



2023 Instagram Stories Benchmark Report

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO INSTAGRAM STORIES METRICS

Questions to Answer with The Instagram Stories Benchmark Report

Instagram Stories continue to grow in relevance to your social media marketing efforts, but it can be tough to know how your brand stacks up against competitors.



- What kind of Stories engagement are my competitors seeing?
- How frequently should I be posting Stories?
- What kind of Stories engagement (taps, replies, and exits) should I expect?
- How might my Stories engagement change if I published more often or grew my followers?
- How do my Stories stats stack up to my Post stats?

DATA SET INCLUDES

— **965** —
HANDLES

IN 2022 BETWEEN THE MONTHS OF

JUN JUL AUG SEPT OCT NOV

COMPRISING

— **147K** — **72K** — **281K** —
POSTS **STORIES** **FRAMES**



The Metrics: Definitions

Engagement: Measurable interaction on Instagram Stories and posts, including likes, comments, replies, and shares.

Exit Rate: The percentage of your impressions that exit your Stories by swiping right, swiping down, or closing Stories.

Frame: A single photo or video posted to your Instagram Story.

Impressions: The total number of views of a frame in your Story.

Post Engagement per Impression: The numbers of likes, comments, and saves per impression on a post.

Post Reach Rate: The reach of a post expressed as a percentage of your followers.

Reach: The total number of unique people that saw a frame in your Story or your post.

Reply Rate: The percentage of your Story Viewers that replied to your Story on any given day.

Replies per 1K Impressions: The number of replies per 1,000 story impressions.

Retention Rate: The percentage of your Story Viewers on any given day that see all your frames.

Stories Reach Rate: Your Story Viewers on any given day divided by your follower count, expressed as a percentage.

Story: The set of frames posted to your Story within a single 24-hour day.

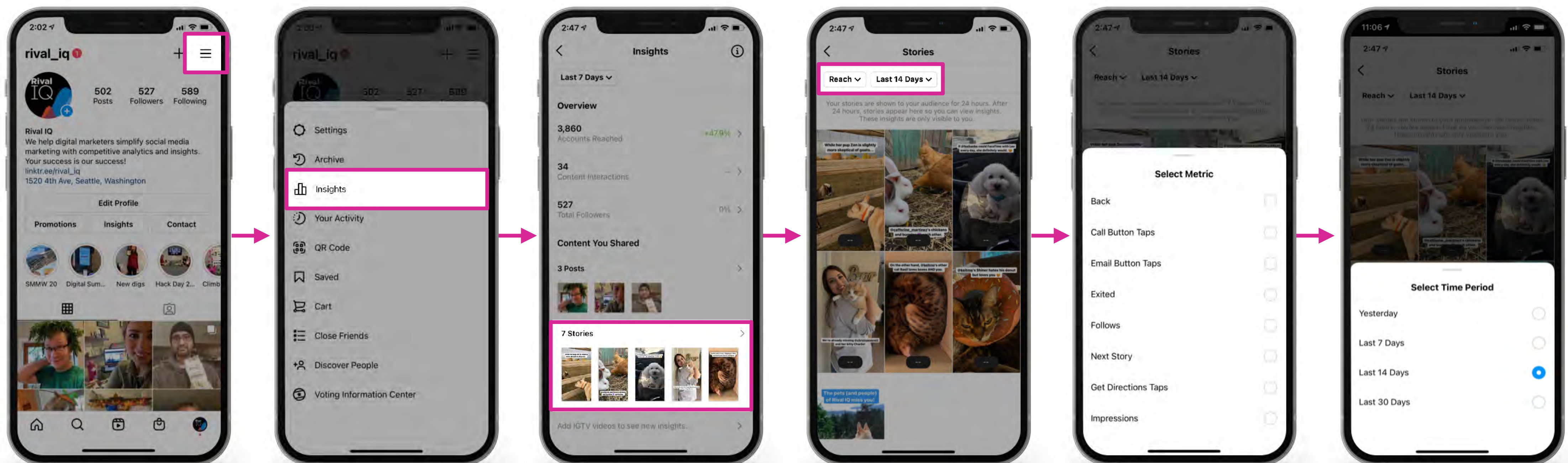
Story Viewers: The number of people who saw your Story on a given day.

Tap-Back Rate: The percentage of your impressions that have a tap backward to see the previous photo or video again.

Tap-Forward Rate: The percentage of your impressions that have a tap forward to see the next photo or video.

Where can I see my data in Instagram?

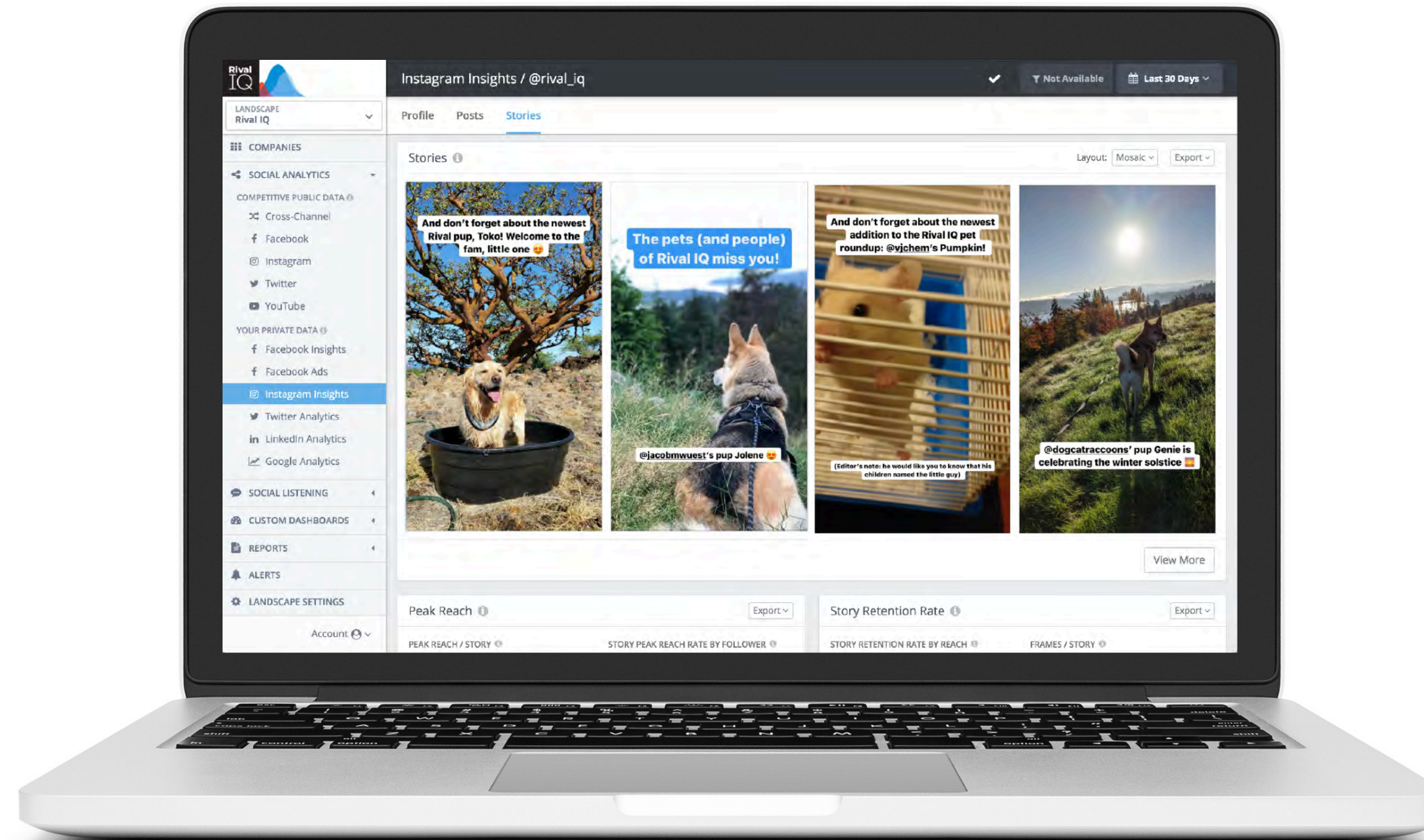
Looking in the Instagram app? Here's where to find your stats.



Using Rival IQ to supercharge your Stories

Track and measure your Instagram Stories performance right inside Rival IQ using our Instagram Insights Reports.

GET YOUR FREE TRIAL





Key Findings

Key Findings and Takeaways



Story frequency is pretty flat this year

For the first time in our reporting history, brands posted about as many Stories as in 2021. Flat isn't bad, but it's not growth either.



Retention Rates are flat

Higher tap-back rates helped boost retention, but flat reply rates and increased exit rates balanced those successes to keep this critical metric flat for brands across the board.



Reach Rate continues to fall

Your Stories (and posts!) are reaching a smaller percentage of your followers compared to last year. Stories are competing with Instagram posts *and* YouTube and TikTok for eyeballs.



Posts reach more than Stories

Instagram posts continue to see a much higher reach rate than Stories. Hook viewers with posts and deepen their engagement with Stories.



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Days with a Story

What is Days with a Story?

The number of days per month a handle published to their Story.

There are two main ways to measure Story activity levels:

- 1. How often do brands publish to Stories?
- 2. How many frames are typically published in a day?

Days with a Story answers the first of these questions.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
✓		✓		✓		✓
	✓		✓		✓	
✓		✓		✓		✓
	✓		✓			

DAYS WITH A STORY

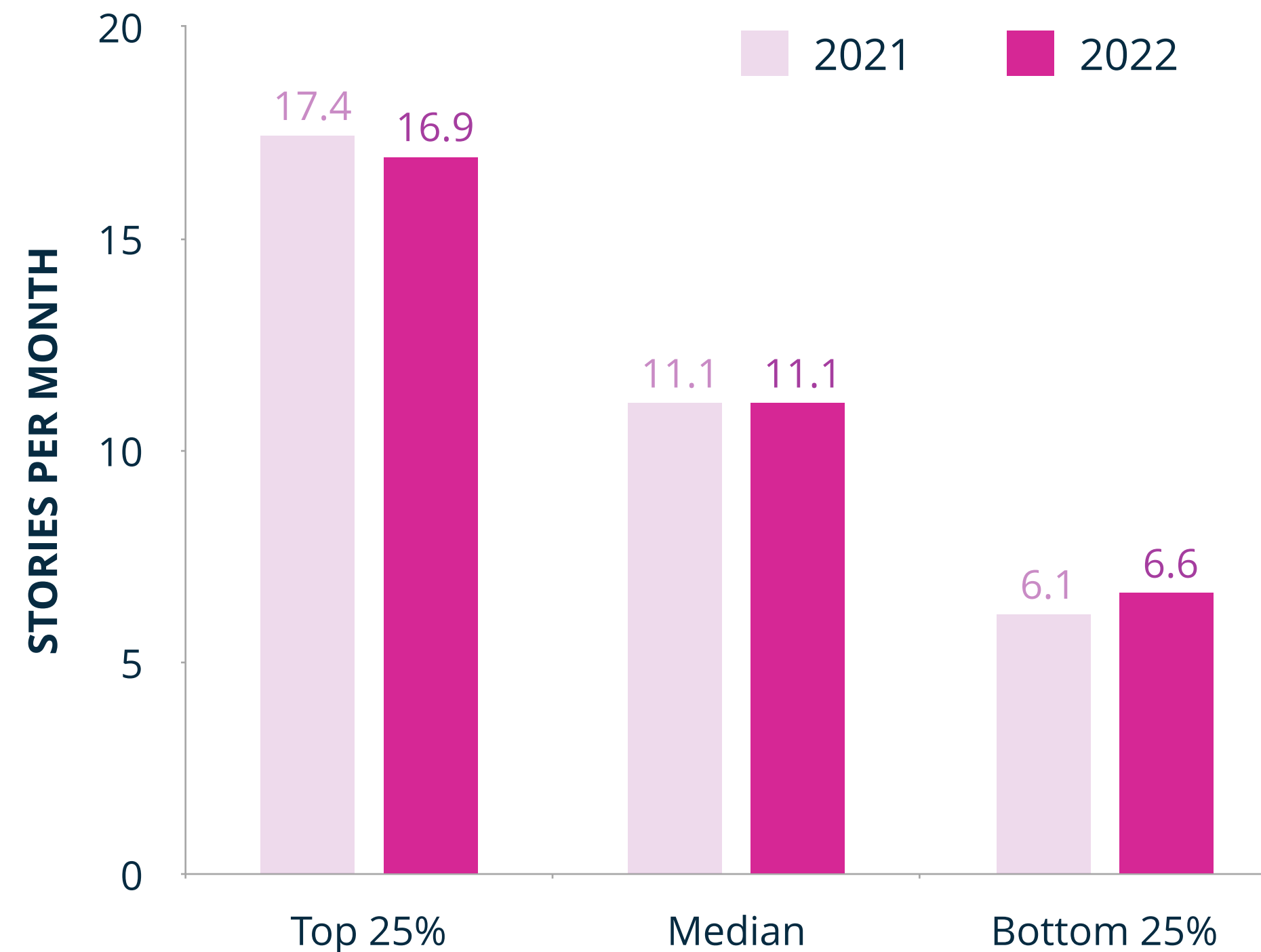


Days with a Story

The number of days per month brands published Stories.

Story frequency is pretty flat, with the average brand posting an Instagram Story 11 times per month.

- The top 25% most active brands publish Stories about 17 times a month—roughly every other day.
- The least active 25% of brands publish just over 1 Story per week.



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Story posting per month hasn't changed much over the last few years: everyone is posting about as often as last year. This consistency means the majority of brands still post Stories just over twice per week.



