The Almanac – Case Study

From persona insights to content that resonates

Antonio Taurisano, 2025

The Almanac occupies a unique position in the market:

What's the problem?

Brain-rot and the subsequent cognitive decline.

How do we solve it?

With smart and elegant daily puzzles that respect players' time and intelligence.

Who do we help?

Taking a look at the competitive landscape will help with the answer to this question.

The answer is in the `data*`.

Conducting market research, four primary competitors came up:

- Lumosity
- Elevate
- Impulse
- NYT Games

On top of those, it's useful to take a look at products that attack brain-rot like The Almanac, just from different angles:

- Headspace
- Opal

Lumosity: Brain Traini...
Lumos Labs, Inc.

+ Add App to Compare
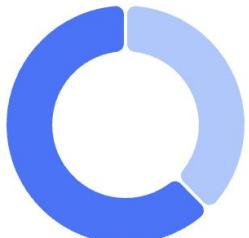
Switch to
Google Play Beta

Audience Insights

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025 (3 Months) ⌄
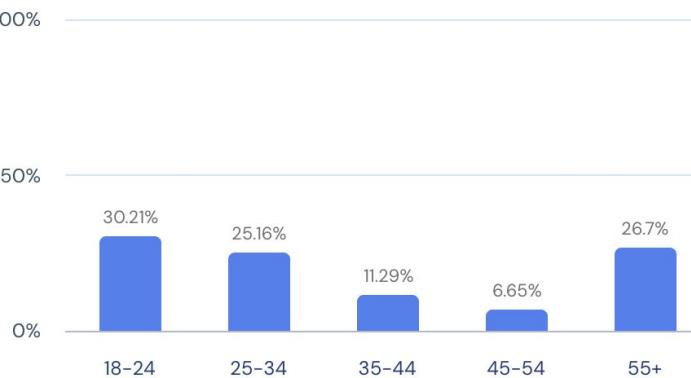
🌐 Worldwide ⌄

Gender Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

- Male **37.69%**
- Female **62.31%**

Age Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

Age	Percentage
18-24	30.21%
25-34	25.16%
35-44	11.29%
45-54	6.65%
55+	26.7%

Elevate - Brain Trainin...
The Mind Company

+ Add App to Compare
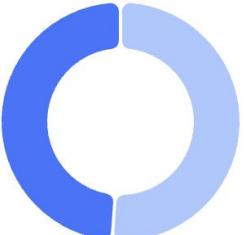
Switch to
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Audience Insights

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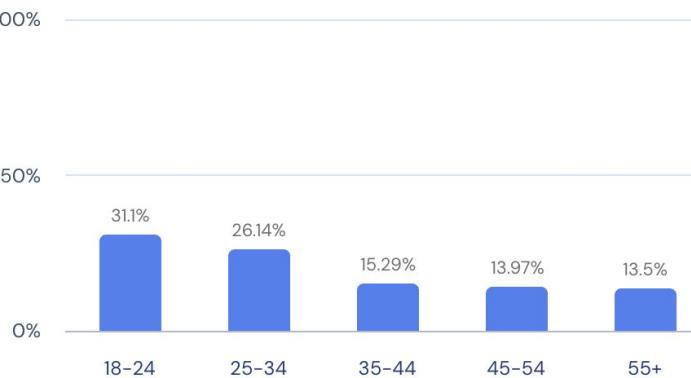
🌐 Worldwide ⌄

Gender Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

● Male   **51.13%**
● Female   **48.87%**

Age Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

Age	Percentage
18-24	31.1%
25-34	26.14%
35-44	15.29%
45-54	13.97%
55+	13.5%

Impulse - Brain Training
GMRD Apps Limited

+ Add App to Compare
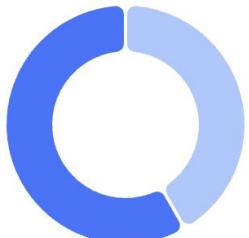
Switch to
Google Play   Beta

