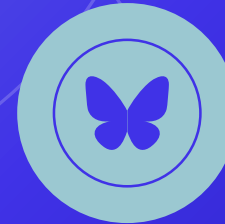


The DGA Global Channel Index:

The Social Platforms That Drive Impact With Corporate Audiences

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Having an owned channel strategy for corporate communications isn't optional. Key corporate stakeholders are using social media in one way or another, whether for personal activity, news mining by journalists, research into a company's sustainability credentials by investors, or understanding a business's culture as a future employee. Our research examines where these audiences are and how best to reach them.

With new channels emerging and audiences migrating, knowing which channels to focus resource on can be challenging.

By evaluating audience demographics, content effectiveness, engagement opportunities, advertising options, and platform credibility, this research provides insights into where corporates should focus their social media efforts.

This annual report tracks where audiences are, which companies are using those channels effectively and monitors emerging channels that could break through in the next year or so.

Key Findings



LinkedIn is an all-rounder for corporate audiences, and it is no surprise that it has scored highly across investors, media, and talent. As well as being a channel for corporate comms it is also widely accepted as an appropriate, and effective channel for CEOs to use for thought leadership. Having precise targeting capabilities and in-depth audience metrics makes measuring impact easy which is why it has become a 'one stop shop' for audiences and for corporate storytelling.



X (formerly Twitter) has seen a decline in use by global companies due to erratic leadership and lack of precise targeting capabilities. Although journalists and policymakers are still on the platform, the use of it for story mining and for tracking corporate news flow is now limited. The US policy audience continues to be active but reaching them through the noise remains difficult. In other markets, such as Africa, X continues to be an important channel for reaching political audiences.



Bluesky is the new channel on the block is gaining traction with academics, policy, and media audiences. We've seen a move from X to Bluesky by certain political and media audiences, around half of UK MPs and hundreds of Members of the European Parliament having now joined the platform. Despite these recent moves, Bluesky's impact is limited by a lack of metrics and paid ad capabilities.



Instagram and TikTok are effective for talent engagement. Institutions such as global banks and companies in the finance sector are capitalising on the presence of a younger demographic providing insight into culture by using their graduates and younger employees to front their campaigns. Both platforms also have pockets of highly engaged communities with shared interests, such as retail investors. We are also seeing leaders explore Instagram - with those in the tech space leaning into the channel which is predominately personality led.

Key Findings



Facebook is limited from a corporate perspective, with its biggest value being when trying to reach a wide audience despite a decline among younger users. Policymakers are present but use the channel for primarily local engagement. Paid ad targeting is broad and measuring impact is difficult, and it's not a channel we are seeing many corporates use, although it is one that needs close monitoring from a crisis perspective.



YouTube is essential for long-form educational content but is not prioritised for corporate engagement due to the resource investment required. From our research we have found many an abandoned channel or a dumping ground for longform content that is then disseminated across other channels.



Then there are other channels, the likes of **WhatsApp, Reddit and Threads**. These might not be part of the day to day of corporate communications, but in particular situations or different geographies can have their own unique uses.

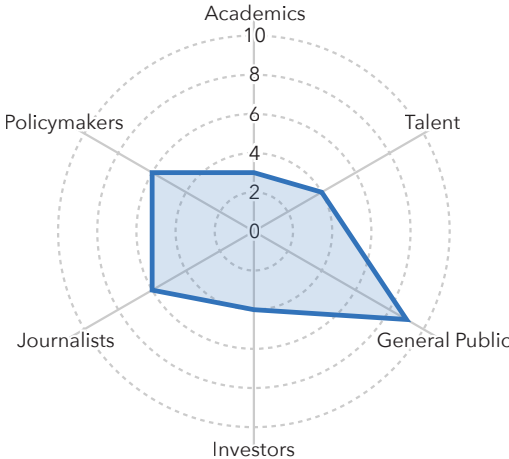
Social Platforms at a Glance:

Where your audiences really are

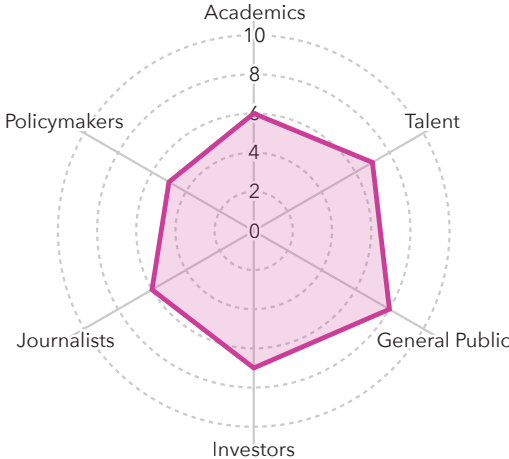
Bluesky



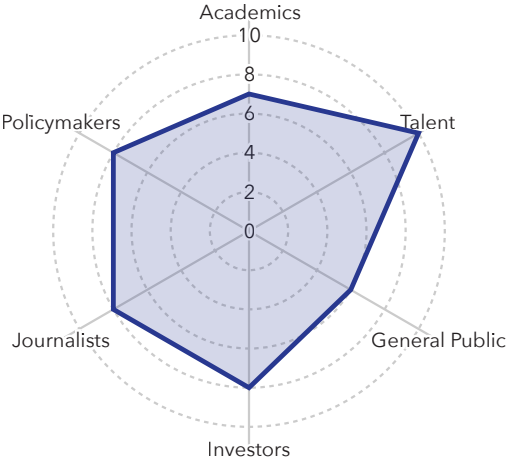
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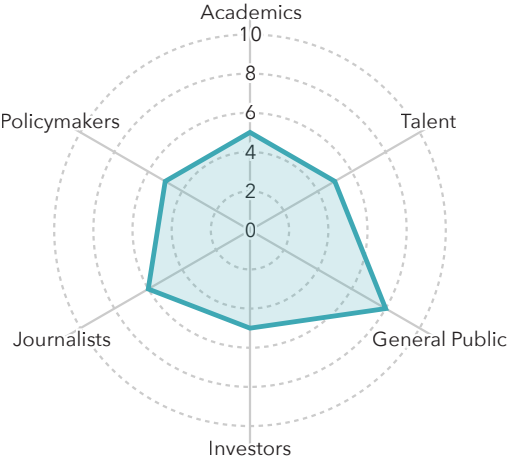
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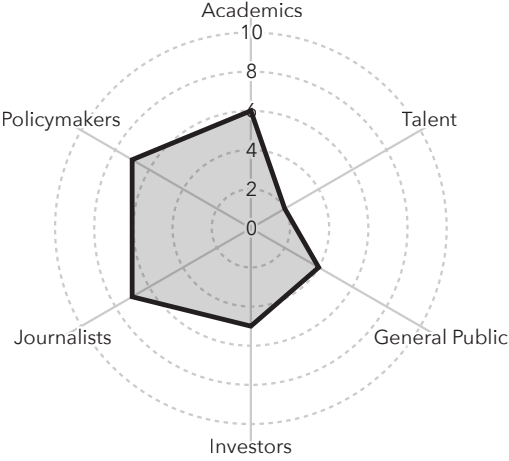
LinkedIn



Tiktok



X



YouTube



Takeaways

01

Investor audiences are active on social but are a passive audience - LinkedIn provides the most measurable way to reach them

02

Reaching corporate stakeholders on Bluesky is currently difficult - although consider for an academic audience

03

Most channels are pay to play - this should be a consideration when choosing a channel

04

Market-specific owned channel strategies are needed. While X and WhatsApp lead in Africa/Asia, LinkedIn dominates Europe/North America

05

Policymakers can be found across platforms. Paid targeting is effective for reaching a broad range on LinkedIn, while many elected officials remain on X or have migrated to Bluesky, and Facebook is used for local campaigning



Bluesky is a decentralised social platform that has grown in prominence recently. Since Elon Musk bought Twitter and renamed it X, some users have been concerned about changes to the platform. This feeling grew following President Donald Trump's victory in the 2024 election and Musk's prominence within the administration. As users left X, Bluesky grew. By the end of November, it had over 20 million users, more than double the 9 million it had in September. However, growth has since slowed, with its total number of users standing at 33 million as of March 2025.