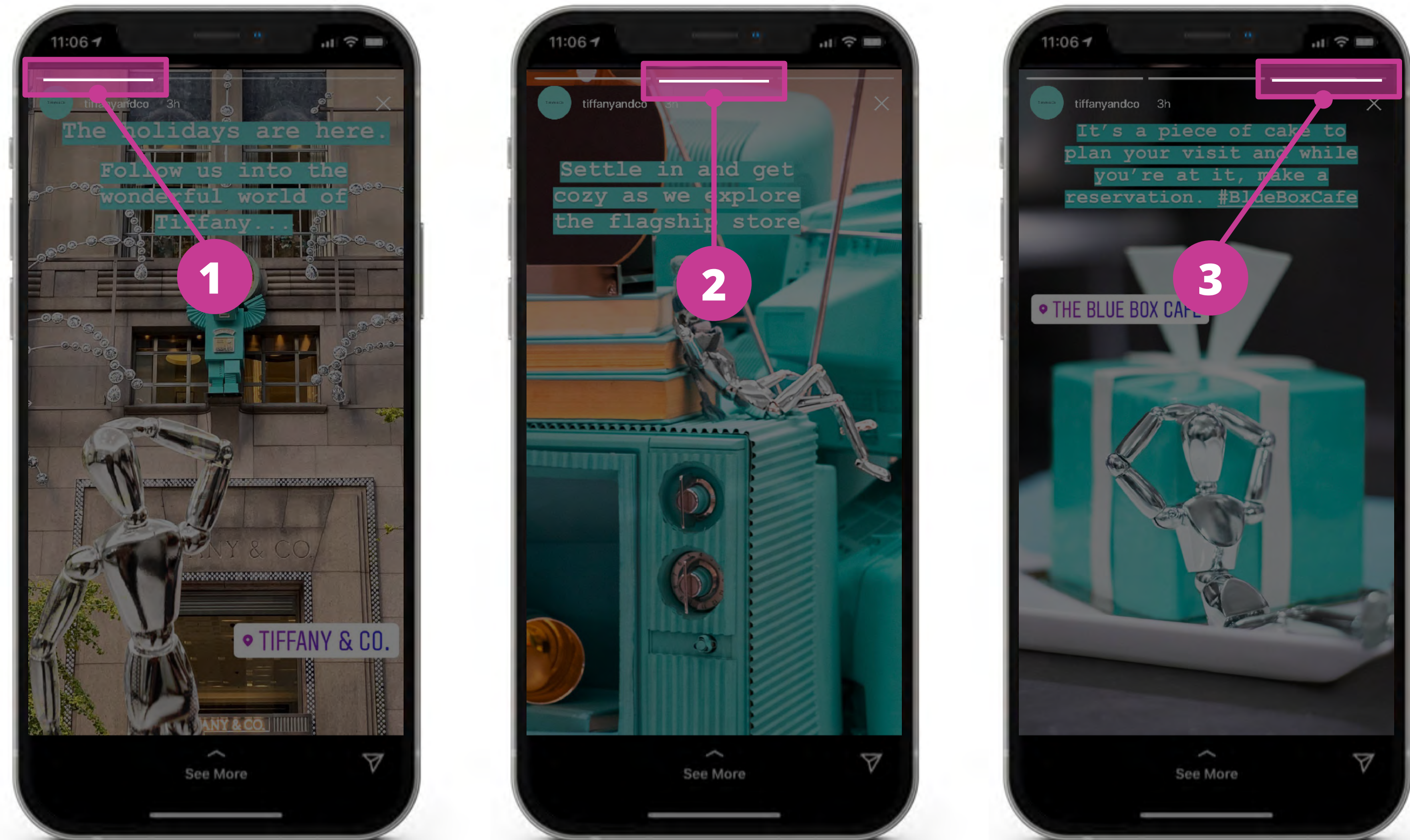
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Frames per Day

What is Frames per Day?

The number of individual photos or video frames posted to Stories within a 24-hour period.

In this example,
Tiffany & Co. posted
three frames per day.

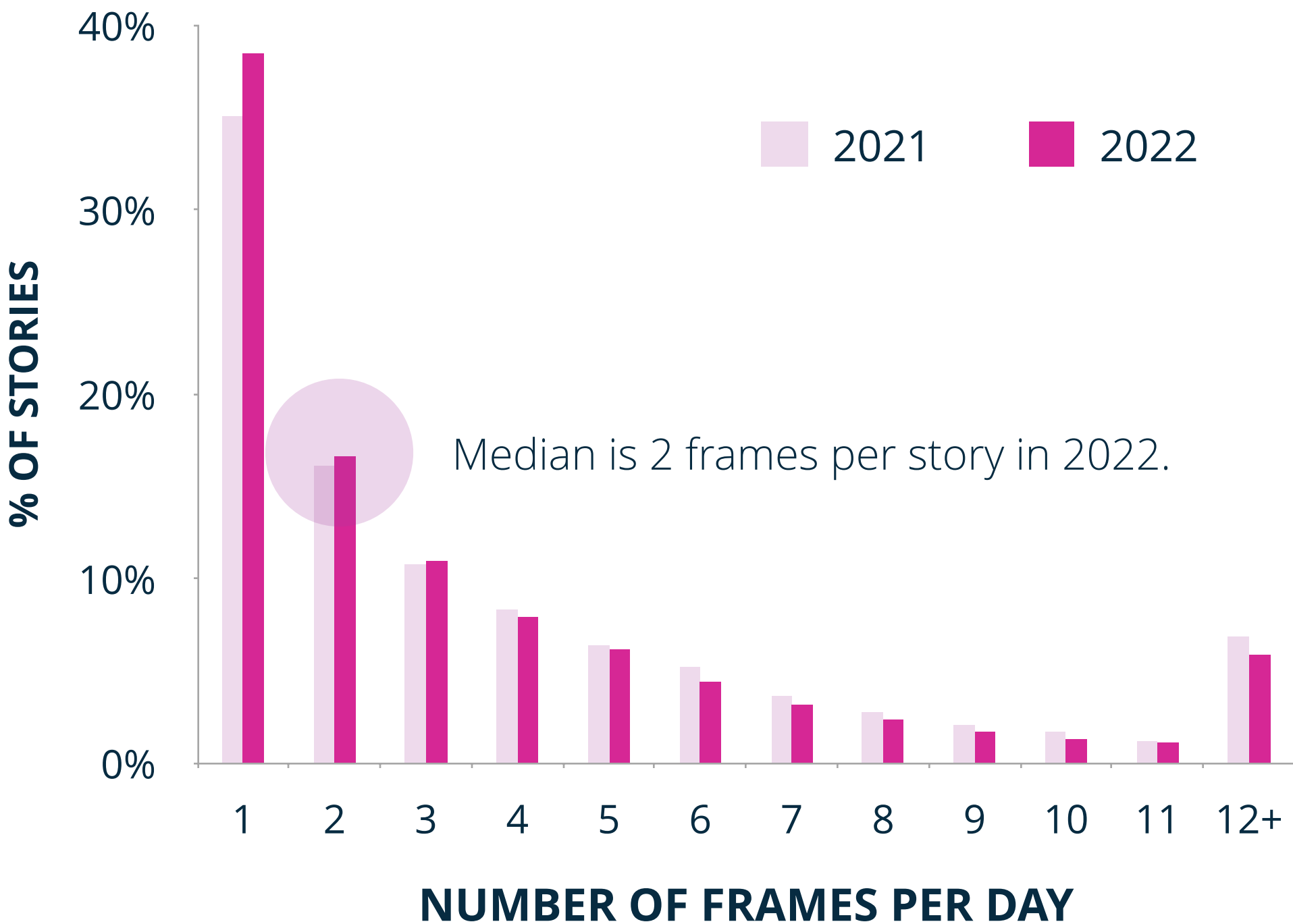


Frames per Day

The number of individual photos or video frames posted to Stories within a 24-hour period.

Shorter Stories are more common than long ones.

- About 40% of Story activity comprises days with only one frame.
- 1-3 frames account for about 65% of brand activity.
- About 15% of Stories have 7 or more frames.



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More brands are using Stories in their marketing, but they're not posting significantly higher frame counts. Finding your own brand's average number of frames per day and factors that increase your retention rate can help fine-tune your frame frequency strategy.



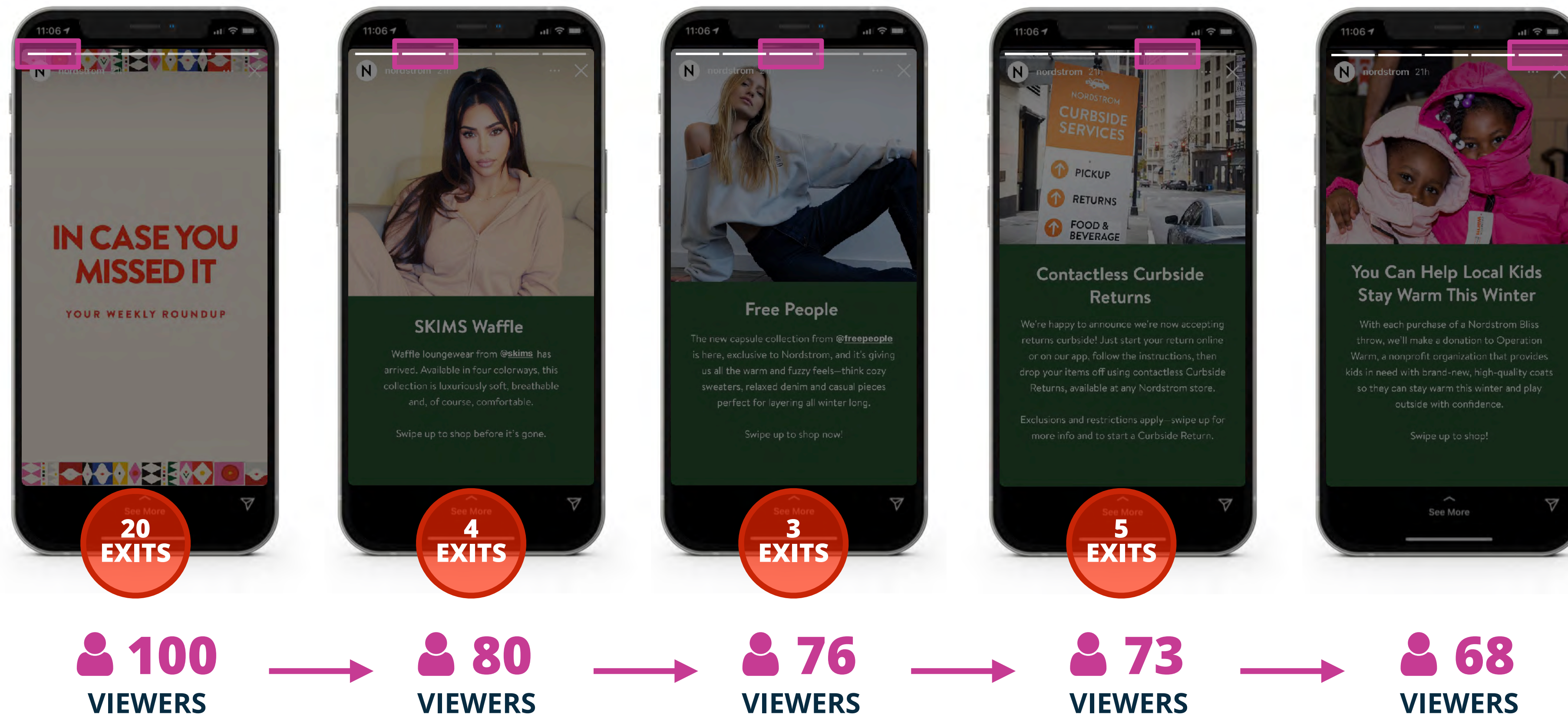
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Retention Rate

What is Retention Rate?

The percentage of Story Viewers on any given day that see all posted Story frames.

This is what **68% retention** looks like.

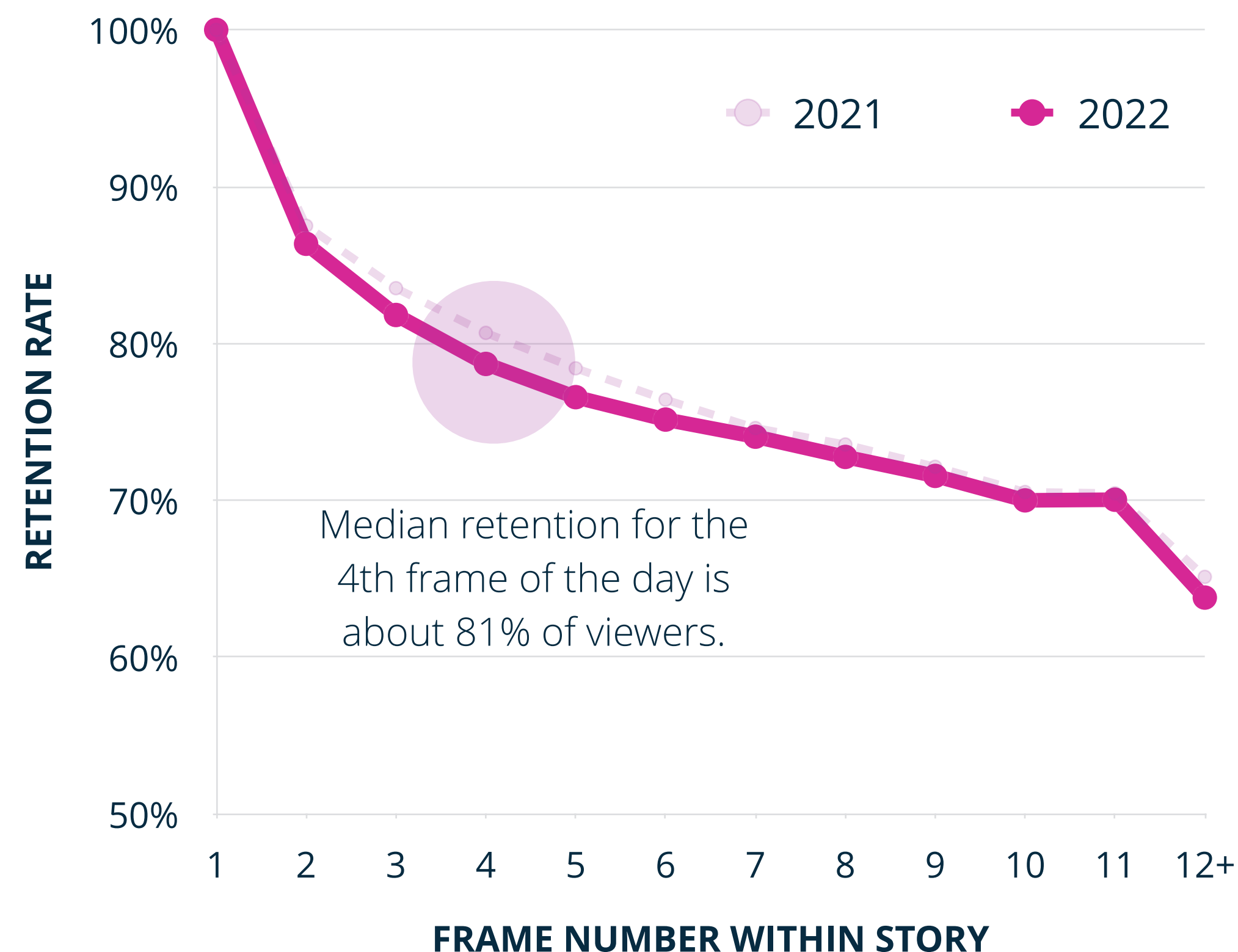


Retention Rate

The percentage of Story viewers on any given day that see all Story frames.

