

McCann  
Content  
Studios

# 2024 will see social media become one of the most important marketing channels for brands. As the platforms evolve, we'll be presented with fresh new opportunities, challenges, and unanswered questions.

How do you produce hundreds of high-quality assets cost-efficiently? How do you ensure the cost is driving a ROI, particularly when it comes to high-budget influencer marketing? With lots of new brands prioritising social next year, how can brands stand out and be distinctive?

This exciting and unexplored future will also offer huge advantages. New technology, especially with AI, will enable unique possibilities. With an explosion of new channels, new formats and fast-growing audiences, untapped demographics like Boomers and other niche groups will be more reachable than ever.

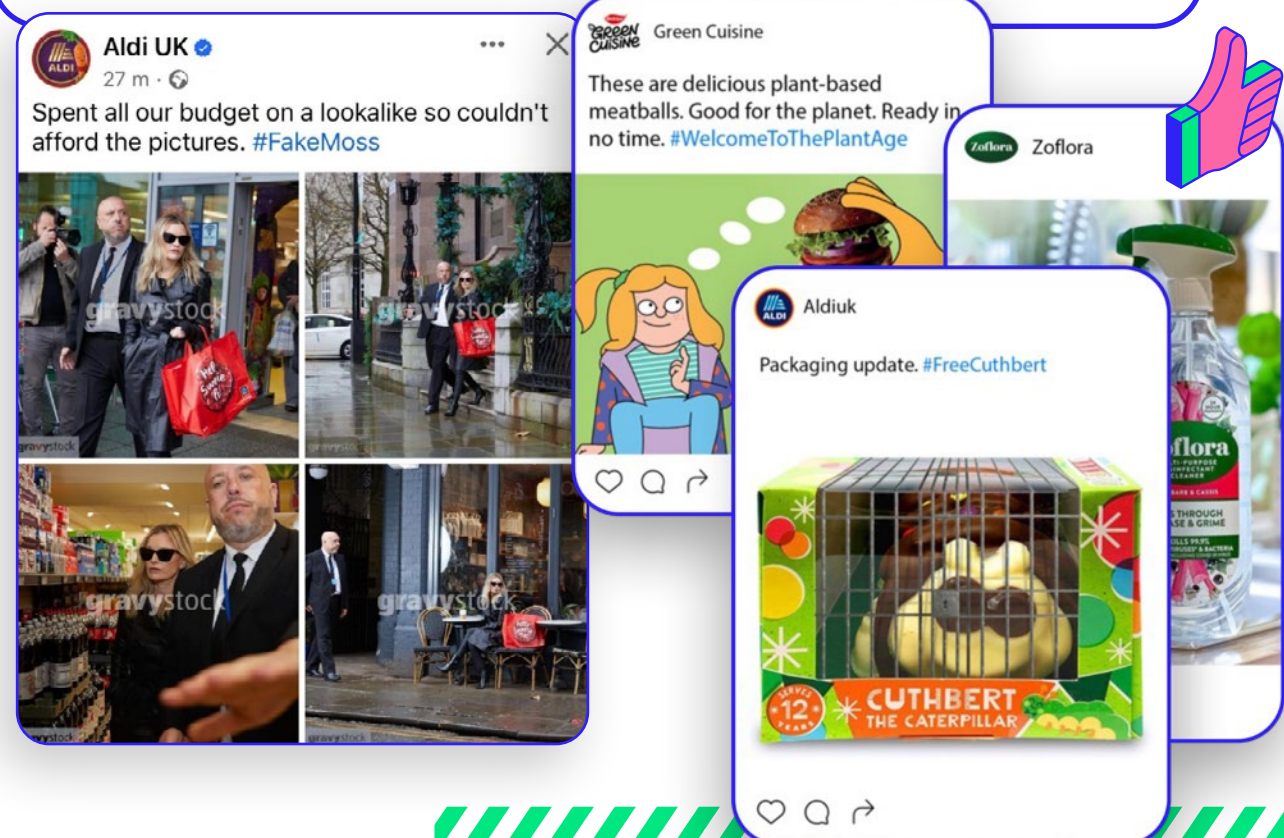
In the upcoming pages, Luke Taylor and Calum Macdonald Ball, Heads of Social & Influencer at McCann Content Studios are delving deep into the key trends shaping 2024.