Bluesky remains under the radar of most general users but has a committed community of journalists and politicians, largely of the left. The lack of adoption from the right means that comparing "For You" and "Discover" feeds on X and Bluesky can seem like there are different news cycles.

One group that has truly embraced the platform is the academic and scientific community, enjoying the less polarised nature compared to X.

Although it does not yet host the breadth of discussion found on more established channels, Bluesky's open-source ethos and evolving governance framework could make it appealing to investors and analysts interested in disruptive technologies, one we'll keep an eye on for our 2026 index. Organisations with a reputation for innovation or a strong commitment to digital transformation may find a receptive audience here. Its true value for mainstream corporate communications remains in the early stages of discovery.

Its self-imposed lack of paid promotion limits its appeal from a corporate communications perspective but lends its credibility in other circles that value its authenticity and independence.

Channel Updates

Video feed: Bluesky has followed other platforms with the introduction of a TikTok style vertical video feed.

Promotion of links: Bluesky's algorithm does not suppress posts with links as X does, and claims to actively promote them.

Trending topics: Bluesky has an old Twitter feature that adds to the platform's "what Twitter used to be" feel.

Who is doing it well?

World Health Organization: Cross-posting across X and Bluesky. Short messages with eye-catching visuals, in the old "Twitter best practice" style.

European Central Bank: Another multinational body also cross-posting with X.

Total Users

33m

(March 2025)

▲ 2,600% y-o-y





Facebook’s extensive user base makes it one of the most far-reaching platforms with the broadest audience in terms of demographics and geographies, but for corporates focussed on specific audiences its use cases are limited.

While many people have a personal profile, this doesn’t necessarily mean they are using it in a professional capacity or can be reached as such. Where they are, it is likely in a different way to other platforms. For policymakers, Facebook can be an important tool for local campaigning and showing their interest in community issues. Local politicians can often be found in residents groups, engaging with people and sharing updates on their work. This is different to the wider policy and regulatory conversations that take place on LinkedIn or X.

In certain geographies, such as West Africa and Southeast Asia, it remains an important platform. But on the whole company presences on the platform are consumer focussed. A journalist or professional investor may look up a company on the platform, but it is not a go to place for corporate news.

The platform’s tools are geared more towards sales and marketing than corporate communications. Meta’s advertising targeting when it comes to interests and characteristics is increasingly broad making it harder to measure the impact of activities and limiting the platform’s appeal when aiming to reach very defined audiences. Its location targeting down to a postcode level remains powerful for reaching people in a specific area, but it is a more relevant platform for sales and marketing than corporate communications.

Channel Updates

Video-first strategy: Facebook has embraced short-form video content, with Reels, Live broadcasts, and AI-enhanced video features.

Fact-checking: Meta is ending its fact-checking program and replacing it with a community-driven system. Mark Zuckerberg claimed the change reflects a broader trend in social media.

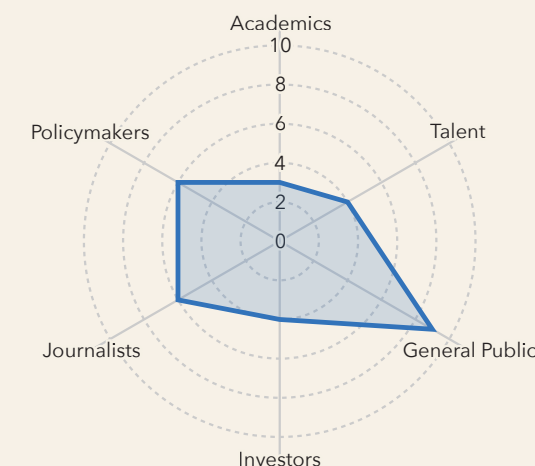
Who is doing it well?

Novartis: Uses thought leadership posts and CSR campaigns to engage healthcare professionals and the general public.

Vodafone UK: The account is an “all-rounder”, sharing a mix of content, including updates on network innovations, partnerships, and sustainability goals.

