

INSTAGRAM CASE STUDY

Improving Share & Saved Transparency
and Story Quality on Instagram

Presented by Komal Fulara



PAIN POINTS

ABOUT INSTAGRAM

Instagram is one of the world's leading social media platforms, with over 2 billion monthly active users. Known for its focus on visual content—photos, videos, Reels, and Stories—it caters to both everyday users and professionals, including creators, influencers, and businesses.

However, despite its popularity, Instagram has several key pain points related to content engagement transparency:

- Users cannot see who has saved their post.
- There is no visibility into who shared a post or to whom it was shared.
- Instagram does not send notifications to post owners when their content is saved or shared, unlike the alerts for likes and comments.
- Instagram compresses high-quality stories, often causing blurry visuals or audio lag after upload



USER PERSONA

Name: Ananya Sharma

Age: 26

Location: Mumbai, India

Occupation: Lifestyle Content Creator

Instagram Followers: 35,000

Goals:

- Track content performance in real time
- Engage her audience meaningfully
- Deliver high-quality visuals consistently

Pain Points:

- Cannot see who shared & saved her posts or where they were shared.
- I get hundreds of views and likes, but I have no idea who's saving or sharing my reel. That's just as valuable as a like —why don't I see that?
- High-quality images and videos lose clarity after being uploaded to Stories.



USER PERSONA

Name: Dhruv

Age: 28

Location: Delhi, India

Occupation: IT Developer

Instagram Followers: ~800

Goals:

- Stay updated with trends and what friends/creators are posting
- Share funny or interesting reels with close friends
- Occasionally post stories to stay active or express moods
- Use Instagram as a casual break during work or in free time

Pain Points:

- Dhruv doesn't want others to know when he saves or forwards their posts with someone. He wants privacy while interacting with content.
- He's hesitant to engage with some posts openly, due to fear of being noticed or judged, concerned about judgment or awkwardness.



New Member

+5.5%/yr




Bug Reports

+11K/yr



THE PRIVACY VS. TRANSPARENCY DILEMMA

 **Meet Dhruv**, a regular Instagram user who spends 2–3 hours daily browsing content. He enjoys saving aesthetic posts, memes, or tech reels, and sharing them privately with close friends. However, Dhruv doesn't want the creator to know that he saved or shared their post.

 **Meet Ananya Sharma**, delivers high-quality visuals consistently but cannot see who shared & saved her posts or where they were shared. Additionally, Instagram does not currently send notifications for saves or shares, unlike the real-time alerts it provides for likes and comments.

The Conflict:

There's a clear contradiction in how Instagram currently works:

- Users like Dhruv want full privacy when saving or forwarding content.

“I want to save or share a post without anyone knowing. It's personal and I don't want to explain why I did it.”

- But at the same time, creators like Ananya wants to know:
 - Who saved their post?
 - Who shared it? And to whom?

“If I put effort into my content, I should know which users are engaging with it and how. That helps me grow.”

This creates a classic user privacy vs. creator insight challenge.