## About MCS

McCann Content Studios represents our global approach to Social, Influencer and Social Commerce. It brings together all our expertise into one team, providing end-to-end capabilities with speed and efficiency across 5 major pillars:

1. Developing a social voice and behaviour that connects with audiences.
2. Real-time conversation using data, trends and agile content production.
3. Platform perfection, creating channel strategies and content at scale.
4. Co-creativity through true collaboration with celebrity, creators and influencers.
5. And business impact throughout the funnel with a drive for commerce and measurement.

We partner with clients such as Aldi, Santander, L'Oréal, Beaverbrooks and more, to achieve their business goals through social.



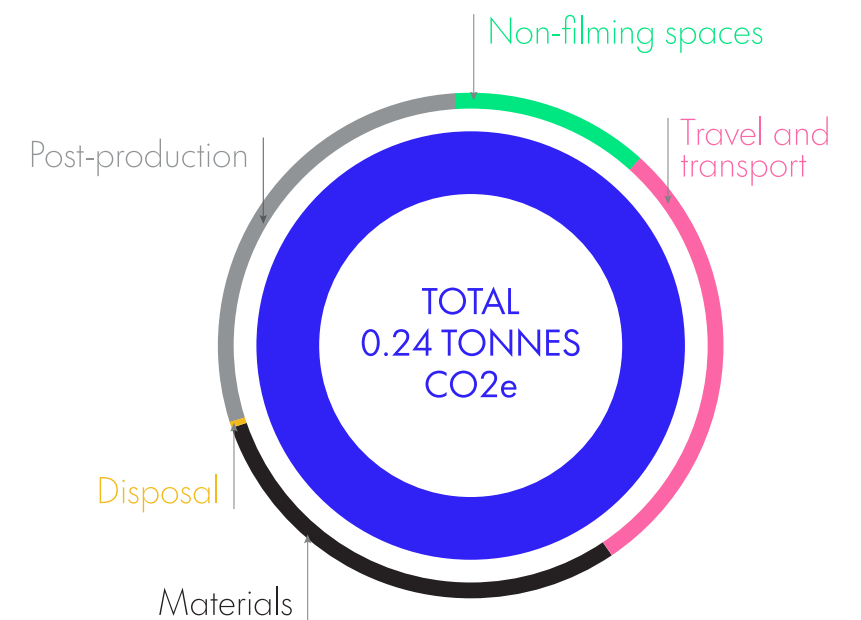
# The Social Tech Surge

By now we all know that social media is the place for innovation. 2024 will be no different, as new tools will only enable greater speed, accuracy and cost-efficiency.

With AI being the biggest buzzword right now, get ready for it to become a big part of our daily lives. Despite 71% of people thinking it's moving too fast, most people will embrace it. As questions around usage rights and cultural acceptability are resolved, we'll see more brands use AI in social advertising. There's already been a 260% increase in the use of AI for image editing in the past year (Hootsuite, Social Media Trends 2024, 2023). Trust will be the biggest challenge, with 62% saying they will trust content created by AI less, but we expect this to subside as it becomes the new normal.

Technology will also improve cost-efficiency and sustainability. We'll see more brands use pre-testing to reduce the growing production costs and production impact needed to create social content. This is becoming one of the biggest challenges for brands, with limited budgets and bold sustainability pledges.

→ So, get ready for an Insta-feed filled with AI-driven creations. At McCann, we're already using AI for productivity, creative concepting and data analysis. Next year we'll be doing more around filters, chatbots, content creation and more.