Total Users
3.065b
(Jan 2025)

▲ 3.6% y-o-y





Our CEO's Instagram profile is one of our core thought leadership platforms.

We invest in and operate over 100 companies globally, many of which are B2C. So, for corporate brand building it needs to work for both. We adapt our topics and formats regularly so that they best resonate with our audiences and drive engagement, such as amplifying events or explaining our tech and innovation initiatives as well as showcasing our brilliant companies.”

Head of Communications - Investment Firm



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Instagram’s highly visual format continues to attract a predominantly younger user demographic, focused on lifestyle, culture, and brand storytelling. For corporate communications it has become a staple for employee engagement with brands such as Blackrock, AstraZenca and Lloyds Banking Group using the channel to share culture content such as video led employee case studies as well as using the channel to share purpose driven content - which provides talent with insight into a brand’s CSR activity.

The channel ranks highly for investors due to it being effective for reaching retail investors, with the use of #retailinvestor up 329% (Meltwater data Feb-Dec 2024) year-on-year after 329%. Key investment outlets such as MorningStar, Investors Chronicle and Bloomberg are all active on the channel, and well followed giving an insight into how well used the channel is used by an investor audience- although we have yet to see corporates use the channel for direct investor engagement - unlike LinkedIn.

Instagram has yet to be adopted by listed leaders as a primary channel, given the platform lends itself to more ‘authentic’ content formats, audiences across the board expect to see more candid video and photography, a format that most leaders wouldn’t feel comfortable crafting. However, there are exceptions to the rule with Prosus CEO, Fabricio Bloisi using the channel as his thought leadership platform for all things AI. What makes this effective is that he leans into short soundbite style content and ‘live’ content from Davos - sharing his daily insights via Stories.

Instagram should be considered as a corporate communications channel, although resourcing, investment, audience and authenticity are key factors when deciding if it should be part of the mix.

Channel Updates

Reels: They can now be up to 3 minutes long, allowing for deeper storytelling

Metrics: New metrics have been introduced, including view rate, the percentage of your followers and non-followers who choose to watch your content over three seconds

Hashtags: Users can no longer choose hashtags to follow

Who is doing it well?

Goldman Sachs: GS use their channel for industry insights, with short expert led videos as well as sharing business newsflow.

Life at PWC: A dedicated channel for talent which gives audiences a behind the scenes look at what it’s like to work at PWC.

Fabricio Bloisi, Prosus CEO: His profile leans into the authentic natures of the platform sharing. selfie videos and ‘real time’ updates during his speaking opportunities including Davod.

Total Users
1.74b
(Jan 2025)

▼ 13% y-o-y



“

LinkedIn is incredibly useful for finding and talking to sources, and identifying potential stories

For example if someone says they've left a job suddenly, it could mean wider job losses. X is way less useful than it once was, and it's dreadful for sharing your articles now - the algorithm deprioritises anything with a link to another site. ”

UK Business Reporter



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LinkedIn ranks highly across the main corporate stakeholder groups, over the last few years it has become the primary channel for corporate communications, where companies once prioritised X (then Twitter) for reaching journalists and policymakers, resource has now been funnelled into LinkedIn.

Investors, both retail and institutional, are active on the channel. Our experience shows that this group is particularly keen on hearing directly from CEOs, especially through video content and discussions on topics like sustainability. Even though this audience might not interact with content, they are highly reachable through paid targeting at relatively low costs. Companies are now leveraging their LinkedIn profiles much like they once used Twitter – ramping up activity around major corporate milestones like financial results – while also taking advantage of the platform’s capacity for in-depth storytelling in the quieter periods. DHL, for example, has successfully used a dedicated investor relations showcase page to keep their investor community engaged in-between set financial moments.

Unlike other social networks in our research and one of the main advantages for corporates is that LinkedIn allows for extremely precise paid targeting – companies can narrow their audience by specific criteria such as company, job title, or seniority. This targeted approach ensures that messages are delivered directly to decision-makers and professionals who matter in a highly measurable way.

