

DASH HUDSON

Global Digital Insights

Q4 2021: Social Entertainment —
The Future of Consumer Marketing



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Context and Purpose

For marketers, 2021 was a year of evolving and experimenting. An increased focus on privacy and the phasing out of third-party cookies changed the nature of targeted advertising, and content grew in importance. The most significant trend from the past year was the shift from the social graph to the content graph. The user experience on short-form video channels is not defined by who one is friends with or which brands they follow. Instead, users of this format are algorithmically served content based on their personal interests. Another emerging trend is the advancement of social e-commerce. Brands have more tools than ever at their fingertips to make content shoppable, and drive sales results from social touchpoints. This is leading to innovation in social marketing known as shoppertainment, where brands are taking advantage of the content graph to create entertaining photos and videos that are primed to send customers directly to checkout.

The next year for marketers will be defined by one important fact: brands are now competing on an equal footing, and in the content graph where reach is uncapped, and the most entertaining content wins.

As a leader in photo and video predictive performance analytics, Dash Hudson has access to data and insights from industry-leading brands about how they are navigating this new content-driven era, including performance benchmarks for both Instagram and TikTok. The following report leverages Dash Hudson's community of forward-thinking digital marketers and relationships with leading social media channels, to explore emerging trends and winning strategies in the market, as brands move to unite the worlds of e-commerce and entertainment.

Summary of Findings

- 1 Brands are rapidly innovating how they reach customers and drive sales.
- 2 Entertainment has come to the fore in brands' strategies to reach consumers on social media.
- 3 Immersive, digital experiences in metaverse platforms will become more prominent in the coming years, as the metaverse market is expected to grow exponentially.
- 4 Live-streamed video is the fastest-growing source of engagement on social media, and brands are investing heavily in live shopping events.
- 5 Cross-vertical marketing is becoming more important than ever, with brands expanding outside of their industry for bold new sales opportunities.