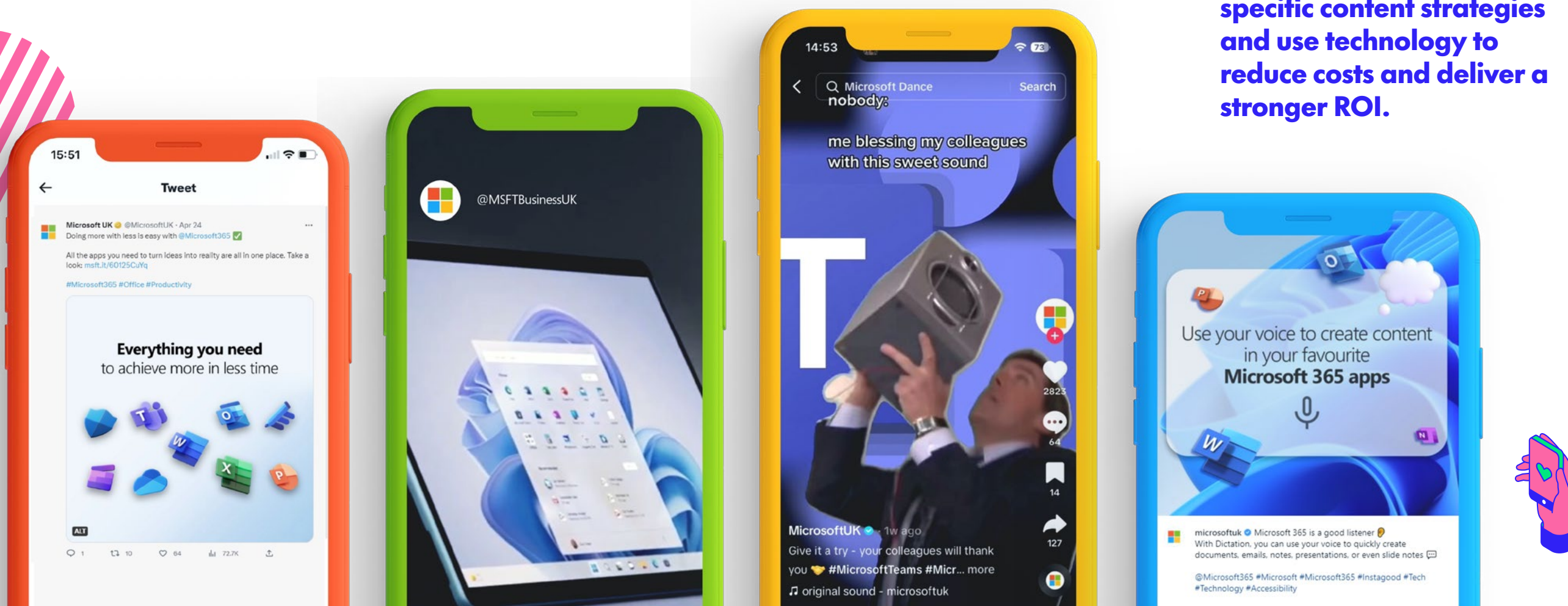
# Platform Overload

Brands are facing an ever-growing challenge keeping up with the new social channels, formats and features. From Threads and YouTube Shorts to Instagram Broadcasts and BeReal, brands are having to adapt and overcome like never before.

Now more than ever, it's crucial for brands to produce individual, channel-optimised and high-quality content. However, the cost for doing so is only growing and brands need that investment to show a return. With the average UK individual using 8 social media accounts (GWI), brands that came out on top in 2023 adapted their vibe to suit each platform's unique experiences.

TikTok has quickly become a focus point for many brands. The parent company, ByteDance posted revenues of \$54B in H1 2023 - closing in on Meta's \$61B (eMarketer). A big chunk of that came from eCommerce and mostly from China; however, it's apparent that social commerce is the new currency. The only thing that seems to be in TikTok's way is the cloud of political issues that just doesn't seem to blow away. Aside from that, brands will be investing far more in TikTok content from now on.

→ **In 2024, brands will reassess their social channel mix and change priorities. At McCann, we're using pre-testing and proprietary data to ensure brands have platform perfect content that delivers performance with cost-efficiency. Moving into the future, brands will need to adopt smarter, channel-specific content strategies and use technology to reduce costs and deliver a stronger ROI.**