Audience Insights

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025 (3 Months) ⌄
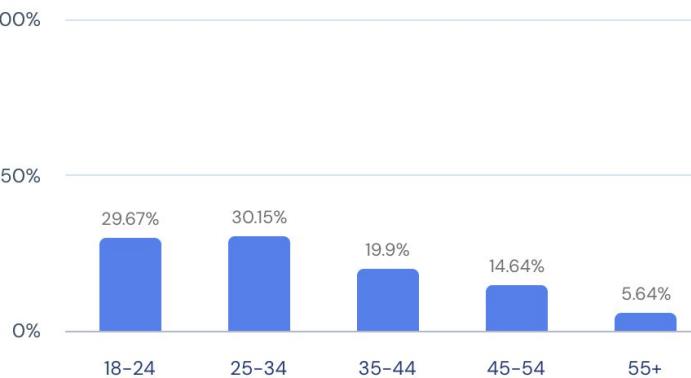
🌐 Worldwide ⌄

Gender Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

● Male **41.75%**

● Female **58.25%**

Age Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

100%

50%

0%

29.67%
30.15%
19.9%
14.64%
5.64%

18-24   25-34   35-44   45-54   55+

NYT Games: Wordle &...
The New York Times Co...

+ Add App to Compare

Switch to **Google Play** *Beta*

Audience Insights

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025 (3 Months) ⌄
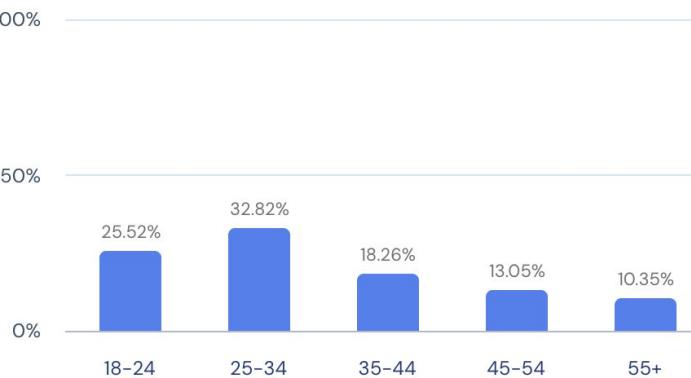
🌐 Worldwide ⌄

Gender Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

● Male **48.67%**

● Female **51.33%**

Age Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

Age Distribution bar chart:
- 18-24: 25.52%
- 25-34: 32.82%
- 35-44: 18.26%
- 45-54: 13.05%
- 55+: 10.35%

Headspace: Meditatio...
Headspace Inc.

+ Add App to Compare

Switch to
Google Play Beta

Audience Insights

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025 (3 Months) ⌄
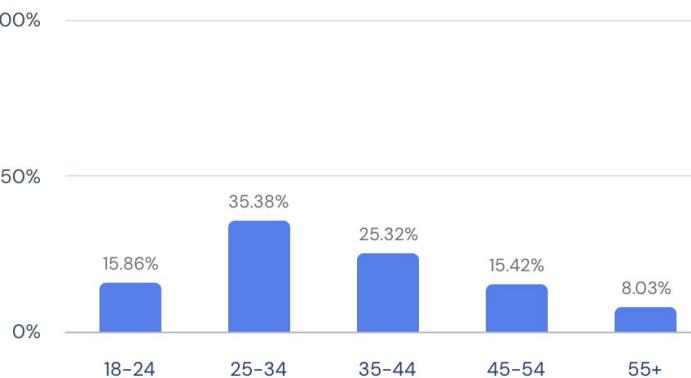
🌐 Worldwide ⌄

Gender Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

- Male **47.19%**
- Female **52.81%**

Age Distribution

📅 Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   🌐 Worldwide

100%

50%

35.38%

25.32%

15.86%   15.42%

0%   8.03%

18-24   25-34   35-44   45-54   55+

Opal: Screen Time Co...
Opal OS

+ Add App to Compare

Switch to **Google Play** Beta

Audience Insights

Jul 2025 - Sep 2025 (3 Months)

Worldwide

Gender Distribution
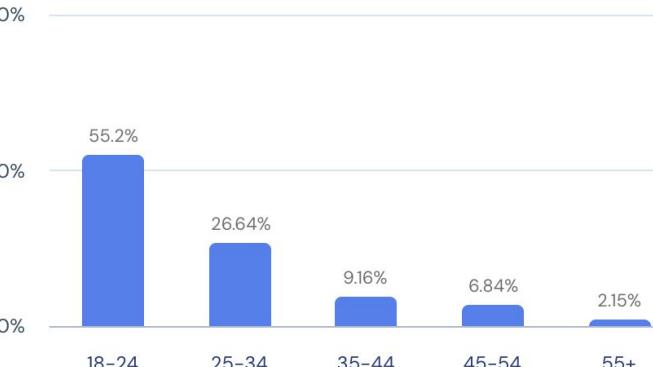
Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   Worldwide

- Male **61.53%**
- Female **38.47%**

Age Distribution

Jul 2025 - Sep 2025   Worldwide

Age	Percentage
18–24	55.2%
25–34	26.64%
35–44	9.16%
45–54	6.84%
55+	2.15%

Many charts.
Lots of data.