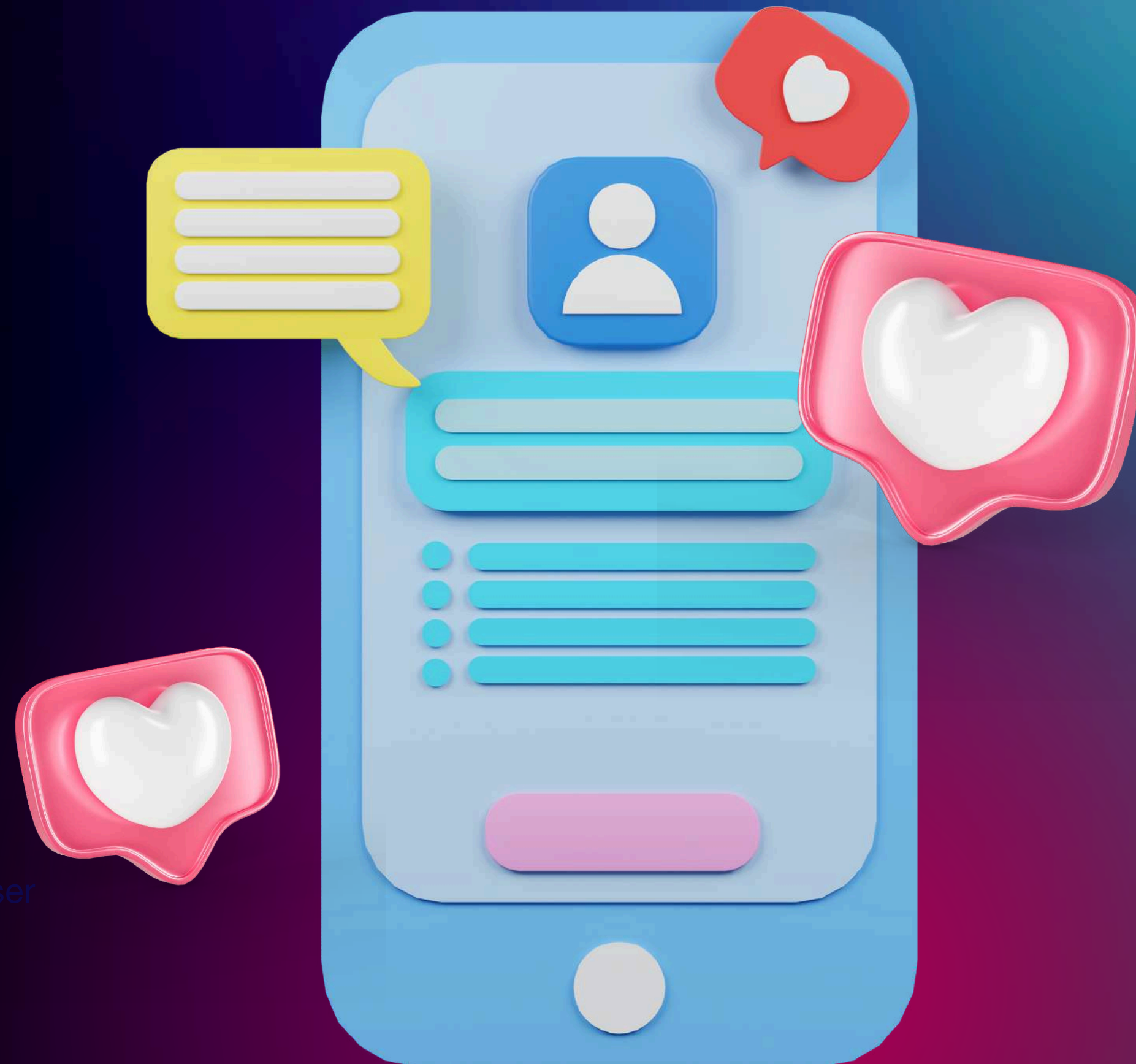
🎯 PROBLEM 1: LACK OF SHARE & SAVE TRANSPARENCY

CURRENT EXPERIENCE

Instagram shows a paper-plane icon on posts that indicates how many times the post has been shared via DMs. However, users cannot see who shared & saved their content or to whom it was shared.

WHY THIS IS A PROBLEM?

- For content creators like Aanya, shares are a powerful form of engagement that indicate how valuable or viral a post is.
- The inability to track shares makes it difficult to measure reach, audience behavior, or viral potential.
- This also creates inconsistency, as likes and comments show user identities, but shares and saved does not.



SUGGESTED SOLUTION: SHARE & SAVE TRANSPARENCY FEATURE

Instagram can introduce a feature that allows only the post owner to see who has saved or shared their post—similar to how they currently view likes and comments. In addition, Instagram should enable real-time notifications for "Save" and "Share" actions, providing creators with immediate insights just like they receive for likes and comments.

HOW IT WORKS?

- A “Save” icon and “Share” icon appear under each post (as they do now).
- When the post owner taps on these icons:
 - They see a list of usernames who saved their post.
 - They see who shared the post, and to whom it was shared (e.g., DM to specific users).
- The notification tab should include alerts for every Save and Share action, notifying the post owner just like it does for likes and comments.

✓ This info is only visible to the post owner — not to the public, followers, or even the people involved

⚙️ TECHNOLOGIES TO FIX THE PAIN POINTS

SHARE & SAVE TRANSPARENCY

This is more data-driven and can be enhanced with AI/ML

SUGGESTED TECHNOLOGIES

- **Basic Analytics & Event Tracking**

- Use standard data tracking tools (like Firebase, Mixpanel, or Meta's own internal analytics) to track:

- Who shared a post
- Who saved a post
- Where it was shared (DM, group, etc.)