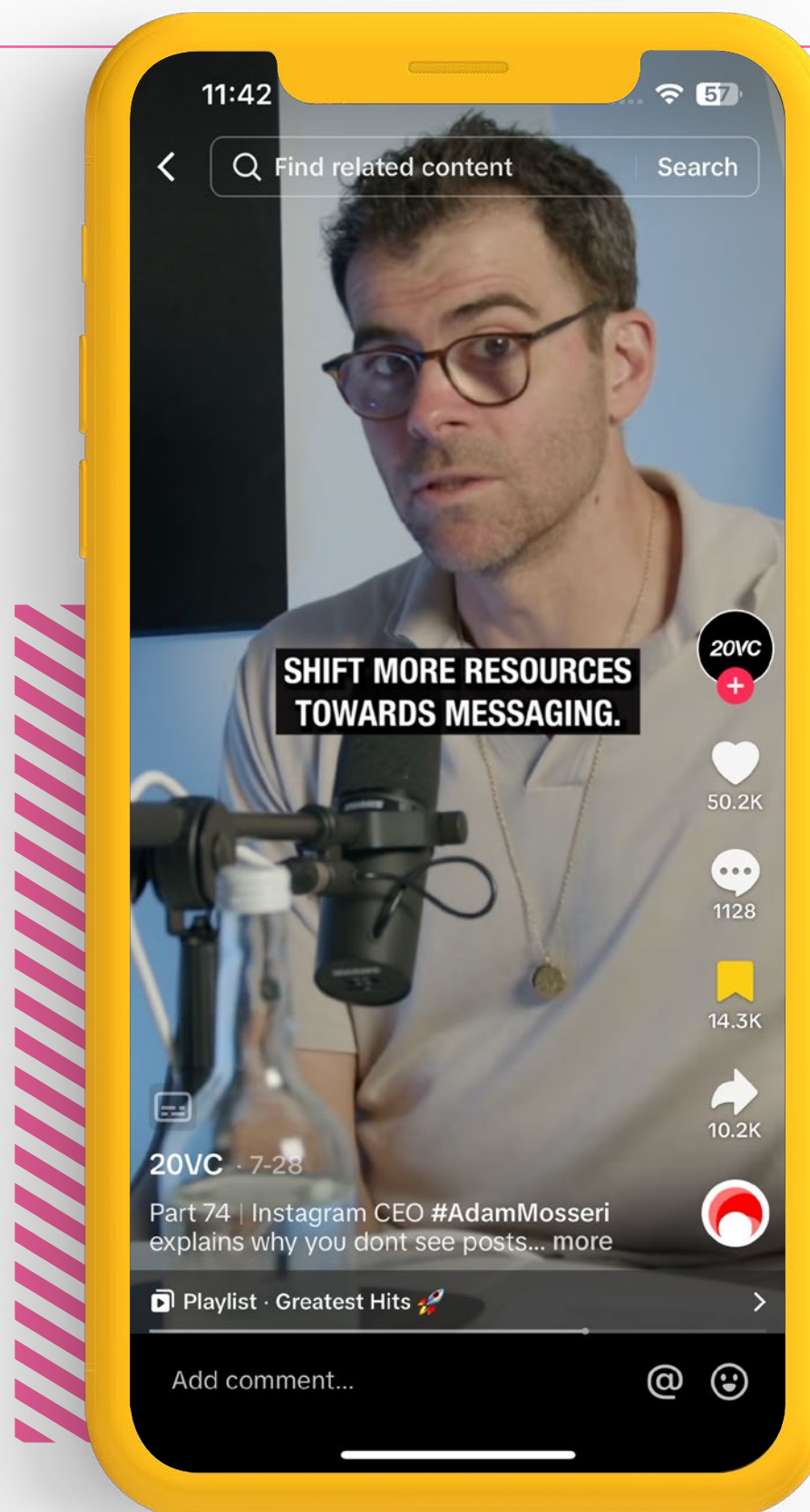


# Instagram

## The New Sharing Era

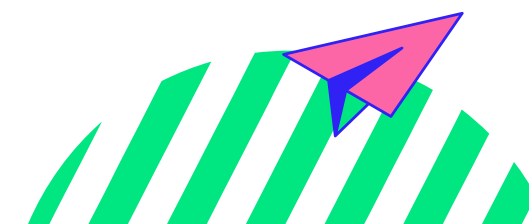
Think of Instagram and you'll imagine a feed of photos and videos - but now people's habits have changed. All the growth has been in DMs. Gen Z now spend more time in DMs than anywhere else on Instagram, with the feed being the 3rd or 4th most important space according to Adam Mosseri.

With more being shared in DMs than in Stories or in-feed, Instagram have responded by introducing more DM-based features like Broadcast channels, DM notes/music and increased messaging safety features.



So, what does this mean for brands? They'll need to consider how their Instagram content would be shared in DMs and should focus on creating content that people will want to share. That means text on images, so it's quicker to read, and skipping external links that take users away.

Now, more than ever, shares will be an important metric to measure. We'll also likely see more messaging innovation from Instagram in 2024, so watch this space.





