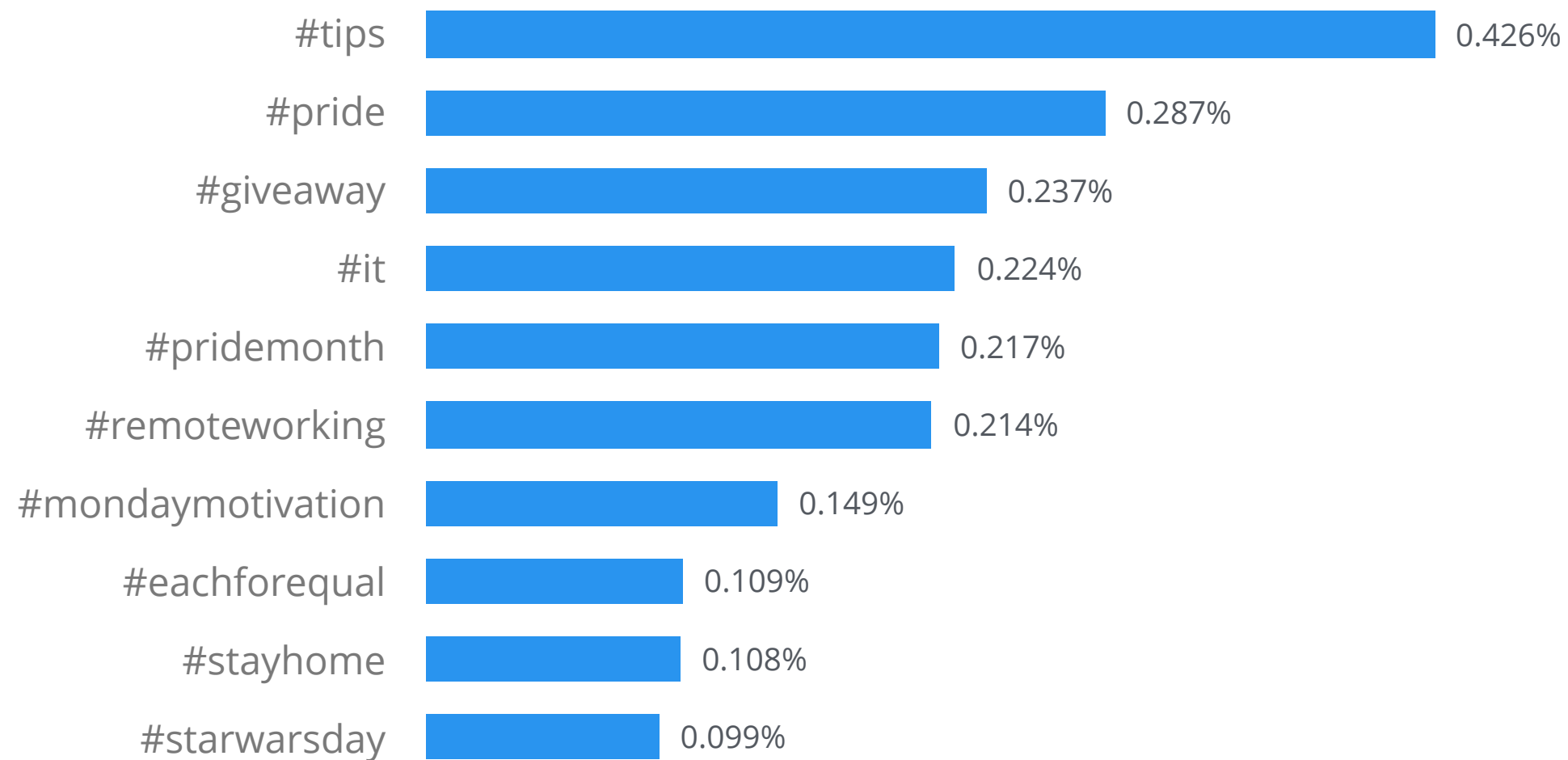


Video grabbed top engagement rates for Tech & Software brands on Twitter, who were much more likely to tweet a link or a photo.

TECH & SOFTWARE

Twitter hashtags

Top hashtags by engagement rate (used by more than 15 companies in this study)



Tech & Software brands kept it topical on Twitter with trending hashtags like #IT, #remoteworking, and #stayhome.

About Rival IQ

Rival IQ is an easy-to-use analytics tool that helps you:

Supercharge your social landscape

Track results across all social profiles, including engagement, influencers, social bios, and sentiment —for **you and your competitors**.

Stay ahead of the competition

Conduct competitive analysis in minutes. Monitor your industry, create benchmarks, and evaluate and respond to competitor activity before the market shifts.

Do more with your data

Dive deeper into your social media analytics with Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram Insights, boosted post detection, LinkedIn Insights, and so much more.

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