The more frames you publish, the lower your retention rate.

- Average retention rate was pretty flat this year.
- As always, the biggest dip is from 1 to 2 frames a day as users swipe past the Story.
- After that big initial drop-off, the retention decline slows down and stays above 75% through 6 frames per day.



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In our experience, retention is one of the best measures of Instagram Story success. Focus on a first frame that hooks viewers, and then don't be afraid to say everything you need to say: retention drops but doesn't flatline with more frames.

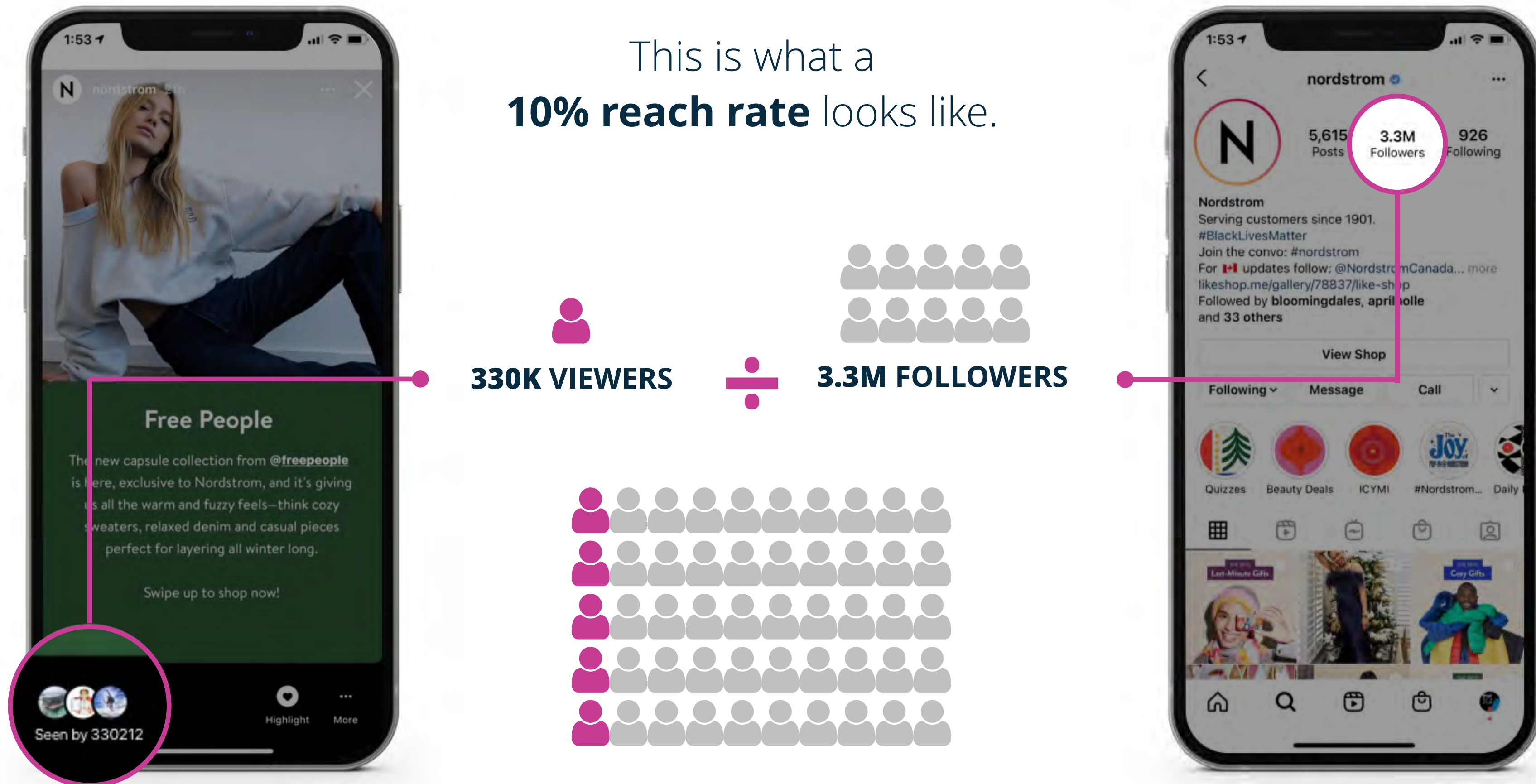


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Reach Rate

What is Story Reach Rate?

Story Viewers on any given day divided by follower count, expressed as a percentage.

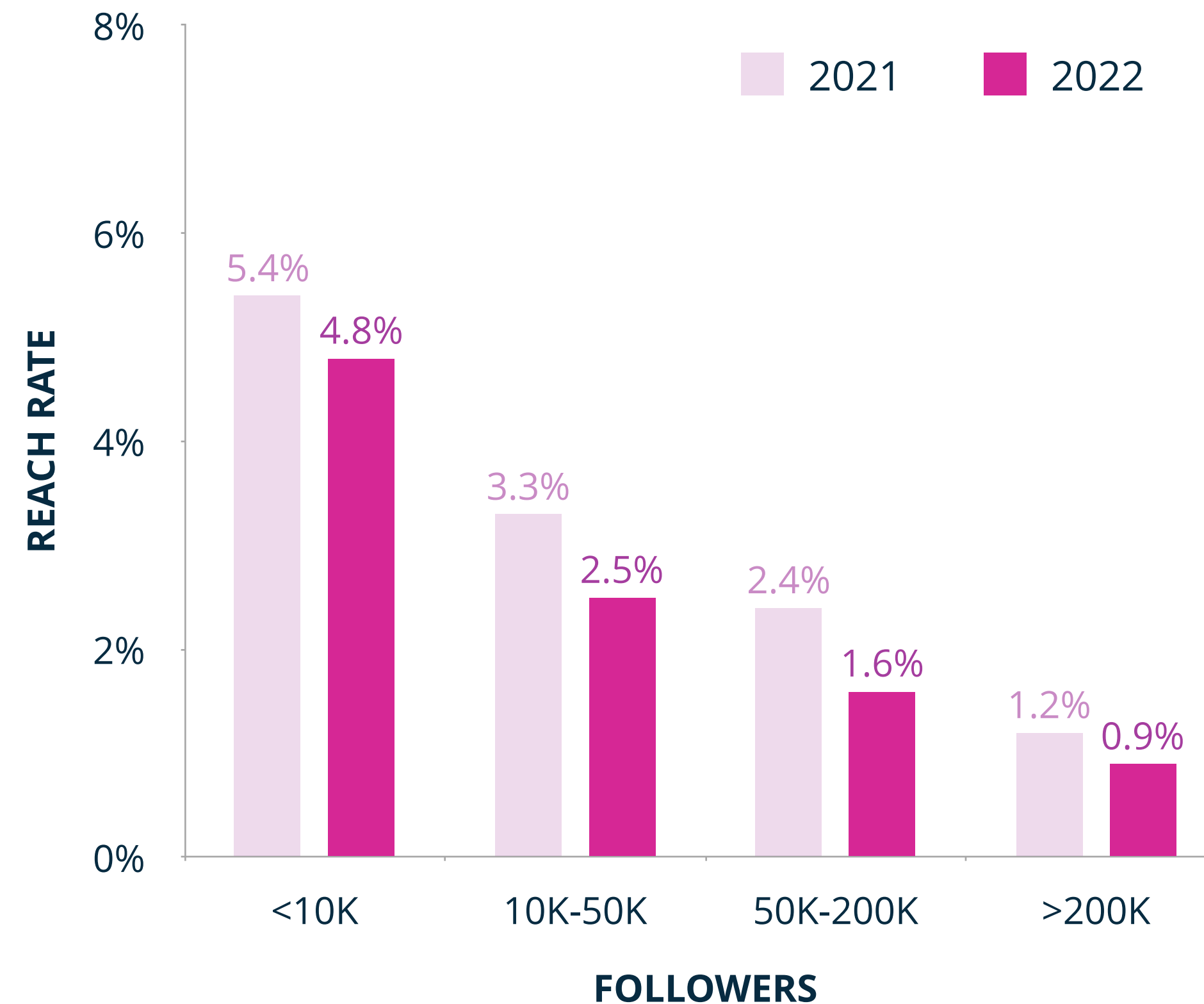


Story Reach Rate

Story Viewers on any given day divided by follower count, expressed as a percentage.

Brands saw reach rates decline in 2022 no matter their follower count.

- Mid-size brands between 50K-200K followers endured the biggest reach declines this year.
- Smaller brands with under 10K followers lost the least this year but still saw declines.



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As we saw earlier in this report, brands are posting more and more Stories, so the competition for views has never been higher. Strong first frames are a marketer's best tool for encouraging retention and notice from the Instagram algorithm.



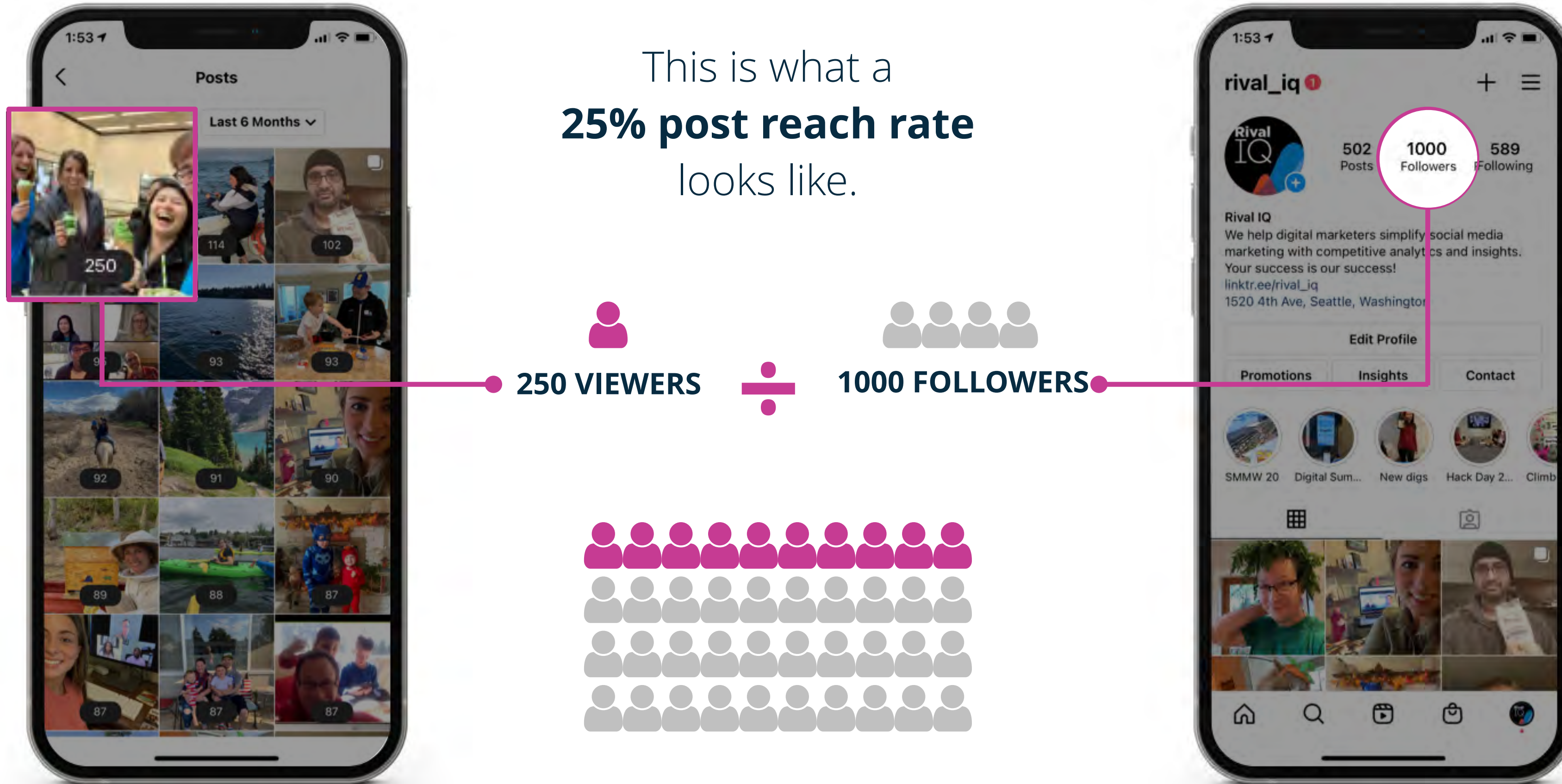
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Post Reach Rate

What is Post Reach Rate?

The reach of a post expressed as a percentage of followers.

This is what a
25% post reach rate
looks like.