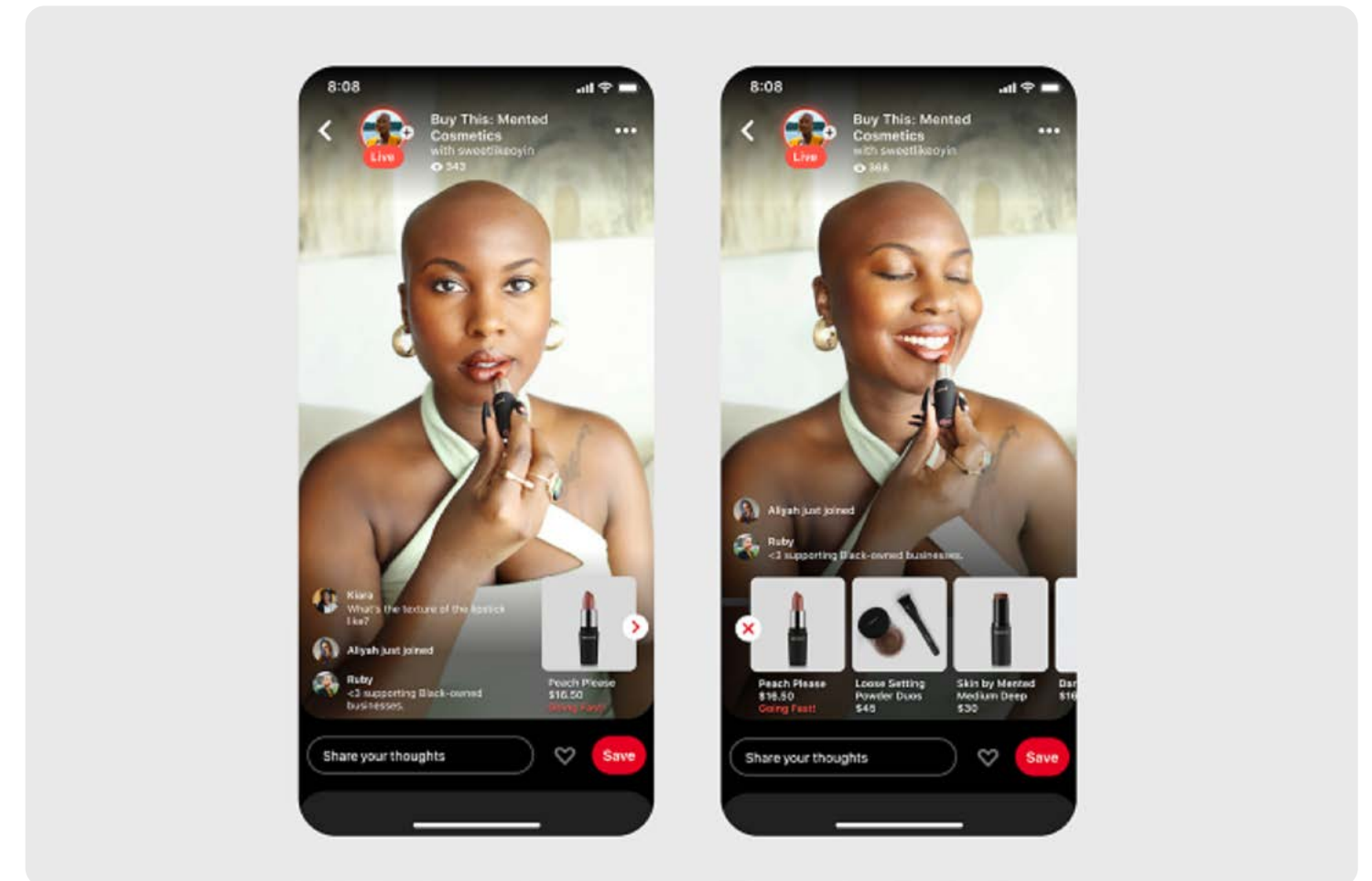
Retail of the Future

The Equilibrium Between Shopping and Entertainment





[87% of Gen Z](#) are using social media for holiday shopping inspiration

[80% of TikTok users](#) who bought something last Black Friday said TikTok played a role

The 2021 holiday season was driven by innovation unlike any other, with social channels and brands taking significant strides into social, live-streamed shopping events. Online holiday shopping is predicted to reach a record [\\$910 billion](#) this season, and much of that is due to the innovative tactics brands are using to reach consumers in new ways. Social e-commerce has taken China by storm, where the market has brought in [\\$300 billion](#) in revenue in 2021 and will account for 11.7% of all e-commerce sales in the country. The integrated social e-commerce format is now expanding internationally, and it is expected to grow significantly in the coming years.



via [Social Media Today](#)

-  **Instagram** has [launched live stream commerce](#) directly in its Shop tab. The social channel is hosting a number of shopping-based live streams this holiday season, where viewers will be able to interact directly with creators and purchase products in the moment.
-  **Facebook** is also [expanding live stream shopping](#) this holiday season, with daily streams in collaboration with brands such as Walmart, Macy's, Cocokind, Ulta Beauty, and Benefit Cosmetics.
-  **Pinterest** announced [Pinterest TV](#), a series of live shoppable episodes featuring creators. Pinner will be able to engage with creators and get exclusive deals from brands such as Patagonia, All Birds, and more.
-  **YouTube** has also announced [live stream shopping events](#) this holiday season, partnering with creators such as the Merrell Twins as they share their holiday wishlist from brands like Walmart, Samsung, and Verizon.



via [Business Insider](#)

Creator Austin Li Jiaqi, known as “Lipstick King,” sold \$1.7 billion worth of goods in a 12-hour live stream with Alibaba

The Rise of Creator Marketing

Creators exist at the core of the content graph. Users are flocking to TikTok and Reels in order to be entertained and inspired, and central to this are creators that drive an experience. Many brands are evolving their influencer strategies into long-tail partnerships with creators, a predominant trend that is emerging as brands look to expand their reach in short-form video formats.