But what's the story?

"Brain rot" is not one single problem.

Mindless scrolling leaves users feeling anxious, unproductive, and intellectually dull.

Three personas embody these problems and could find a solution in The Almanac.

The
Habit Builder

The
Optimizer

The
Longevitist

- Female Skew
- 18-35

- Male Skew
- 25-34

- Even gender split
- 45+

Let's meet them.

The *Habit Builder*

- **Core Motivation**: She wants to cut through brain rot because it feels chaotic and anxiety-inducing. This is an act of self-care and a way to build a keystone habit every day.

- **Needs**:
  - An elegant and enjoyable way to build a **daily ritual**.
  - To feel a sense of **accomplishment**.

- **Pain Points**:
  - **Chaos Brain Rot**: The anxiety and overwhelm from "doom scrolling."
  - **Habit Guilt**: Finding anti-brain-rot apps "boring" or "too hard" and feeling guilty for not using them.

The Optimizer

- **Core Motivation**: He wants to cut through brain rot because it's inefficient. He's here to train. He hopes for a tangible impact on his career and productivity.

- **Needs**:
  - Having a measurable and objective **improvement**.
  - To feel productive and **sharp**.

- **Pain Points**:
  - **Performance Brain Rot**: Feeling mentally "slow" or "off" at work and in daily life, which threatens his output.
  - **Wasted Time**: The guilt of inefficient scrolling that provides no measurable value.
  - **Focus Debt**: The inability to concentrate for long periods due to constant "context-switching."

The *Longevitist*

- **Core Motivation**: Health is the primary motivator here. Preserving brain plasticity and delaying cognitive decline.

- **Needs**:
  - Doing something good for their long-term brain health.
  - Enjoying a challenge that makes them feel like "they still got it."

- **Pain Points**:
  - **Cognitive Decline**: A tangible, daily fear of age-related cognitive decline and memory lapse.
  - **Digital Skepticism**: A distrust of overly-gamified apps, and unscientific claims.

How does this translate into content?

Each piece of content for The Almanac has to encapsulate its unique tone of voice:

Smart

- **It is**: Clear and insightful
- **It's not**: Condescending

Appeals to **Optimizers** and **Longevists** by proving the app is an intelligent, credible partner for serious self-improvement and brain health.

Calm

- **It is**: Reassuring
- **It's not**: Hype-y or urgent

Resonates with **Habit Builders** and **Optimizers** by offering a serene, focused space that counteracts chaos and supports mindful productivity.

Elegant

- **It is**: Less is more approach
- **It's not**: Flashy or cluttered

Engages **Habit Builders** and **Longevists** through premium, minimalist design that builds trust and makes the self-care ritual feel refined and elevated.

Human

- **It is**: Relatable
- **It's not**: corporate or too brand-safe

Unites all personas by adding warmth and relatability, turning the app from a tool into a friendly, supportive companion.

One Message, Three Languages.

When it comes to **short-form video** content, although crossposting is common, there are important nuances to each platform:

TikTok optimizes for hooks
Instagram Reels optimizes for shareability
YouTube Shorts optimizes for retention

When it comes to **images** instead, TikTok as well as Instagram respond quite well to slideshows, even though they have been recently deranked by the algorithm.

Plain static images are still viable.

Content idea 1

Platform: Instagram
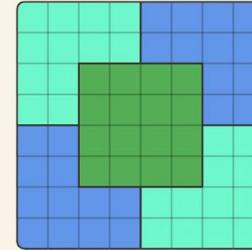
Concept: Showcase puzzles and create appetite for people to share looking for a solution or hop on The Almanac

Copy: Every level of Mosaic trains a different kind of focus: from pattern recognition to spatial reasoning.

Think you can spot the solution?