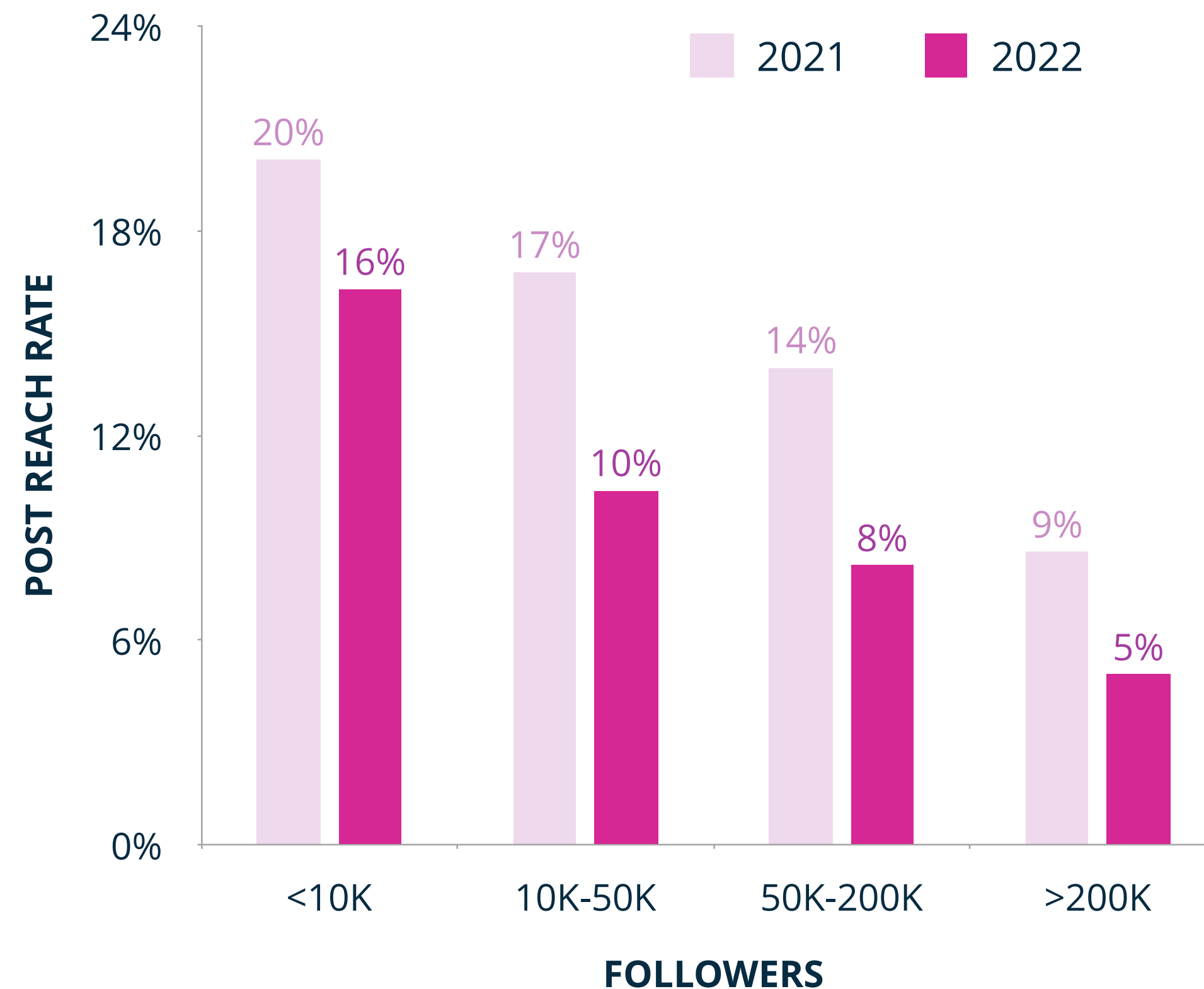


Post Reach Rate

The reach of a post expressed as a percentage of followers.

Brands saw their post reach rates decline across the board in 2022.

- Handles with more than 200K followers saw the sharpest Post Reach Rate declines in 2022.
- As usual, the larger your follower count, the smaller your reach rate.



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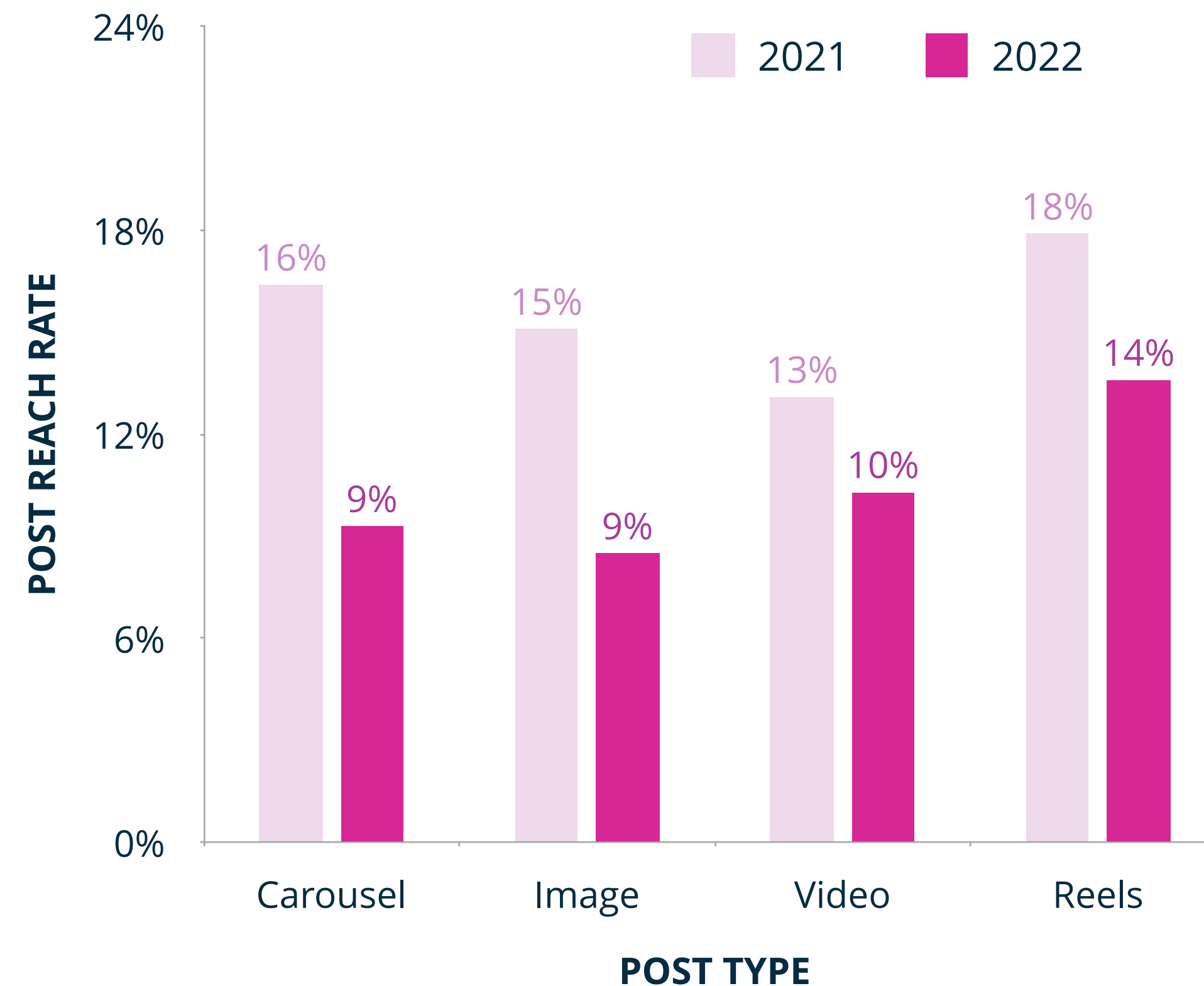
Post reach rate has declined every year we've studied it as Instagram adds more ways for users to consume content (like Lives and Reels) and therefore further divides attention.

Post Reach Rate by Media Type

The reach of a post expressed as a percentage of followers.

Brands saw their post reach rates decline for every media type in 2022.

- Images were hit especially hard with a 40% decline in reach rate.
- Video posts saw the smallest declines in reach this year but still suffered.
- Even Reels saw a decreased reach rate by about 25% this year.

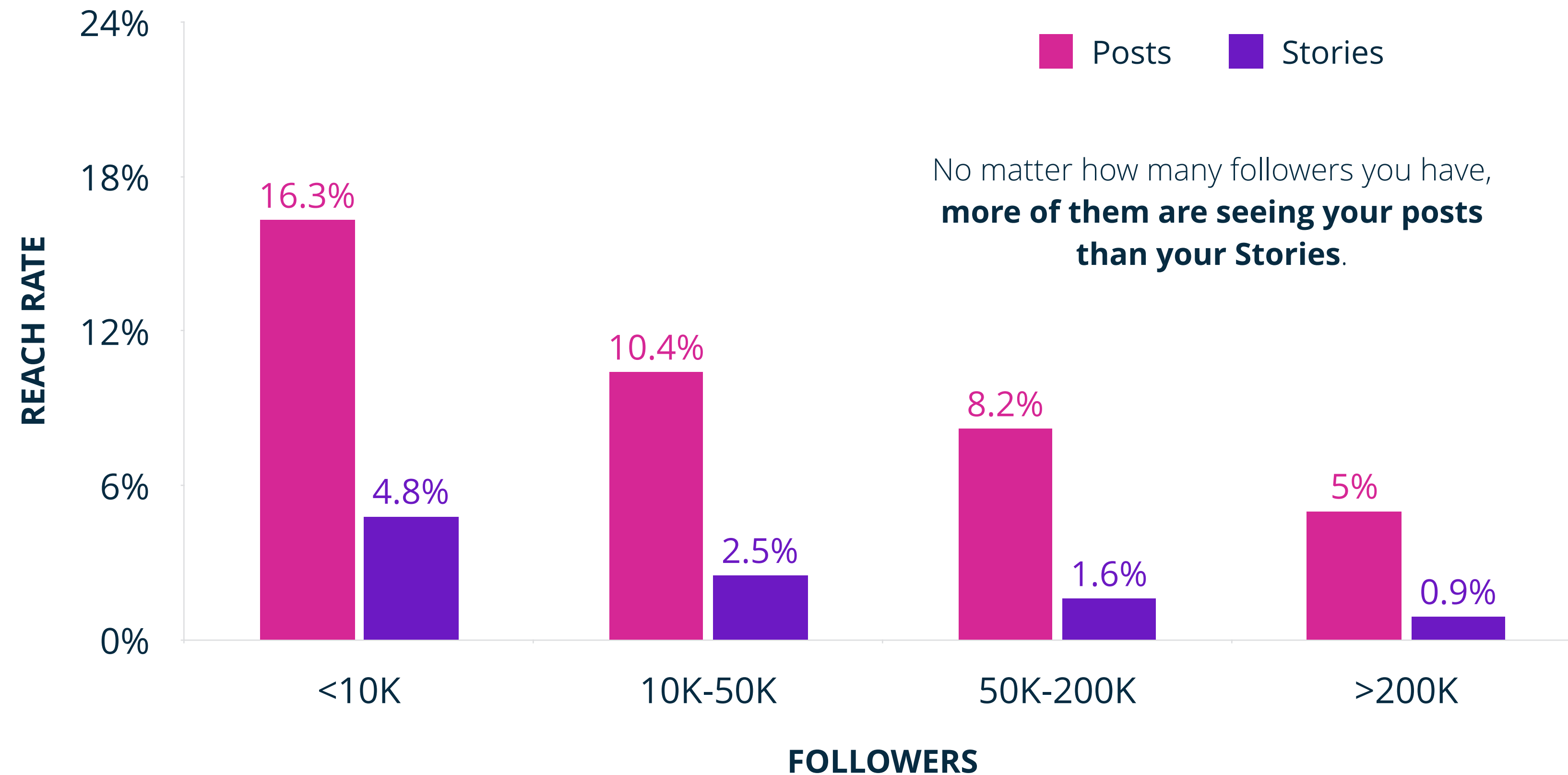


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Instagram is working hard to incentivize more video content to compete with YouTube and TikTok, so this is a good area to invest in in 2023 to engage both followers and the algorithm.

Reach Rate: Stories vs. Posts

The reach of a post expressed as a percentage of followers.



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Stories continue to have a lower reach rate than posts for brands, but does that mean your brand should stop creating Stories? The short answer is no: Story impressions can be a great tool for engaging with followers and developing relationships over time.