This also has benefits for reaching policymakers, including civil servants and policy researchers as well as elected officials. The ability to target people based on their professional characteristics can be applied to government departments, parliaments, political parties, regulators and more.

It’s no surprise that talent ranks highly, in today’s market, potential employees often research a CEO’s online presence before joining a company, and current employees prefer to work for leaders who are visibly active on social media. LinkedIn’s formats – ranging from longform articles to thought leadership ads – provide the perfect stage for executives to share insights, demonstrate vision, and reinforce their company’s values.

With an algorithm that rewards longer “dwell time,” LinkedIn provides a space where complex corporate messages can be unpacked and fully communicated – something that is often sacrificed on platforms favouring brevity. This ability to delve into detailed narratives makes LinkedIn one of the best channels for corporate communications, enabling companies to engage audience with both strategic updates and in-depth storytelling.

Channel Updates

Thought leadership ads:

Allowing companies to share articles and posts from employees, useful for amplifying leadership content.

AI integration: LinkedIn has integrated AI into some of its key features, including offering generative AI support for personal summaries.

Video Feed: Added a new video feed to the mobile app, making vertical video more prominent on the platform with a more casual style.

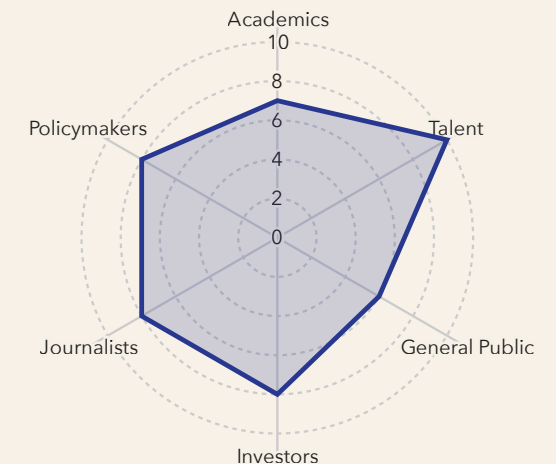
Who is doing it well?

DHL Investor Relations: An example of an investor specific channel which is building a strong following and maintaining storytelling beyond key financial moments.

Jesper Brodin: An example of a thought leadership led CEO profile who uses the channel for multiple audiences including employees and investors.

Total Users
1.15b
(2025)

▲ 15% y-o-y





TikTok’s short-form video format has carved out a strong appeal among a younger, mobile-first audience, but it is not solely confined to teenagers and influencers. Increasingly, a wider public – especially in entertainment, lifestyle, and creative spheres – engages with the platform for quick bursts of video content.

This channel allows organisations to present more informal, engaging, and sometimes light-hearted content, whether that’s employee-driven behind-the-scenes footage or inventive campaigns that tap into current trends.

While TikTok is less likely to be a focal platform for policymakers or institutional investors, it has drawn the attention of forward-thinking communicators who see potential in connecting with emerging talent pools or the next generation of consumers. As is the case with Instagram and YouTube, TikTok’s appeal to retail investors is growing, exemplified by the success of the FinTok community.

Some journalists and academics have also started to experiment with TikTok for storytelling or educational content, mindful that it can serve as a direct line to users who might not engage with traditional media.

As the platform grows and diversifies, it could represent a fresh avenue for corporate communications, particularly for those seeking to energise brand perception and reach audiences typically missed by formal channels.

Its precise geo-targeting tools and strong US base, particularly among young people, make it of interest for specific use-cases such as raising awareness about local policy issues, attract talent or crisis communications. However, potential regulatory changes, such as the proposed ban in the U.S., could impact its accessibility and influence in key markets.

Channel Updates

TikTok ban: The platform was banned in the US on 19 Jan, but Pres. Trump suspended it for 75 days. It’s unclear what will happen after that.

New post formats: TikTok now supports carousel posts for still images synced with music or effects, offering creators more flexibility beyond video content.