Your move.

Can you solve this Mosaic in **2 moves?**

Touching tiles spreads color. You can select different colors at any time. Your goal is to paint the whole grid **into one color**.

*The Almanac.*

Content idea 2
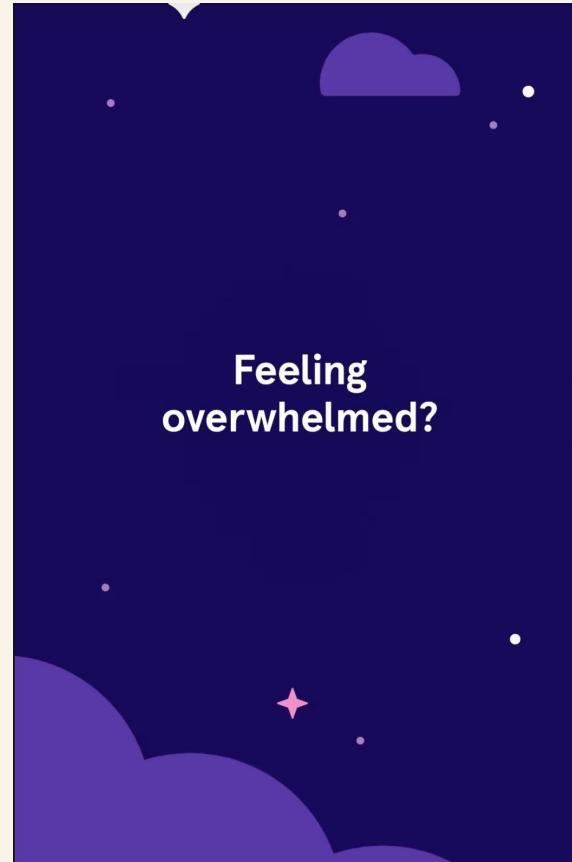
Platform: TikTok

Concept: Position The Almanac as a safe haven from doom scrolling and offer viewers some time to nourish their brain on their fyp

Copy: Time for a pause from the noise. Reconnect the pipes; and maybe your thoughts, too.

Visual Direction: A flat design background with copy on-screen: "It's time for a break from doomscrolling". Then transition to a Pipes puzzle, with a brief explanation of how it works (similarly to content idea 1), and a call to action for the audience to solve it.
Reference visuals

Feeling
overwhelmed?
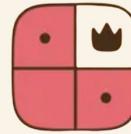
Content idea 3

Platform: Instagram

Concept: A very shareable seasonal piece of content, jumping on the trend of meme-y valentine cards, branded on The Almanac's puzzles. This is supposed to be a carousel, with a card for each puzzle. The mockup showcases the valentine card dedicated to the Kings puzzle

Copy: Send this to your valentine 💌 (along with your daily puzzle streak, obviously)

Are you today's Kings?

Because I seriously can't figure you out.

to:
from:

The Almanac.

Beyond B2C with LinkedIn

From acquisition to authority

LinkedIn is for Cortex Studio.

The tone of voice is still "Smart, Elegant Human" but here we lean more heavily into:

- Authoritative
- Insightful
- Professional

LinkedIn - Post 1 (Studio intro)

Concept: Studio Introduction

Purpose: To introduce Cortex Studio, its mission, build brand identity, and attract talent

Copy: Today's digital world is becoming more and more of a challenge for daily focus. Most apps are part of the problem, designed for mindless scrolling and compulsive loops.

We believe there's a different way.

We're Cortex Studio, a new team at Voodoo. Our first app, The Almanac, is our answer. It's a daily ritual of elegant puzzles designed to train focus, not just to demand it.

We're here to prove that you can build a loyal audience without addiction.

Visual Direction: Cortex Studio Logo / The Almanac Logo

LinkedIn - Post 2 (Context Switching)

Concept: A context switching playbook in the form of a **LinkedIn Carousel**

Purpose: Building upon relatability with the LinkedIn professionals audience, educating on context switching, and offering a practical solution

Copy: That "quick" Slack message just cost you 23 minutes.

We've built a work culture around "context switching" and then wonder why we feel foggy and unproductive.

The problem isn't just the interruption; it's the "toggle tax" we pay every time we shift focus. To do real, valuable "deep work," you have to retrain your brain to unitask.