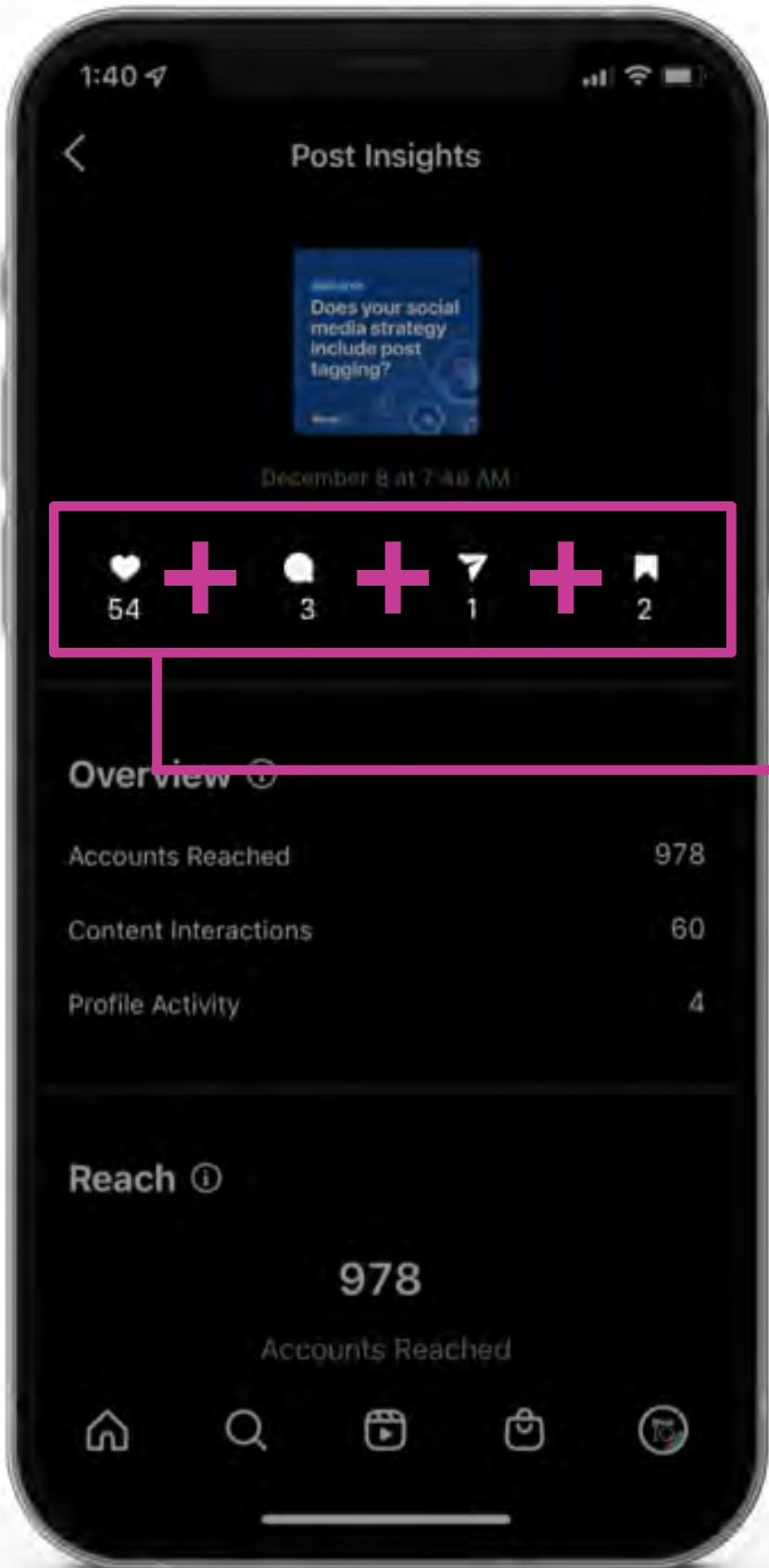


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Post Engagement per Impression

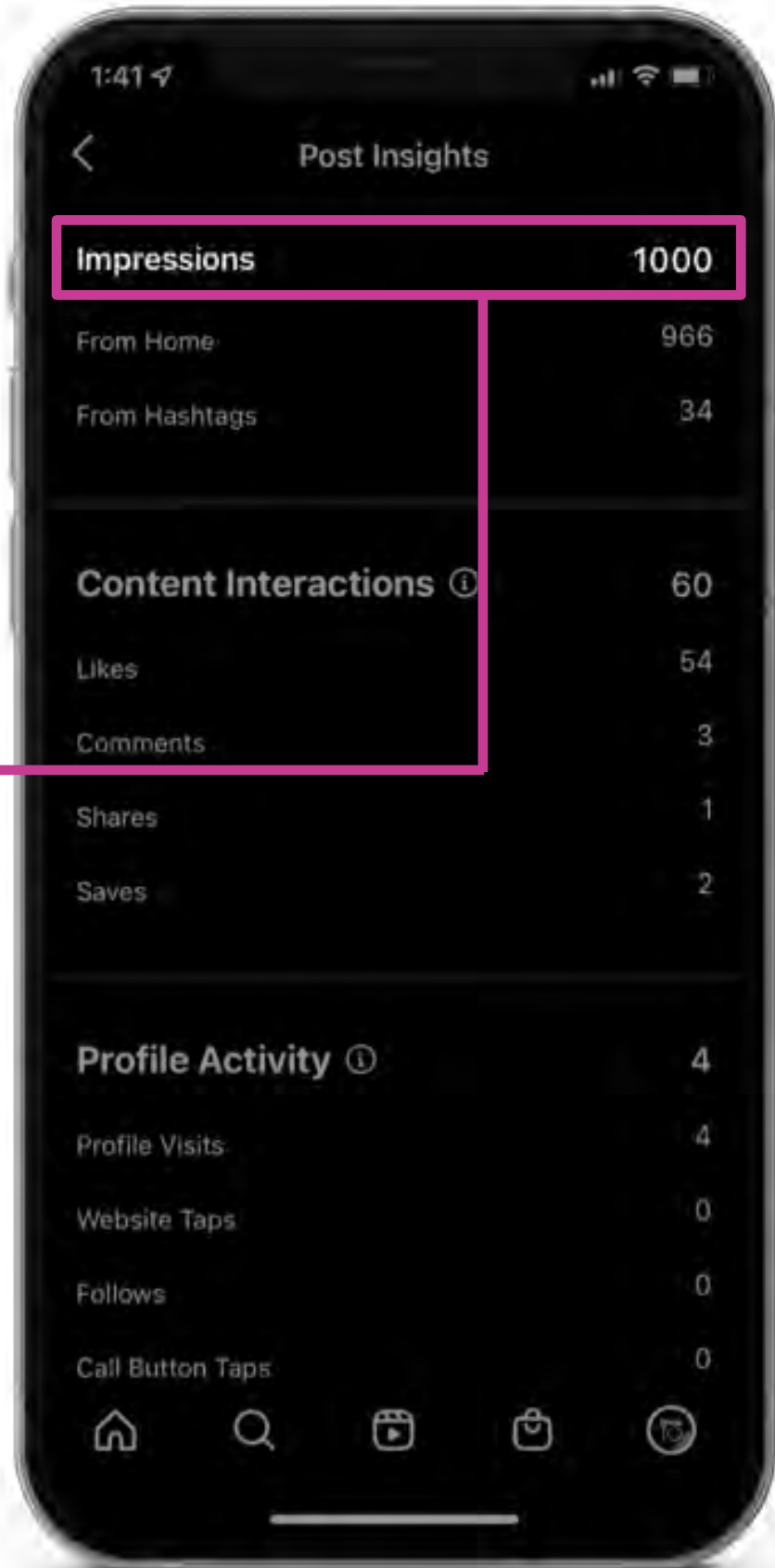
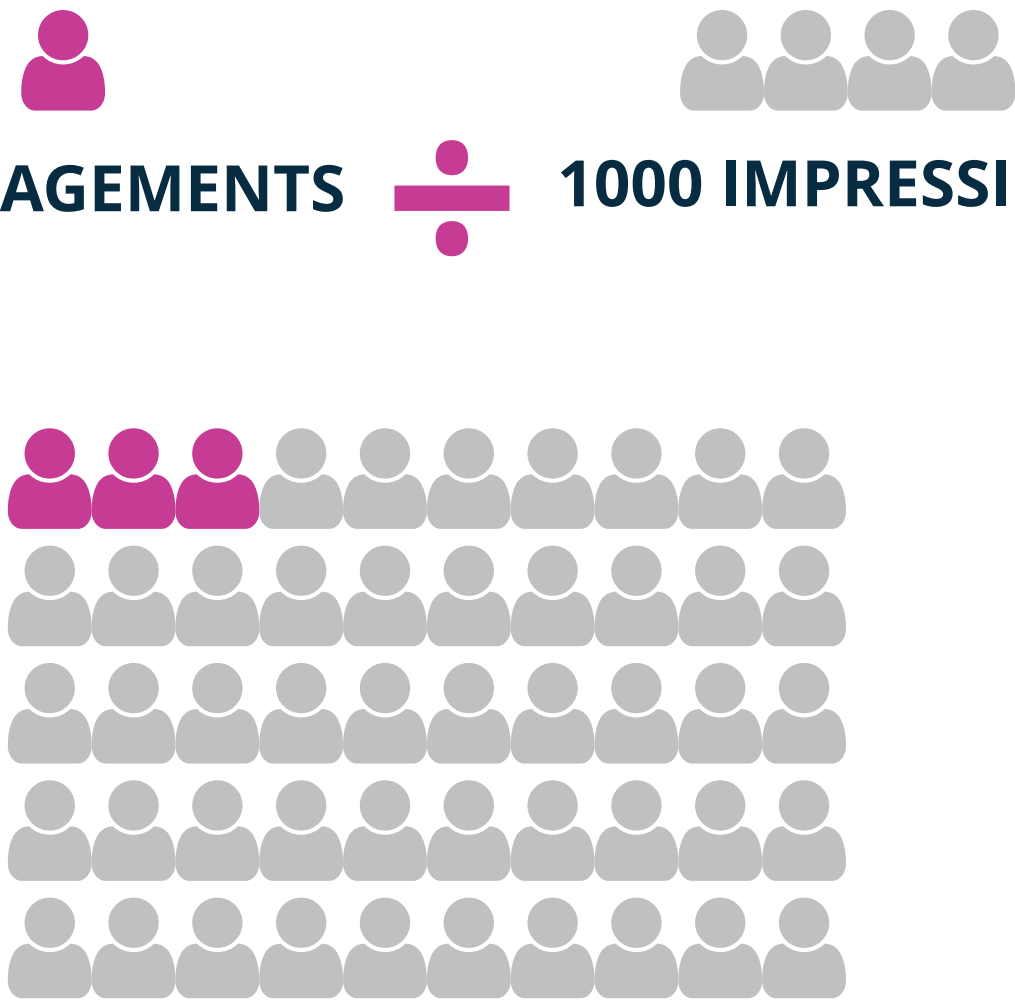
What is Post Engagement per Impression?

The numbers of likes, comments, and saves per impression on a post.



This is what a
**6% post engagement/
impression** looks like.

60 ENGAGEMENTS ÷ 1000 IMPRESSIONS

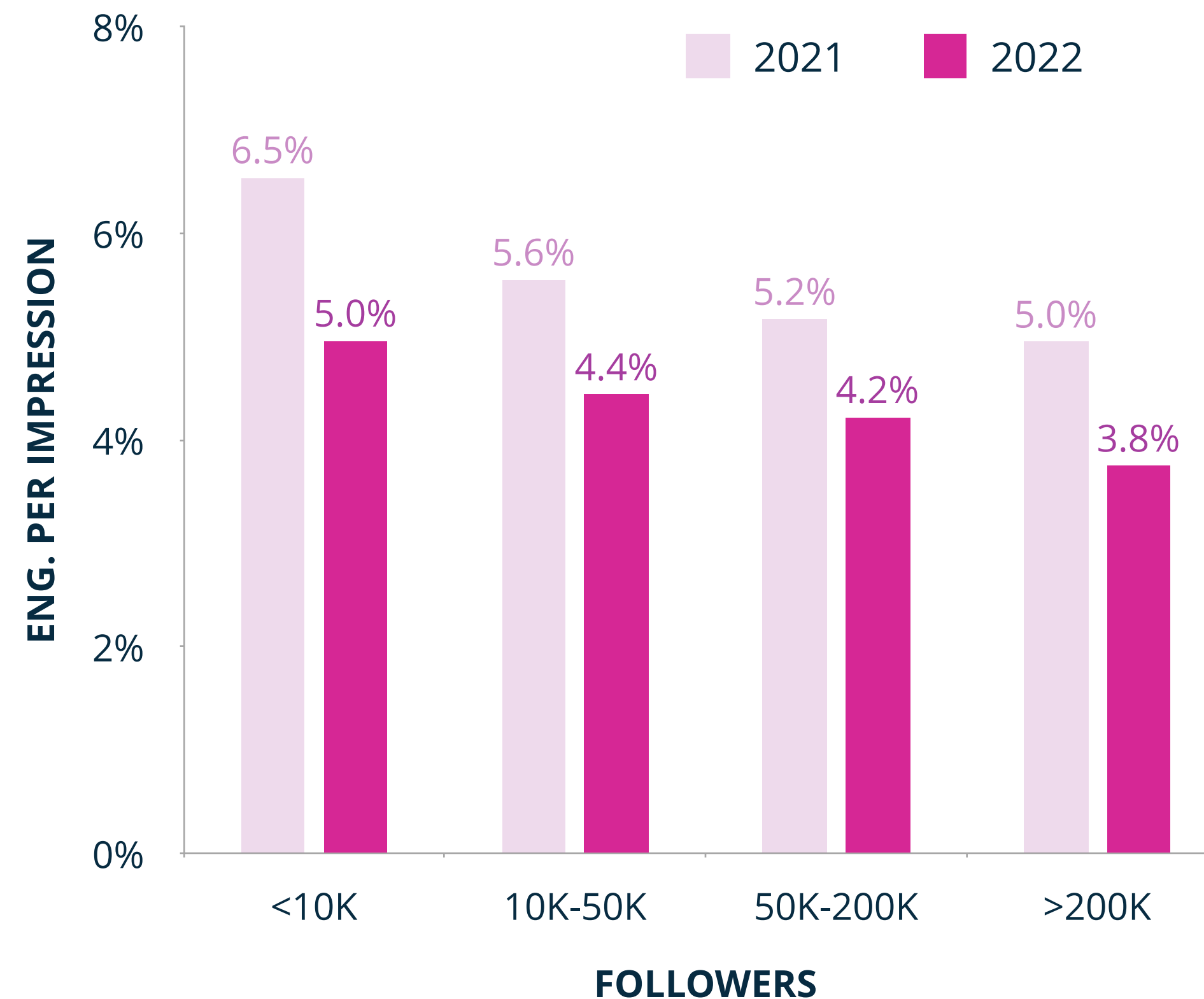


Post Engagement per Impression

The numbers of likes, comments, and saves per impression on a post.

Post engagements per impression declined regardless of follower counts this year.

- Mid-sized handles with between 50K-200K followers retained post engagement per impression best this year.
- The smallest and largest brands fared worse, with handles in both groups seeing about a 25% drop.