TikTok and BuzzFeed signed a [year-long partnership](#) for multiple sponsored live-streamed series

The transformation of social media into a creator-driven space has changed the nature of influencers and brand sponsorships. Traditional influencers are now more likely to [remove sponsored posts](#) after a period of time to avoid overcrowding their feeds, as sponsorships are now viewed as temporary in nature. Creator marketing differs from influencer marketing in that it is a creative partnership between creators and brands, in order to produce content that entertains, rather than product placement. Brands are increasingly looking to enter exclusive partnerships with creators, which provide more meaningful and longer-lasting customer touchpoints than a single sponsored post.

The Metaverse and What it Means for Marketers

Facebook stunned the world when it announced it was changing its corporate name to Meta and investing heavily in the metaverse. Many marketers are still grappling with what the metaverse means for them, but with Meta announcing its stake in the space, it is a concept that is here to stay. The metaverse can be considered to be an interactive, immersive digital ecosystem where users are able to have a number of shared experiences. Augmented, virtual, and mixed reality also have roles to play in how users experience the metaverse, with the global market for these technologies also expected to expand significantly in the years to come.

Many brands are already taking advantage of these new experiences to change the way customers interact with products, and it is a trend that will continue to gain traction in the coming year.



The global metaverse market is expected to increase from \$44.7 billion in 2021 to \$596.5 billion in 2025



The global augmented, virtual, and mixed reality market is expected to reach close to \$300 billion by 2024



Early Trends in the Metaverse

Nike is making an early foothold in the metaverse by partnering with video-game platform Roblox on a virtual world known as [Nikeland](#). Players will be able to fit their avatars with Nike products, and play mini-games such as “tag,” “the floor is lava,” and “dodgeball” inside of the branded virtual theme park.

Beauty brand **Charlotte Tilbury** introduced a [virtual retail store](#), known as Charlotte’s Virtual Beauty Gifting Wonderland. Users are able to shop in augmented and virtual reality, and they are able to invite up to four friends to join them on this experience, intertwining the metaverse, social interaction, and e-commerce into one seamless user experience.

The Power of Effective Video

The Evolution of Video Content

TikTok was the first non-Meta app to reach [3 billion downloads](#)

Live-streamed video is the [fastest-growing source of engagement](#) for top social channels

Last quarter, Dash Hudson explored the evolution of video content marketing. Video content is rapidly innovating, as the pandemic condensed several years of digital adoption into a few months. **Consumers are flocking to TikTok for many entertainment and social purposes**, and e-commerce is growing in prominence in the format, as brands develop a greater understanding of the sales potential short-form video holds. It will be prudent for marketers to have an understanding of what makes video marketing effective, and how their brand stacks up against industry benchmarks.

☆ **Tip:**

The Evolution of Video Content is available to [read now](#).

Instagram Performance Benchmarks

While Instagram established itself as a photo-sharing app with the social graph model, the social channel has made major moves to adapt with the changing industry. **The channel is more content and creator-driven than ever.** Its evolution from the social graph to the content graph means that it is essential for brands to monitor their performance during this period of change to identify opportunities for growth. For that

purpose, Dash Hudson has aggregated data from industry-leading brands for the entire year of 2021 to define and benchmark the performance of key industries. The following benchmarks include average engagement rate, average effectiveness rate, average number of weekly saves, and more, in order to help brands navigate this new era.