- **AI/ML for Engagement Insights (optional but powerful)**

- Use ML models to analyze:

- Which types of posts are most shared or saved
- Predict what kind of content a creator's audience is likely to engage with
- Cluster user behavior into patterns to suggest better content strategies

- **Recommendation Algorithms (ML)**

- Based on share/save data, AI can help surface "similar content" suggestions either for viewers or creators.

⚠️ Important Note: AI/ML should only be used to generate insights, not to reveal identities unless it's privacy-safe.



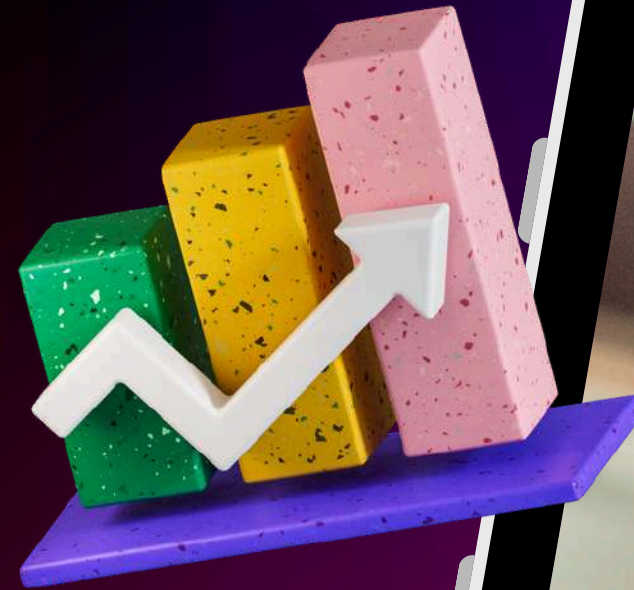
PROBLEM 2: REDUCED QUALITY IN INSTAGRAM STORIES

CURRENT EXPERIENCE

When a user uploads a high-resolution photo or video to their story, Instagram compresses the file, often resulting in blurry visuals or audio lag.

WHY THIS IS A PROBLEM?

- Creators spend time producing high-quality content using DSLRs or premium mobile cameras.
- Lower-quality stories affect brand perception, viewer engagement, and overall aesthetics.
- This can lead to frustration and migration to alternative platforms like Snapchat that offer better quality preservation.



SUGGESTED SOLUTION: HIGH-QUALITY STORY UPLOAD OPTION

Many users notice that their Instagram Stories lose quality after uploading. To fix this, Instagram can make it easier to upload high-quality stories without heavy compression.

HOW IT WORKS?

- **Add a “High-Quality Upload” option in story settings**
 - Similar to WhatsApp, users can turn this on to make sure their photos and videos are uploaded in better quality.
- **Improve compression behind the scenes**
 - Instagram can upgrade how it compresses media so that stories look clearer and sharper without making the file size too big.
- **Offer even better quality for Pro or Verified accounts**
 - Creators and businesses could get cloud-based optimization that keeps their content looking professional and clean.

⚙️ TECHNOLOGIES TO FIX THE PAIN POINTS

IMPROVING STORY UPLOAD QUALITY

This is more of a technical and infrastructure challenge.

SUGGESTED TECHNOLOGIES

- **Advanced Compression Algorithms**
 - Used to reduce file size without losing too much quality. Instagram can use smarter video/image codecs like AV1, HEVC, or WebP that maintain sharpness.
 - **User-Controlled Settings (High-Quality Toggle)**
 - Adding a frontend UI toggle for high-quality uploads. On the backend, this maps to different compression workflows.
 - **Cloud-Based Optimization (for Pro/Verified users)**
 - Use cloud servers (e.g., AWS or Google Cloud) to process stories at higher quality for business accounts.
 - Technologies like Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) ensure fast, optimized delivery globally.
- 🔧 No ML needed here — just smart engineering + user control + better processing.



← END CONCLUSION

Instagram has evolved into a powerful platform for personal expression and digital business. However, lacking transparency in shares, notifications and media quality issues in stories hinder the full potential of user engagement and content excellence.

By addressing these issues with thoughtful updates, Instagram can:

- Improve user trust and satisfaction
- Strengthen the creator economy
- Stay competitive in a fast-moving social media landscape



Komal Fulara
Product Manager