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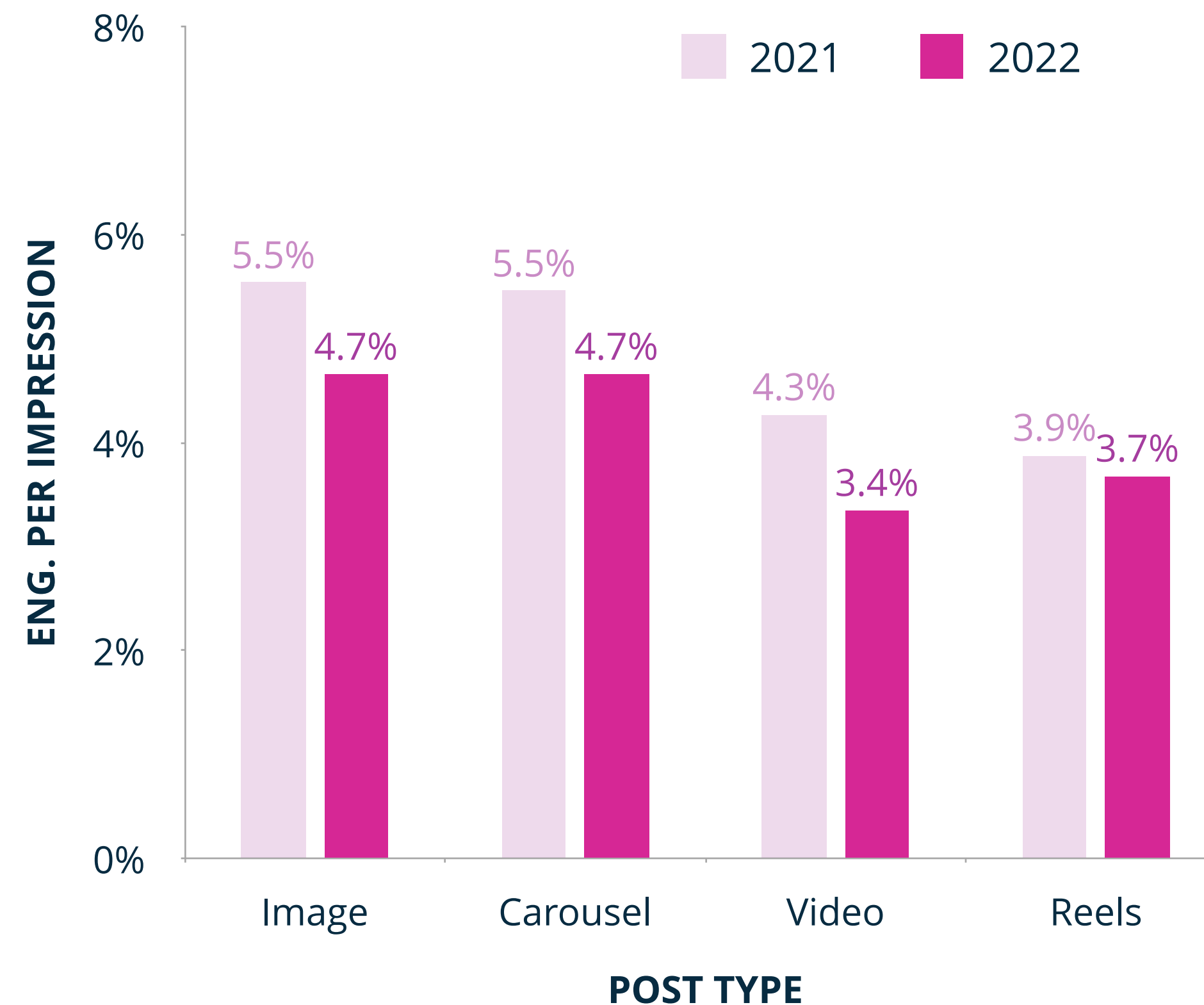
These drops in post engagement rate per impression are part of a larger trend of decreased engagement on Instagram as the platform battles for attention in the era of YouTube and TikTok.

Post Engagement per Impression by Media Type

The numbers of likes, comments, and saves per impression on a post.

Post engagement per impression decreased across every media type in 2022.

- Video posts saw post engagement per impression drop by more than 20%.
- Reels fared better than other post types, losing just 5% engagement per impression from 2021.



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Static post types like images and carousels are still outpacing videos and Reels despite Instagram's big investments in video this year.

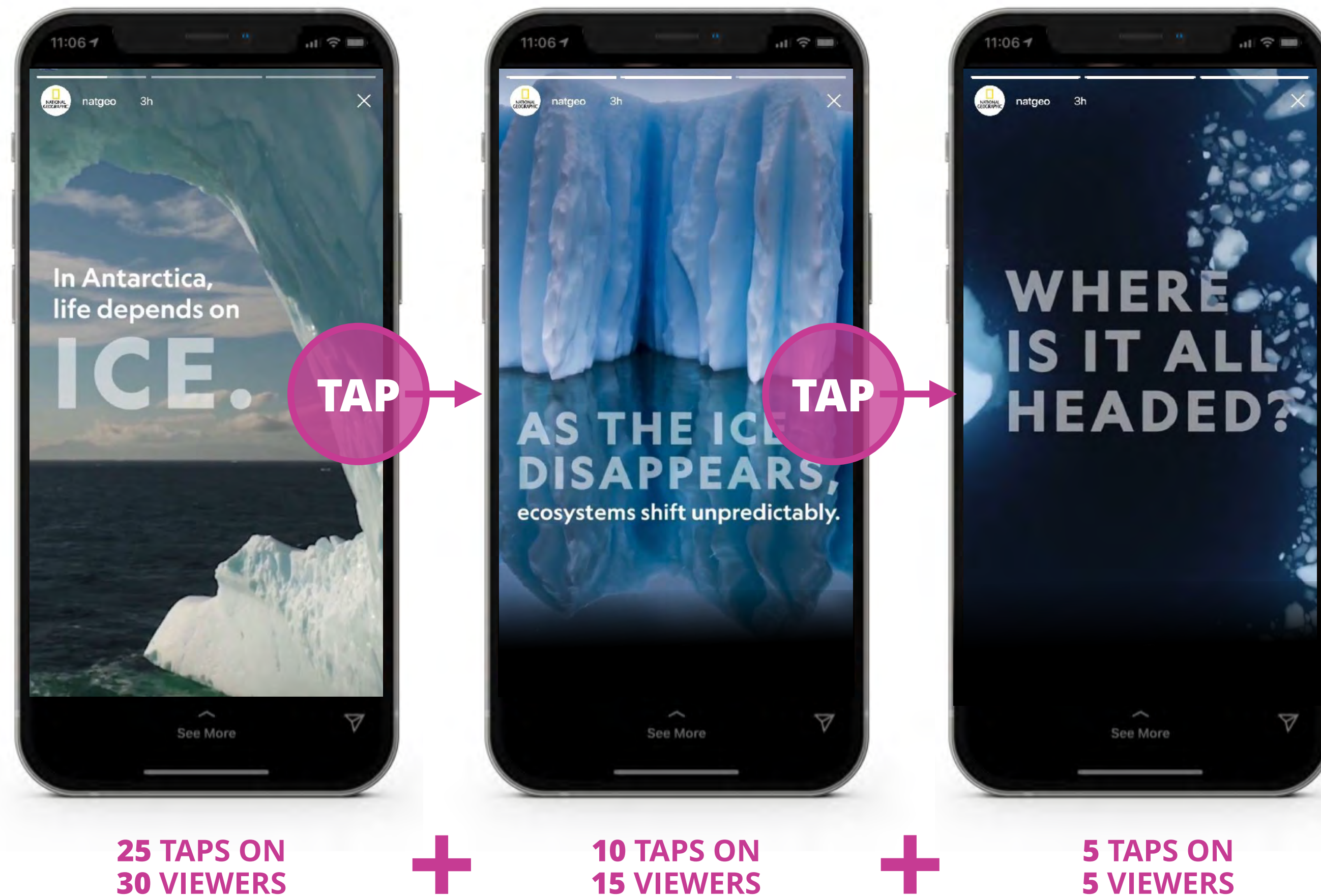


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Tap-Forward Rate

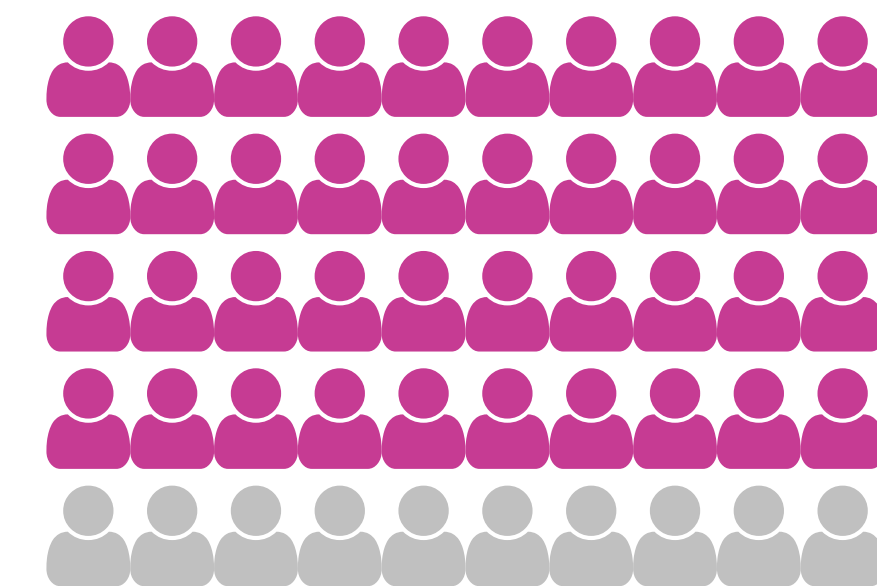
What is Tap-Forward Rate?

The percentage of Story viewers that have a tap forward.



This is what a **80% tap-forward rate** looks like.

$$\frac{40 \text{ TAPS}}{50 \text{ VIEWERS}}$$

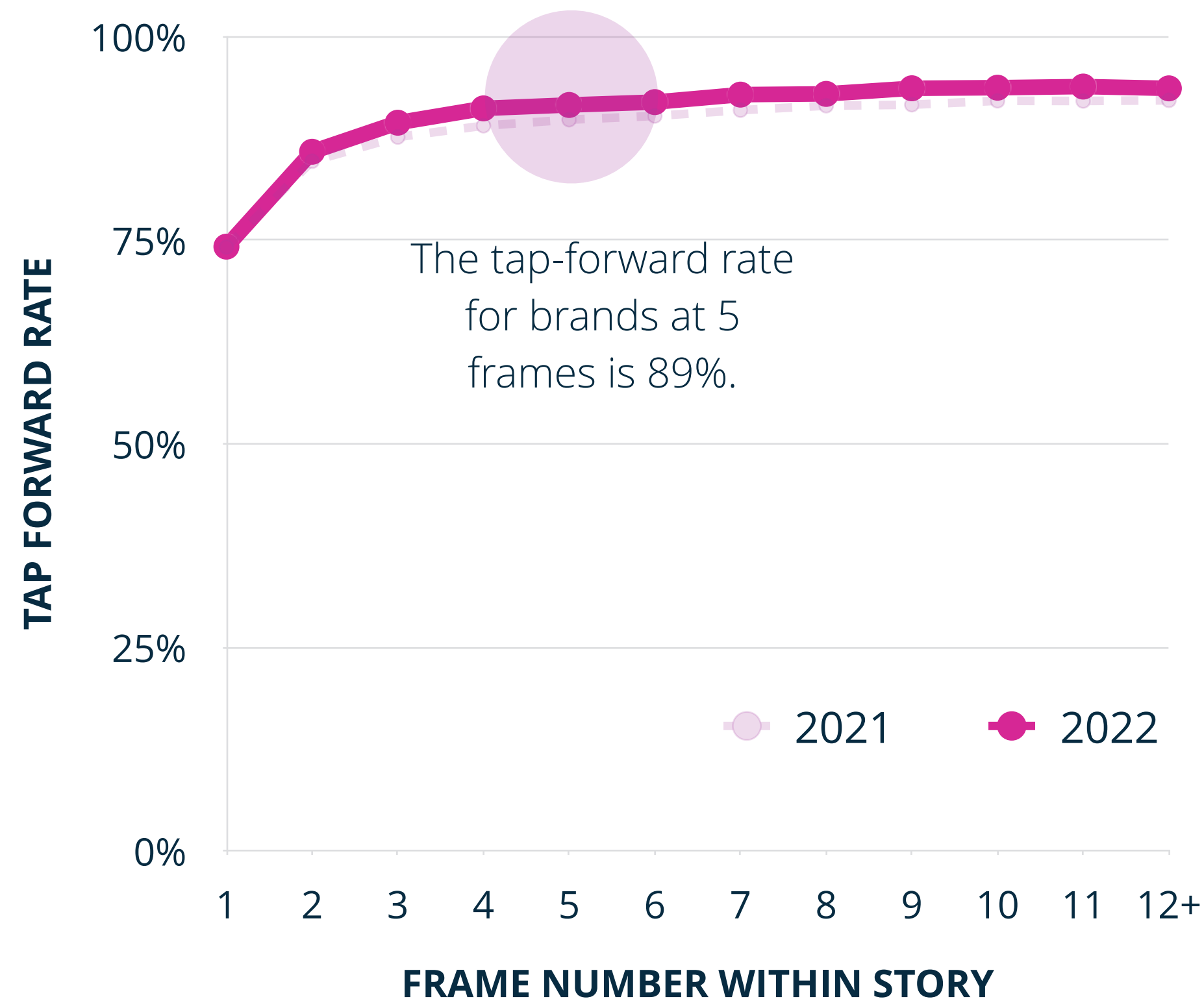


Tap-Forward Rate

The percentage of Story viewers that have a tap forward.

The more frames in your Story, the more likely followers will tap forward.

- The median tap-forward rate at 5 frames per day is nearly 90%.
- Tap-forward rates stayed flat this year, suggesting attention spans haven't decreased too much.
- If your Story contains more than 4 frames, more than 90% of your viewers are tapping forward to advance to the next frame.



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Tapping forward isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it does indicate that the viewer has either seen enough of the content or wasn't interested in the first place. Keep your frames engaging and experiment with video to maintain your viewers throughout the entire Story.