Instagram is projected to reach 1.2 billion monthly active users by 2023

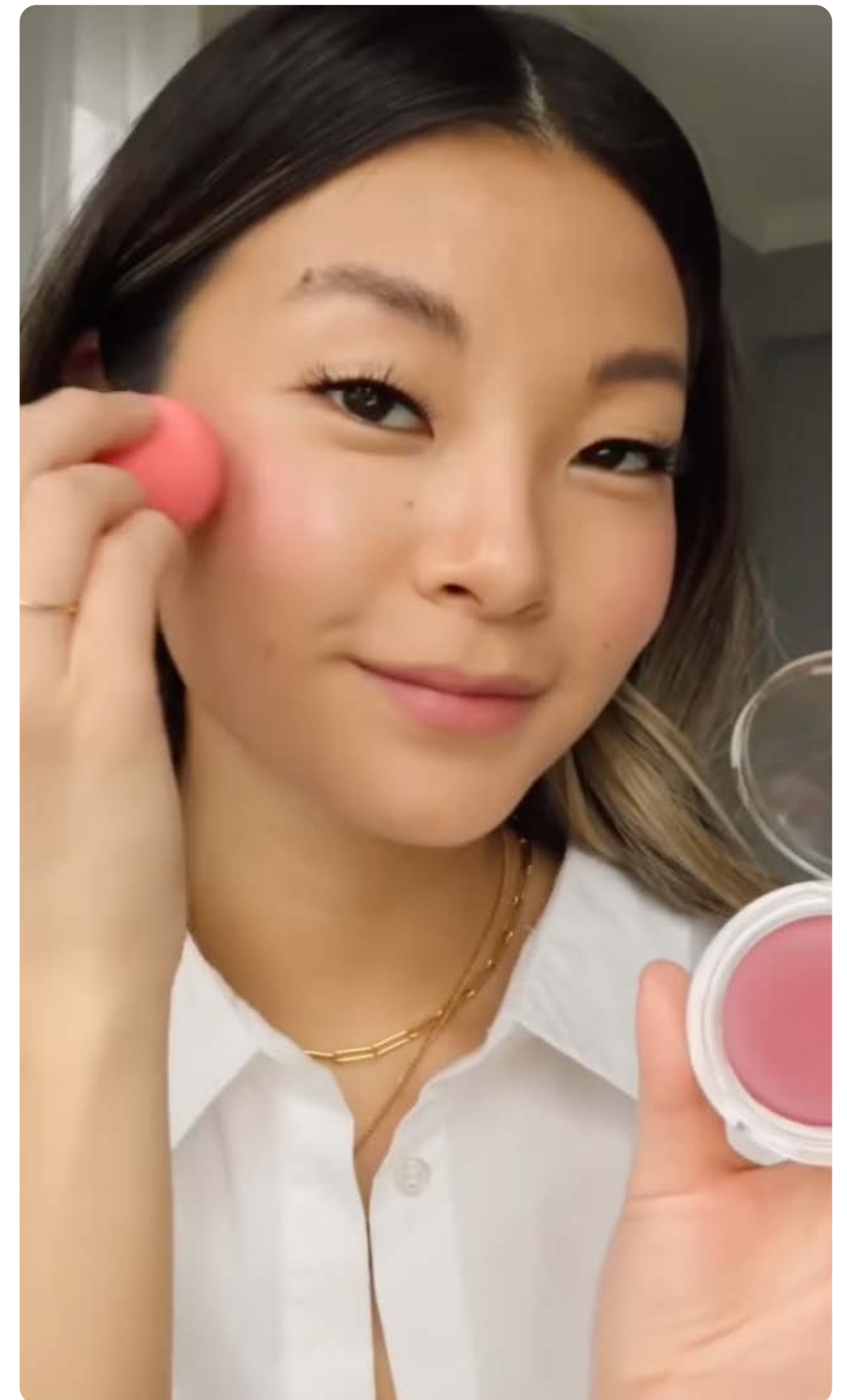


Instagram is introducing Badges, a means for fans to support creators during live streams

Beauty Industry

The beauty industry was one of the first industries to understand the importance of short-form video in omnichannel strategies, and the sector’s collective experience producing video content has resulted in an average effectiveness rate that outperforms other industries—especially for brands with over 200,000 followers. While effectiveness rate usually tapers with size, medium-sized beauty brands actually see an increase in performance, demonstrating their prowess in producing video consumers love.