Here's how to fix this ➡️

LinkedIn - Post 2 (Context Switching)

Visual Direction:

- Slide 1: "What's Context Switching" You're not "multitasking." You're "context switching." And it's killing your productivity.

- Slide 2: "The Problem" A single interruption—even 30 seconds—can take you 23 minutes to fully refocus. ([via UC Irvine study](#)). Think about your Slack/email habits.

- Slide 3: (The "Brain Rot" effect) This "toggle tax" isn't just inefficient. It trains your brain for distraction, shortening your attention span and creating chronic "brain fog."

- Slide 4: (The Solution) The fix isn't just blocking apps. It's training the muscle of focus. You need to practice doing one hard thing, uninterrupted.

- Slide 5: (CTA) That's why we built The Almanac. It's your 5-minute daily 'focus workout.' A keystone habit to train your brain for the deep work that matters.

Concept: The 4-Step 'Deep Work' Ritual

Purpose: Positioning The Almanac as the first step in users' new ritual.

Copy: Your focus isn't gone. It's just untrained.

Here's a 4-step ritual to reclaim your "deep work" block every morning.

LinkedIn - Post 3 (Deep Work)
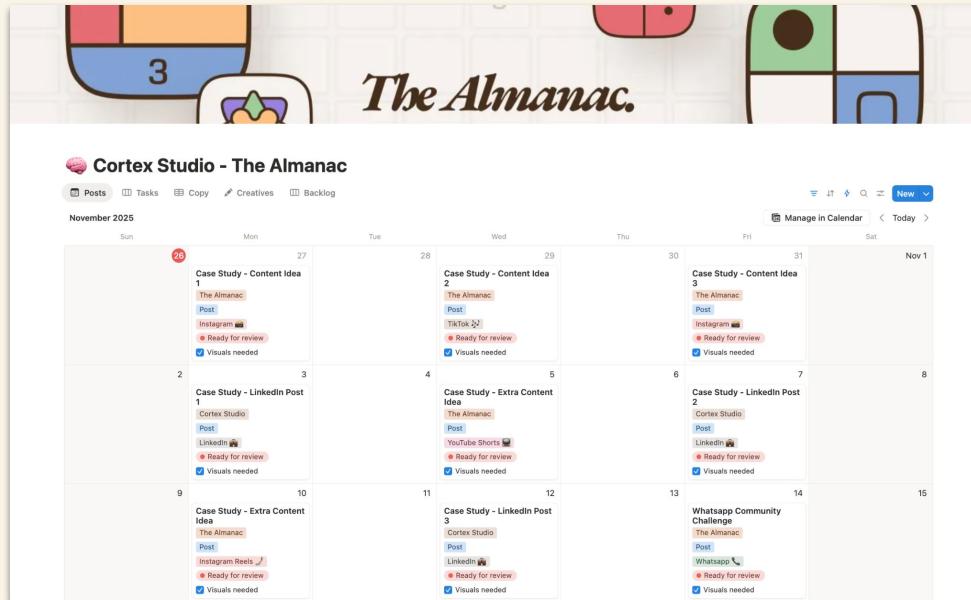
Visual Direction:

- Slide 1: (Title) How to Reclaim Your Focus. A 4-Step Morning "Deep Work" Ritual.

- Slide 2: 1. Prime Your Brain (5 min). Before you open email, activate your mind. Do a 5-minute "focus workout" (like a puzzle from The Almanac) to warm up your concentration muscle and get ready for what's next.

- Slide 3: 2. Define Your 'One Thing' (3 min). What is the one high-value task that, if completed, would make today a win? Write it on a physical sticky note.

- Slide 4: 3. Time Block (2 min). Block 90 minutes on your calendar for that one task. Call it "Deep Work" or "Focus Time." Be ruthless. Close Slack. Close your email.

- Slide 5: 4. Execute (90 min). Work only on that one task. When you're done, take a real 15-minute break. You just did more in 90 minutes than most people do all day.

Content calendar and cadence

After trying many solutions through the years from Hootsuite, Sprout, Buffer, and more, I've decided to develop my own on Notion.

You can find the content calendar, with extra pieces of content for The Almanac and a suggested cadence of **three posts a week** here.

The end.

Presented by Antonio Taurisano

Email: hello@antoniotaurisano.com

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/ataurisano/