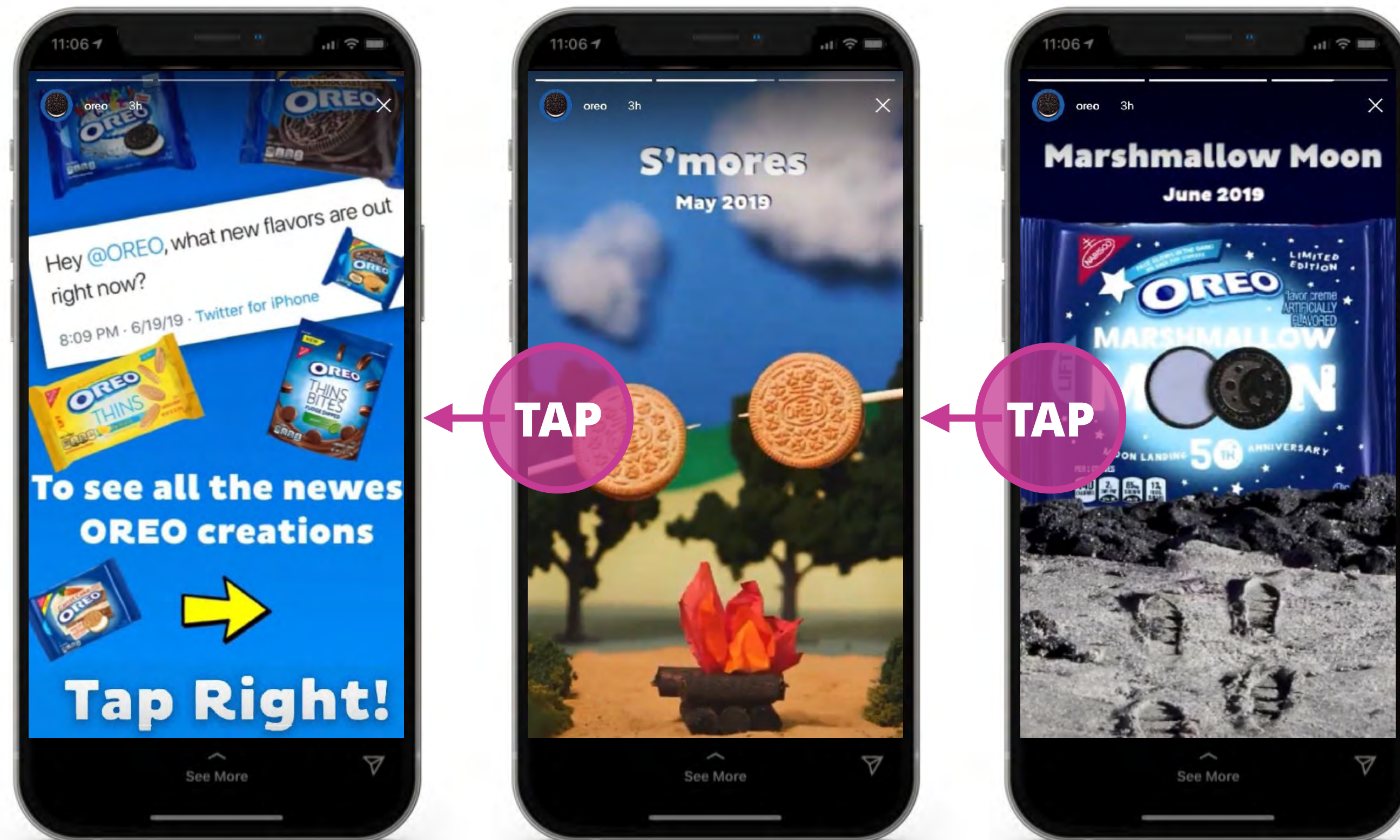


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Tap-Back Rate

What is Tap-Back Rate?

The percentage of Story impressions with a tap backward.



0 TAPS ON
30 IMPRESSIONS



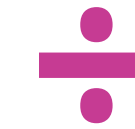
3 TAPS ON
15 IMPRESSIONS



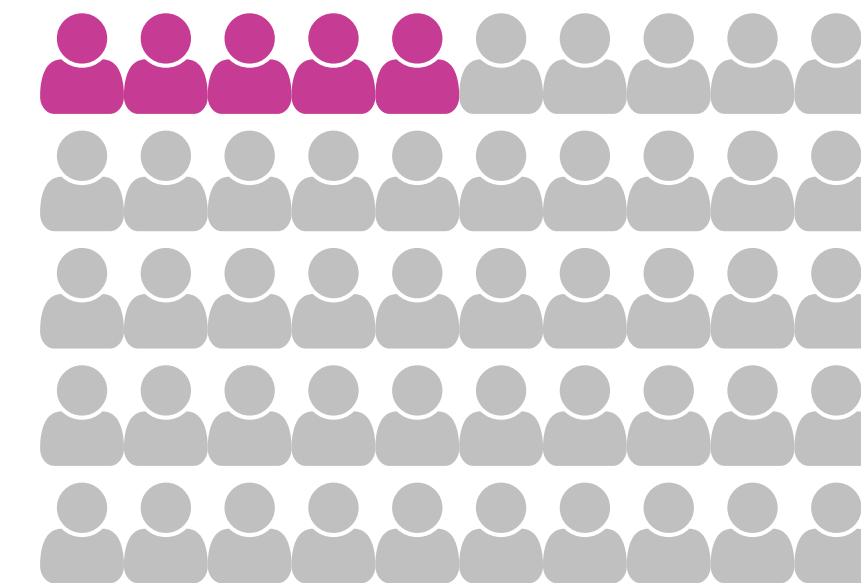
2 TAPS ON
5 IMPRESSIONS

This is what a
10% tap-back rate looks like.

5 TAPS



50 IMPRESSIONS

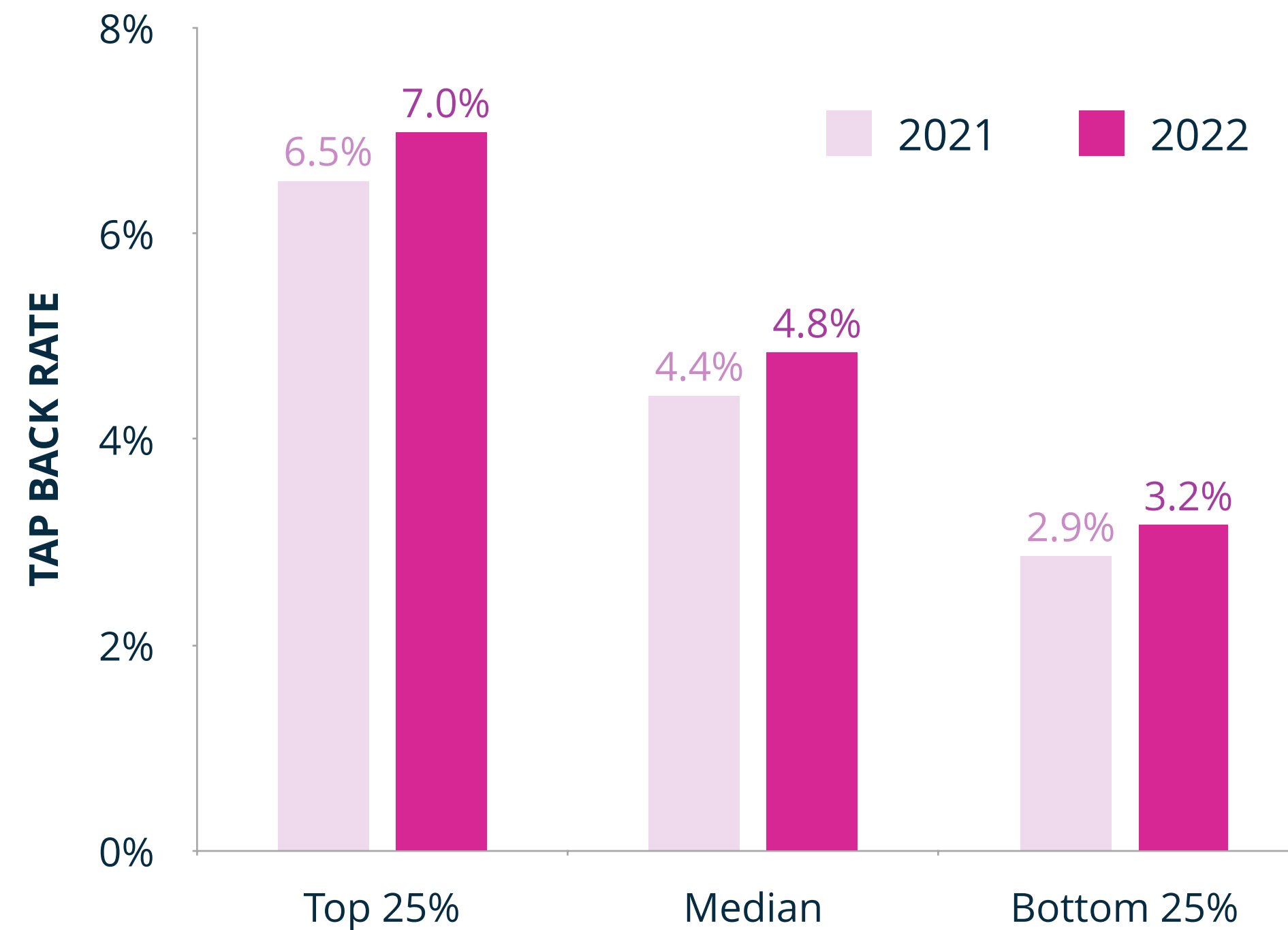


Tap-Back Rate

The percentage of Story impressions with a tap backward.

Tap-back rates have increased across the board in 2022.

- The median tap-back rate is 4.8%, but the top 25% of brands see tap-back rates closer to 7%.
- Taps back are a great indication of content that your followers want to consume more of.



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Taps back mean a viewer was eager to reengage with your content, which is always a good thing. Taps back have increased slightly as brands grow savvier about posting engaging frames that merit a second look.

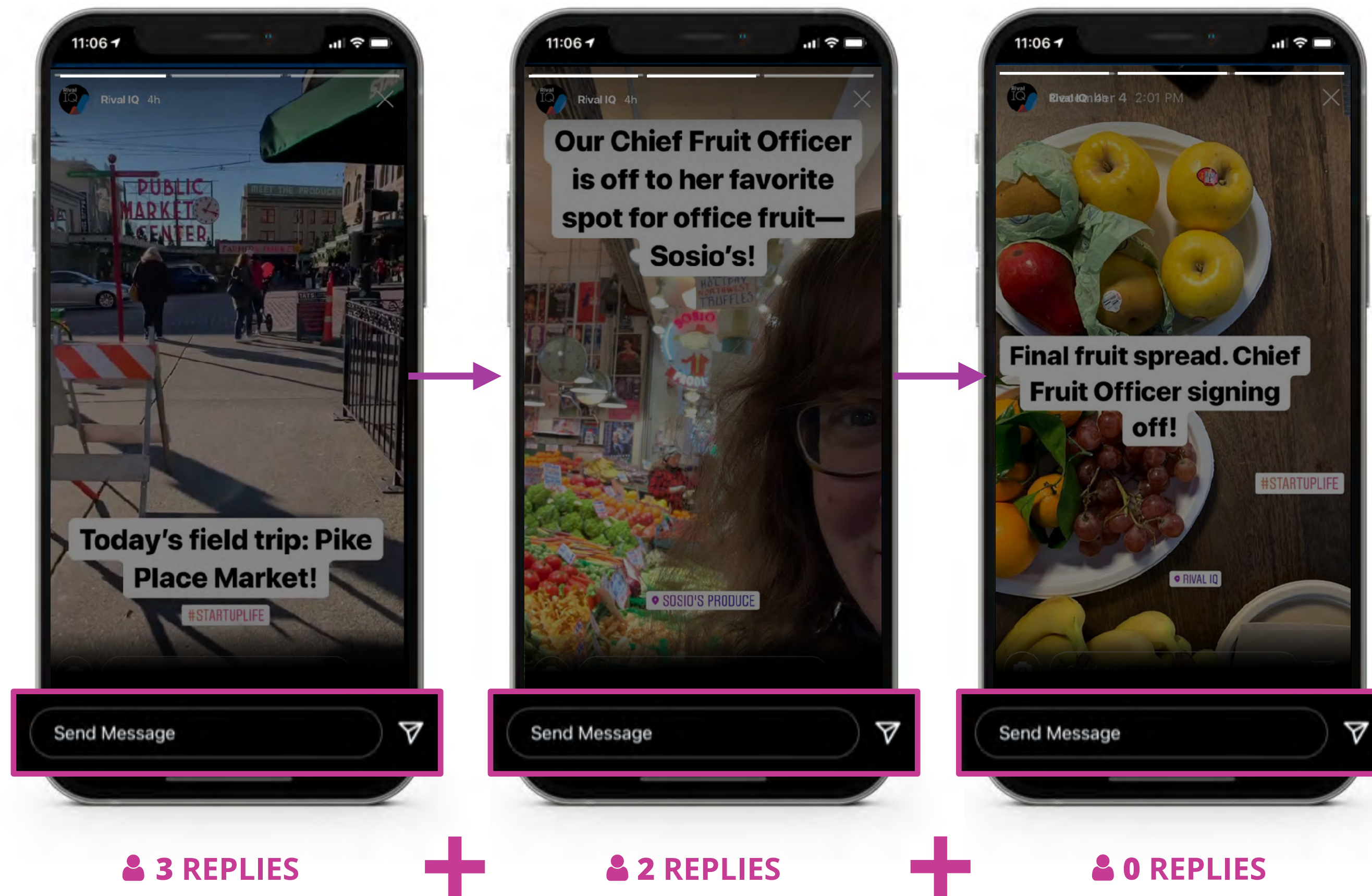


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Reply Rate per 1K Impressions

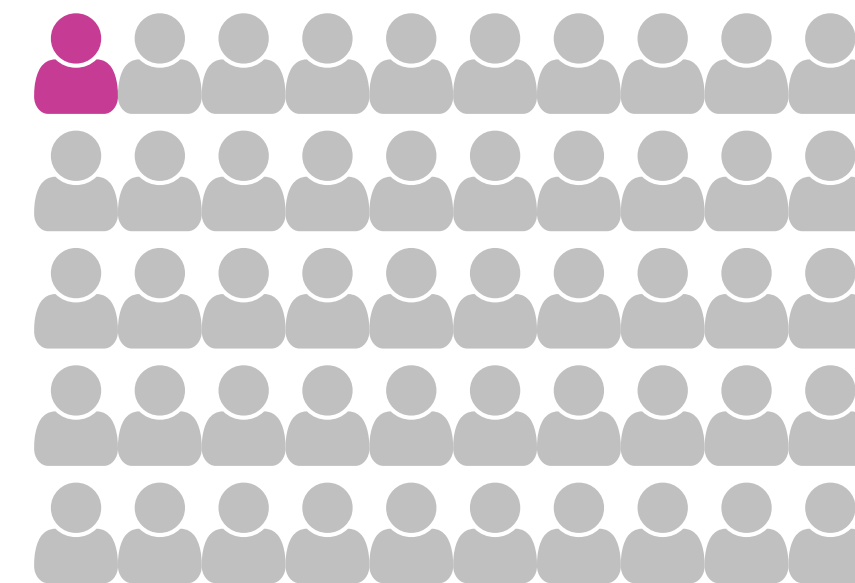
What is Replies per 1K Impressions?