	10K – 200K Followers	200K – 1M Followers	1M+ Followers
Avg. Growth Rate	0.05%	0.03%	0.03%
Avg. Engagement Rate	0.87%	0.51%	0.66%
Avg. Effectiveness Rate	5.95%	6.78%	5.01%
Avg. Weekly Owned Reach	104,002	1,152,602	14,529,763
Avg. Weekly Posts	5	7	8
Avg. # of Weekly Saves	54	498	1496



@beautyblender

Retail Industry

The retail industry, spurred by the unpredictable brick and mortar landscape of the past year, understands the role social media plays in inspiring purchasing intent. Consumers who follow retail brands have a high propensity for saving posts to view later, using the Instagram feature to catalog products they may wish to buy. Savvy retailers are keeping tabs on which products are garnering the most interest, and Instagram benchmarks play an important role in understanding that performance.

	10K – 300K Followers	300K – 1.5M Followers	1.5M+ Followers
Avg. Growth Rate	0.06%	0.03%	0.02%
Avg. Engagement Rate	0.78%	0.39%	0.26%
Avg. Effectiveness Rate	5.69%	5.10%	4.21%
Avg. Weekly Owned Reach	275,116	3,251,213	35,149,813
Avg. Weekly Posts	7	14	14
Avg. # of Weekly Saves	342	1836	4582



@outdoorvoices

Media Industry

With entertainment now at the forefront of social media, the media industry has emerged as the highest performing industry on Instagram, with an average weekly owned reach of over 146 million for accounts with more than 2 million followers. Even more impressively, large media brands have a cadence of 47 posts per week, and they receive an enormous average of 73,796 saves per week from followers who want to revisit content later on. While smaller media accounts have more modest performance, they notably have a high average effectiveness rate of 9.77%, showing that smaller media brands are posting content that resonates well with viewers.

	10K – 400K Followers	400K – 2M Followers	2M+ Followers
Avg. Growth Rate	0.08%	0.03%	0.04%
Avg. Engagement Rate	0.98%	0.56%	0.64%
Avg. Effectiveness Rate	9.77%	5.87%	4.42%
Avg. Weekly Owned Reach	544,980	5,544,303	146,024,266
Avg. Weekly Posts	11	18	47
Avg. # of Weekly Saves	402	1573	73,796



@enews

The Power of Effective Video

Key Learnings

- Live-streamed video is a fast-growing source of engagement on social media and will continue to grow in prominence in the coming year.
- Instagram is continuing to grow in innovative new ways, investing heavily in creators and entertaining content.
- Video effectiveness is growing in importance as consumers move towards engaging consumers with video.
- Smaller brands are in a better position to experiment, and have an edge in producing effective content.
- Consumers are using Instagram's save feature to catalog products they wish to buy, and media they want to return to.

Emerging Trends in Social E-Commerce

Cross-Vertical Marketing

Live stream shopping is estimated to become a [\\$25 billion](#) market in the US by 2023


Walmart is the first retailer to pilot a live stream shopping event [with Twitter](#)

Netflix has launched its first [video games](#) for smartphones, expanding its intellectual property in new ways

Walmart has led the way in creating an interactive, entertaining digital shopping experience for consumers. The big-box retailer has been partnering with TikTok on live shopping events since the last holiday season, and the new e-commerce format has become a staple not only for the brand, but the entire retail industry. Walmart has more than 30 live stream events in the works for the end of 2021. Both **Target** and **Sephora** have also [partnered with YouTube](#) on creator-driven live stream shopping events, using the long-form video platform's new e-commerce functionalities to convert customers in real-time.



Shop the Target store ⓘ ✕



Women's Button-Front Ribbed Cropped Cardigan - Wild Fable Yellow Space Dye M

via [Target](#)



via [Netflix](#)

On the other side, entertainment companies are making moves to expand on the e-commerce opportunities of their properties. **Netflix** has partnered with **General Mills** on nostalgic ['80s branded cereal](#) for its e-commerce website, where it features merchandise for many of its hit shows. **NBCUniversal's** network **Bravo** has introduced a [virtual shopping mall](#), where users are able to browse virtual AR rooms, based on popular television shows, and shop for products seen on screen. Not only is this an example of cross-vertical marketing, but it's also an example of traditional media companies utilizing the metaverse for social e-commerce.