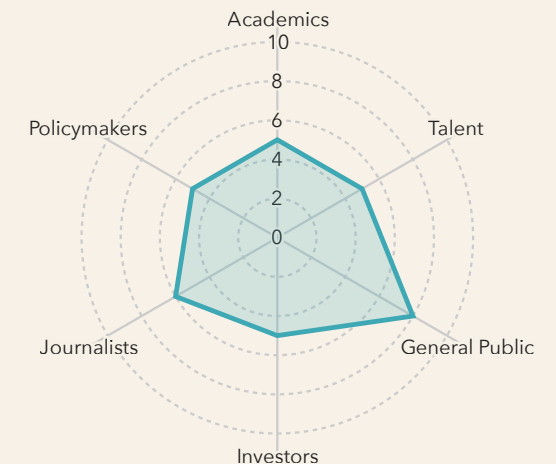
Who is doing it well?

Barclays UK: While some of its videos might be considered too polished for the TikTok aesthetic, they generate solid engagement and they are consistent with the bank’s wider communications strategy. Content includes influencer videos, financial literacy advice and peaks at life inside their offices.

ING Spain: The bank’s Spanish branch launched a campaign with a lion mascot to promote financial literacy that has improved brand awareness among younger demographics making it the second most important channel.

Total Users
1.59b
(2024)

▲ 51% y-o-y



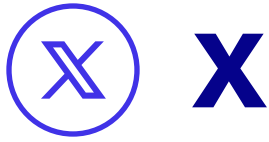
“

I'm not using X as much as I used to, because the content has changed so much. I'm using LinkedIn a lot more as a result, even though its functionality is different.”

UK Parliamentary Staffer



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For a number of years, X (formerly Twitter) was a go-to platform for journalists and policymakers, who valued immediate updates and thought-provoking threads. The platform was characterised by real-time discussion and concise messaging. Since its change of ownership in 2022, it has been a volatile couple of years, which has seen an exodus of brands and advertisers.

Much of the focus on its changing user base has centred on political views, but the lack of return on investment has ultimately made it easier for companies to decide to leave the platform. A smaller user base than Facebook or Instagram and less precise paid targeting than LinkedIn have limited the usefulness of paid advertising. X Premium's subscription model has simultaneously throttled organic reach and lowered the quality of posts given prominence by the algorithm. This has seen companies, particularly in the UK and Europe, choose to focus their efforts elsewhere. Some choose to announce their departure from the platform, while others have simply stopped posting, with only their customer service accounts remaining active.

A significant number of journalists remain on X tracking breaking stories, interacting with peers, and commenting on events but the algorithm's suppression of links mean it is less useful for sharing stories than it used to be. While The Guardian's announcement it was leaving X was done from a moral stance, reduced traffic surely made the decision easier.

Many policymakers from around the world continue to debate policy and share their views on X. But there is increasing scepticism, with those particularly uncomfortable with Elon Musk's political views abandoning the platform.

While it is less useful as a place for companies wanting to be heard, X still has a role shaping public discourse, thanks to the journalists and policymakers on the platform plus Musk's use of his own account. Its influence on public narrative, particularly in the US, and rapid mobilisation of (dis)information remains significant and therefore remains an important platform to monitor if not actively participate.

Channel Updates

Analytics: X is rolling out a native analytics to all called Radar to premium users.

Monetisation: Having changed the algorithm to favour premium accounts, payouts to premium users are now based on their interactions with other premium subscribers.

Who is doing it well?

Tesla: Unsurprisingly, Elon Musk's own companies make heavy use of the platform, sharing company and product updates.

Nvidia: Leading AI company shares updates on their product development and thought leadership on the implications of the technology for business.

Google Deepmind: Sharing insights from their scientists and engineers on the future of AI.

Total Users
586m
(2024)

▲ 5% y-o-y





YouTube’s massive user base covers nearly all demographic groups, from the general public seeking entertainment to journalists researching in-depth stories. However, as a dedicated corporate communications channel it isn’t widely used, and in some cases has become a repository for video content that is sliced and diced across other channels.

A successful YouTube channel requires significant investment, with a preference for longer-form content (over 30 minutes) and regular posts (at least once a week) meaning the investment needed is worth the ROI. For policymakers, analysts, and the investment community, YouTube can be an effective medium for broadcasting press events, testimonies, and detailed briefings that benefit from more extended narrative formats. However, the investor section of a company website is where these audiences would instinctively expect to find this content.