The number of replies per 1,000 Story impressions.



This is what
**5 replies per
1K impressions** looks like.

5 REPLIES ÷ 1K IMPRESSIONS

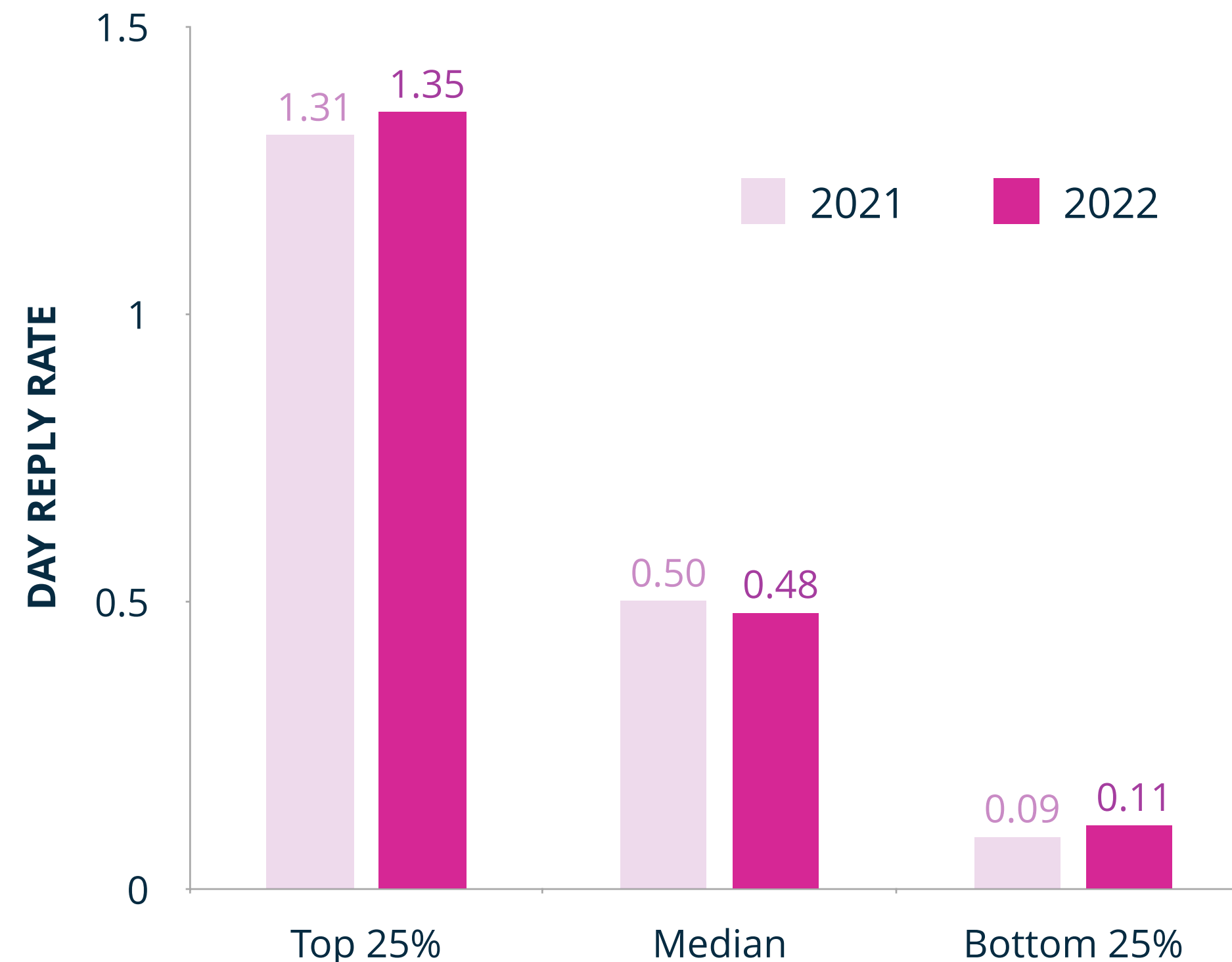


Replies per 1K Impressions

The number of replies per 1,000 Story impressions.

Replies per 1K Impressions increased for most brands in 2022.

- Median reply rates were pretty flat this year—people have about as much to say to brands as they did last year
- These reply rates are tiny because users mostly don't reply—particularly in the bottom 25%, which has a teeny average reply rate close to 0%.



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The best way to score an elusive reply is to ask for one by asking a question. Unfortunately, Instagram's API continues to limit data from in-frame engagement stickers like polls and quizzes, so it's tough to measure the impacts of these interactive elements on your engagement and reply rates.

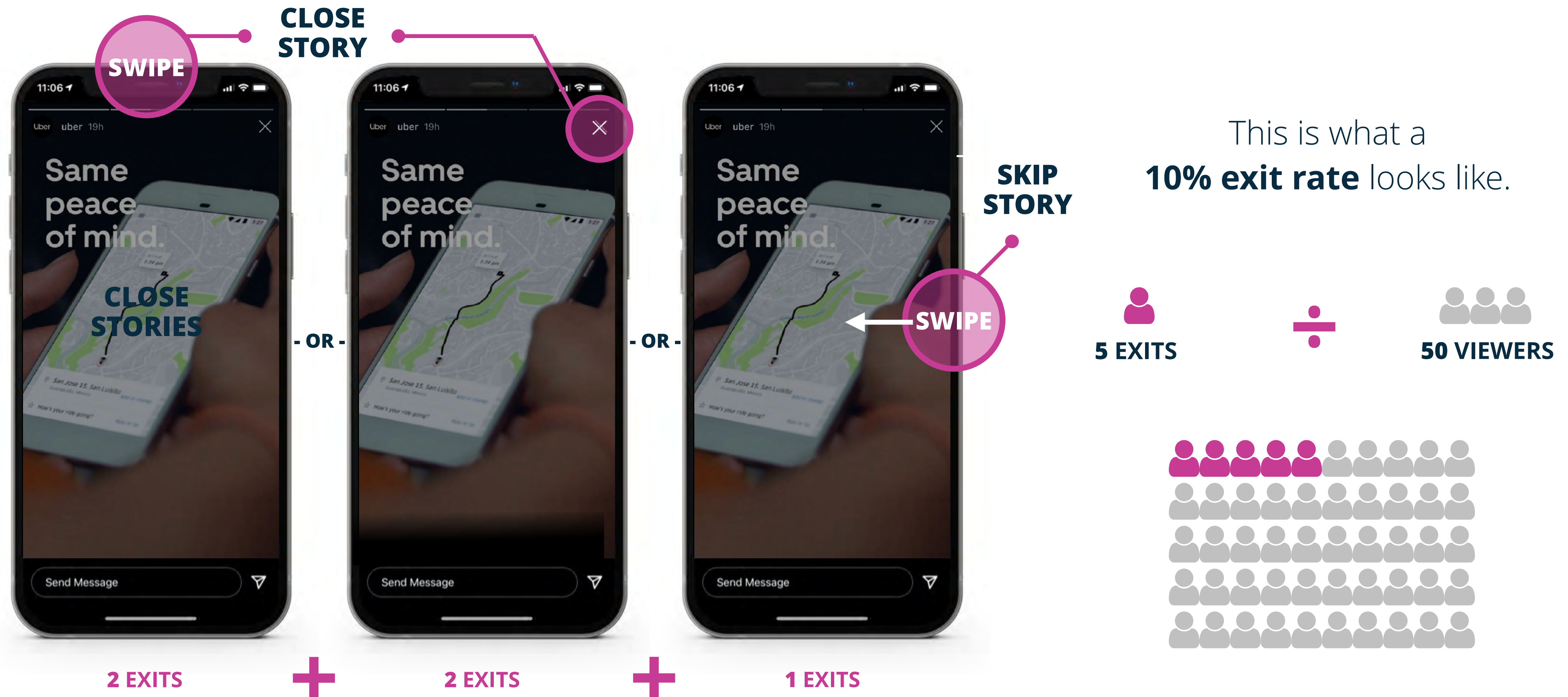


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Exit Rate

What is Exit Rate?

The percentage of impressions that exit your Story.

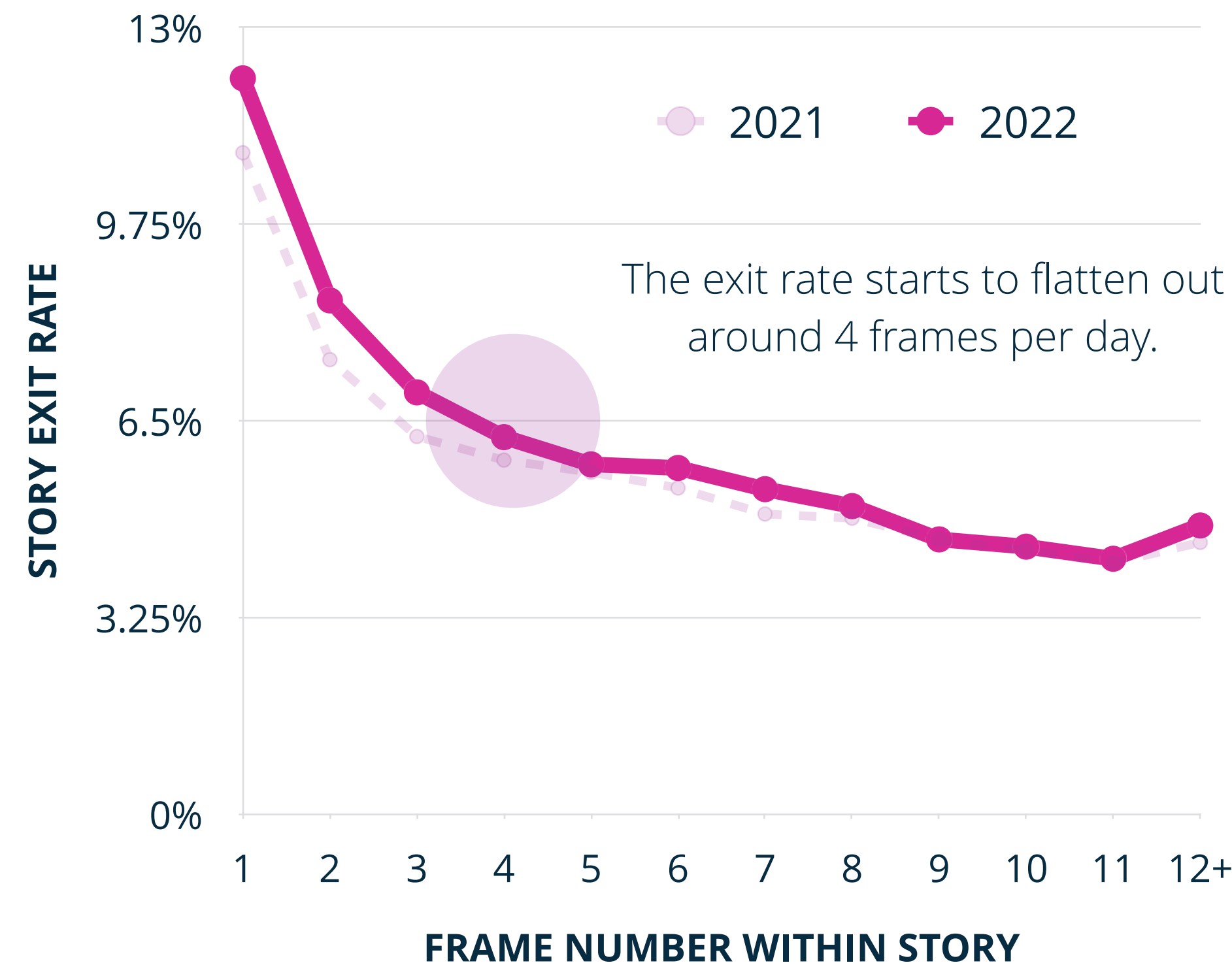


Exit Rate

The percentage of impressions that exit your Story.

Exit rates were fairly flat this year.

- Brands saw exit rates increase just slightly this year, which means viewers were about as likely to bail on a Story as they were last year.
- Exit rates start at about 12% for Stories with a single frame.
- The rate begins to really tail off at 5 frames per day and flattens out in the 4% range.



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Exit rates increased a little across all frame per day counts this year, which indicates viewers were slightly less engaged with Story content this year. These exit rate numbers are pretty small, so don't get discouraged.

About Rival IQ

Rival IQ is a social media analytics toolkit 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 competitor activity in time to respond before the market shifts direction.

Do more with your data

Dive deeper into your social media analytics for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, boosted post detection, hashtag analysis, and so much more.

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