Top Advice from Savvy Visual Marketing Summit

This year, Dash Hudson held its first entirely virtual Savvy Visual Marketing Summit. The exclusive one-day virtual conference, designed for the savviest social marketers and executives, delivered insights from industry leaders on the social channels, formats, and strategies propelling the top brands of today to greatness. The following quotes encapsulate key insights about this new era of social commerce. Savvy is also available to [watch now](#).

“ Marketers need to plan for moments, not just campaigns. Moments span the entire customer lifecycle. **Every brand interaction is an opportunity to market your company**, and social media has accelerated the ability for marketers to reflect customer worlds back into their brand. You are accessing a live, almost real-time feed of consumer insights, feedback, and data, that should be acting as insights into how you deliver on these moments.



Jessica Liu,
Senior Analyst
FORRESTER

Source: [Savvy Visual Marketing Summit](#), November 10, 2021

“ The viability of live streaming depends on your audience and who you’re speaking to. **These days you can go live on any large social media platform**, and for us it depends on which audience we’re speaking to, not just on the social platform side, but also the content side. It comes down to knowing your audience, digging into your benchmarks, and making sure you’re serving them something they want to see.



Tracey Lincoln,
Sr. Manager, Brand Social
hulu

“ What’s really interesting about TikTok is that we aren’t a traditional social media platform. We see ourselves as an entertainment-based content platform. It’s not the traditional social graph. It’s a content graph. What that means is that people come to TikTok to be inspired, to learn, and ultimately it’s authentic. **Everyone has a completely unique TikTok experience**, depending on what our subculture is, who we are, and what our interests are. It means that as a brand, and as a creator, you have a unique lens.



Kristina Karassoulis
Head of Luxury Brand Partnerships EMEA
TikTok

“ The traditional social of 2005 to 2020 is growing tired. We’re looking for something else, and **social entertainment will reign going forward**. This transition from the social graph to the content graph is happening in real-time, and this is really a once-in-a-career leadership opportunity for marketers.











Thomas Rankin
Co-founder and CEO
DASH HUDSON

Market Spotlight: Luxury Brands

Instagram Stories Benchmarks and KPI Leaders

Dash Hudson analyzed the Instagram Stories performance of the most followed brands in the luxury industry to establish benchmarks for brands to compare their performance. For the full benchmark report that covers additional industries, read the [blog on Dash Hudson's website](#).

Instagram Stories Metrics

-  **Story Frame:** an individual video or image posted in a story.
-  **Story:** the number of story frames in a group—regardless of when they were posted. There can be multiple stories posted in a day, and stories may overlap.
-  **Reach:** the number of unique times a story frame or story is viewed by accounts on Instagram.
-  **Impressions:** the total number of times people watched your story.
-  **Exit Rate:** the percentage of people who exited a frame. The inverse of Completion Rate.
-  **Completion Rate:** the percentage of people who watched a frame until the end without exiting. The inverse of Exit Rate.
-  **Tap Forward:** the total number of times a user taps forward on a story frame to view the next frame.
-  **Tap Back:** the total number of times a user taps back to view the story frame again, or a previous story frame.



Instagram Stories Benchmarks: Luxury Industry

Instagram Story Frame Posting Cadence

Avg. Days Posted Per Month	8
Avg. # of Story Frames Posted Per Month	35
Avg. # of Story Frames Posted Per Week	8
Avg. # of Story Frames Posted Per Day	1

Average Monthly Story Frame Engagements

Avg. Monthly Reach Per Story Frame	348,917
Avg. Monthly Impressions Per Story Frame	358,902
Avg. Monthly Exit Rate Per Story Frame	2.22%
Avg. Monthly Taps Forward Per Story Frame	282,539
Avg. Monthly Tap Backwards Per Story Frame	7,018

Average Daily Stories Engagement

Avg. Daily Reach	11,566
Avg. Daily Stories Impressions	11,897
Avg. Daily Stories Exit Rate	5.93%
Avg. Daily Exits	686

Average Completion Rate 93.50%



-The baby.
-[crowd] Aw.