Brands that have effectively built a YouTube channel have been active for years, creating a storytelling destination and investing in high-quality video content – think Coca-Cola and BMW. Others have been successful by building channels for a specific audience or purpose, such as Lloyds Banking Group’s careers channel and investment firm Atomico’s long-form interviews supporting their annual tech report.

Despite these efforts, even those perceived to be ‘doing it well’ often achieve only a few hundred views. Although an effective channel for long-form content, resources could be better spent building strong storytelling across corporate websites, making content easier for stakeholders to discover

Channel Updates

Communities: Dedicated dashboard for creators to engage with their audiences.

AI: dubbing and translation function allowing creators to reach a wider global audience

Who is doing it well?

DHL: As well as leading the way on LinkedIn, DHL also have a highly active YouTube channel, posting weekly with storytelling around their people and operations

J.P. Morgan Asset

Management: Uses their channel to host a podcast series, following the trend of visual podcasts popular over the last couple of years

Total Users
2.53b
(2024)

▲ 0.8% y-o-y



Other Channels

What you need to know



Reddit

Reddit's ability to advertise by Subreddit gives it some unique advertising options. There are communities for just about anything on the platform, including highly engaged retail investors. This can make it a useful source of data when carrying out an online perceptions analysis. AMAs (Ask Me Anything) can be an alternative way for business leaders to engage online, but any interaction on Reddit must come across as authentic and not overly engineered.



Threads

Despite recent media attention on Bluesky as a Twitter alternative, Meta's own version now claims to have 300 million active monthly users. This has no doubt been helped by its direct linking to Instagram profiles and its use as a corporate platform so far remains limited. First tests of paid advertising began in January.



WhatsApp

Channels allow companies to set up a feed to share updates with subscribers, and communities can be used to foster groups of people with similar interests to share information. WhatsApp is one of the primary communication tools in much of Africa including for news, business updates, and political campaigns.



Telegram

Similar to WhatsApp, Channels can be used to share company updates and foster groups of with shared interests. Telegram has large users bases in India and Brazil.

Other Channels

What you need to know



Snapchat

A platform that can sometimes feel forgotten, Snapchat now more closely resembles TikTok than its original form of exclusively disappearing stories. It remains a consideration when targeting young people, and news outlets including Sky News and NBC News are active on the platform.



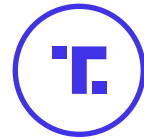
Discord

Favoured by some as an internal communications tool over the likes of Teams or Slack. Discord is a way of engaging groups both publicly and privately, with more relevance for internal and consumer audiences than corporates.



Substack

A platform for sharing longer form thought leadership in the shape of articles and newsletters. While companies themselves don't typically publish on the platform, it can be a way for individuals within an organisation with an area of expertise to share their insight. The private equity sector have leaned into Substack over the years.



Truth Social

Founded by President Donald Trump and used by his supporters, Truth Social remains the President's platform of choice despite Elon Musk's prominence within his administration. It can therefore be a useful platform to monitor for organisations and industries who need to stay abreast of the President's and his supporters' views.

Who We Are

DGA Group is a global advisory firm that helps clients protect - and grow - what they have built. Across our business units, we provide clients with multidisciplinary expertise tailored to meet their diverse and complex needs, including navigating public policy, engaging with stakeholders, delivering insights and intelligence, and preparing for high-stakes moments.

Our team includes digital, data and campaigns specialists who have built and been a part of pioneering digital practices and strategies. We are all experienced in working both locally and globally, and training up teams as we go, so that our business has a bench strength when it comes to digital and research skills.

While we are specialist, we are not a silo. These are universal skills and are most successfully deployed when embedded across the DGA platform.

The team are immersed in the digital communications landscape and network, monitoring for latest updates and sharing knowledge with clients in regular events.

DGA is purpose-built to be completely global and we serve as a digital nerve centre for our clients, drawing on deep expertise in working efficiently across multiple time-zones.

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