Lisa Simpson in Balenciaga Resort 2022 via [Augustman](#)

As luxury brands market seasonally, they are well-positioned to take advantage of ephemeral content such as Instagram Stories. They are also moving towards making organic posts ephemeral as well, in a trend known as [short-lived marketing](#). Luxury brands are quickening the pace at which they remove content from their social media feeds, keeping their timelines current and relevant. **Balenciaga** now regularly clears its Instagram feed ahead of the launch of new collections, keeping its Instagram grid focused only on the latest fashion. The following brands exemplify how the luxury industry is navigating this new entertainment-driven focus for social media.

BALENCIAGA

Balenciaga has made big moves in merging the worlds of content and commerce, including partnering with The Simpsons on a promotional episode for its spring and summer 2022 collection, as well as merchandise featuring the animated show.



The Simpsons x Balenciaga collaboration has over **8.8 million views** on YouTube

Balenciaga has also invested heavily in the metaverse, by collaborating with the [Fortnite video game platform](#) to make its fashion wearable by player avatars. Fortnite players are able to enter a virtual Balenciaga store, shop luxury fashion for their avatars, and submit photos of themselves to be featured on virtual billboards. In real life, customers are able to purchase the same Balenciaga fashion as their avatars in stores.

BALMAIN

PARIS

Balmain understands the power of branded entertainment. The luxury fashion brand conceptualized a [mini-series called Fracture](#), featuring a star-studded cast in partnership with Channel 4. Balmain has also partnered with Netflix on a limited-edition capsule collection inspired by the movie *The Harder They Fall*, featuring contemporary Western fashion. The brand's intent is to move beyond fashion behavior and reinvent the space, and the brand's entertainment roadmap allowed them to reach the point of producing a television drama.

Its reasoning is that the media landscape is fundamentally evolved, and younger audiences do not watch platforms where there is traditional advertising, yet they are still interested in brands that make an impression.



Image from the accompanying stills campaign, shot by photographer An Le through Now Open via [Shots](#)



Winter Weather Outfits! Presented by Area Sales Manager Jennifer Woodruff, Must-Have Beauty Gifts Holiday Glam Up via [Nordstrom](#)

NORDSTROM

The luxury fashion retailer has made a massive commitment to the world of live stream e-commerce. Debuting a channel known as [Nordstrom Live](#), the retailer has aired dozens of interactive product demonstrations, tutorials, fashion shows, and Q&A sessions featuring top creators, influencers, and brands such as **Burberry** and **COACH**. The retailer understands that live steam e-commerce allows for discovery, personalization, and service at scale. **Nordstrom is able to meet the ever-changing needs and expectations of customers, wherever they are, and however they want to shop.**

Conclusion

Innovative marketing will be what drives brand growth in the coming year, as marketers navigate the rise of the content graph by creating content that is both entertaining and integrated with e-commerce. Short-form video content will continue to expand, and shoppable, live-streamed video will become a greater part of brands' strategies in order to scale the retail experience. While the metaverse is still in its infancy, it has already become an opportunity for high-profile branded collaborations, and its significant growth projection, as well as the investment of Facebook parent company Meta, means that it will be a point of serious consideration for marketers going forward. Brands that are able to prepare strong strategies for the content graph now will have a competitive edge in earning reach and creating entertaining content that wins.

For 2022:

- Brands that are making bold moves now are finding significant success in the field of social e-commerce
- Don't be afraid of experimentation, as the rise of the content graph rewards brands that are able to find a niche in entertainment
- Pay close attention to Reels and TikTok benchmarks and analytics in order to make informed decisions
- Take steps now to integrate e-commerce into your social channels, starting with a link-in-bio solution

Check back every quarter for more insight into social media, e-commerce, and visual marketing from Dash Hudson. And, for all the tools you need to succeed year-round, [request a demo today](#).