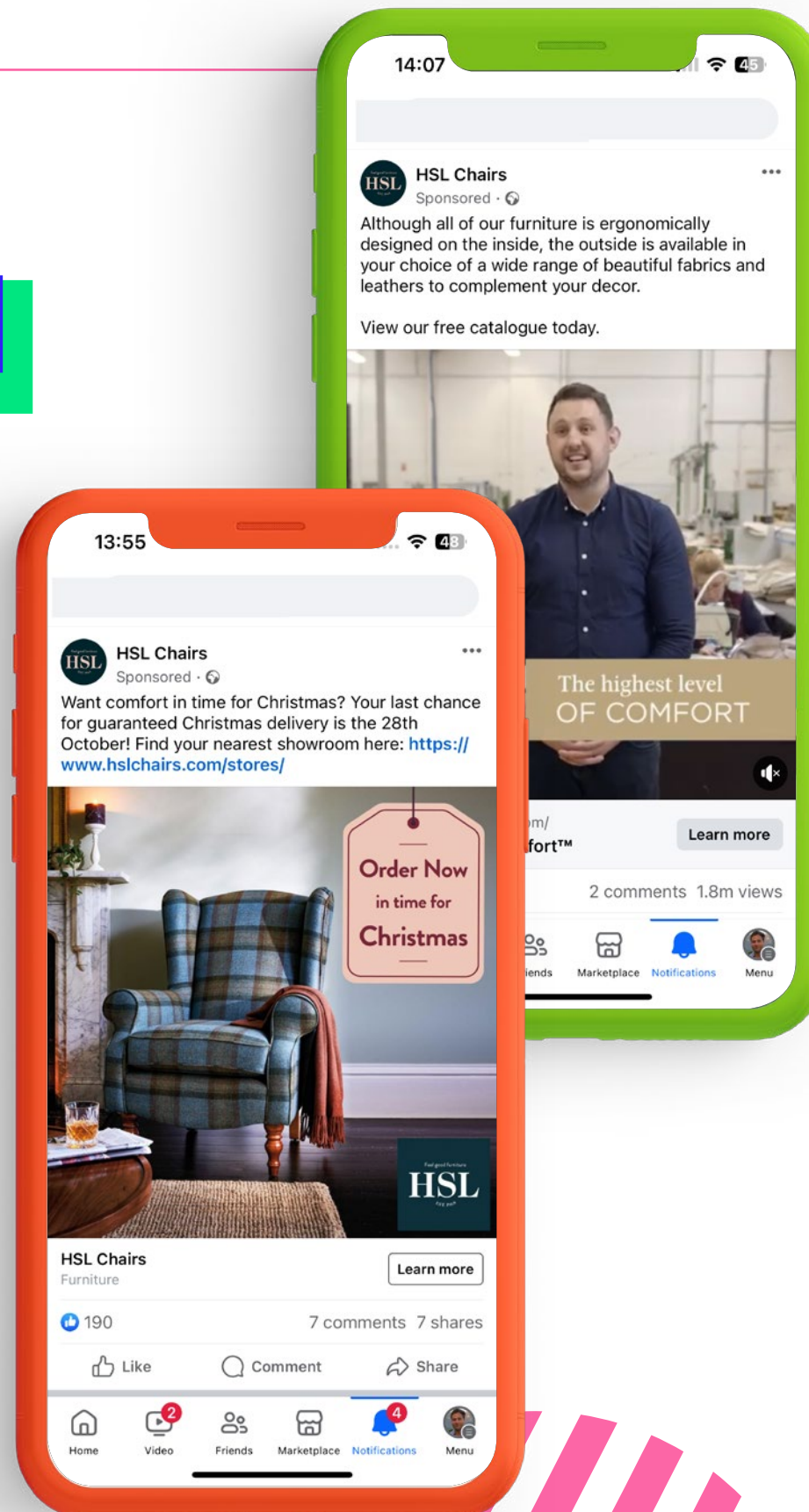
# Boomers: The Untapped Goldmine in Social

We saw a huge digital upskilling during Covid, with over 55s being the fastest-growing segment. Showing no signs of slowing down, it's going to be up to brands to take a very different approach to this generation moving forward.

TikTok is no longer just a dance app, it's now a Boomer hotspot. With a 57% rise in Boomers using the app, brands are going to have to start considering them much closer in behaviour to younger users. Crucially, they're more likely to have bought a product from TikTok Shop in the last week than Gen Z (GWI).

We've already established that younger audiences want social content that is entertaining, but now it's the same for Boomers and Millennials alike.

What won't be a shock to anyone is that all the generations are enjoying keeping in touch with friends and family via social media, and it's their primary reason for using it (49% for GenZ vs 57% for Boomers). Facebook is still Boomer's preferred app (followed by Instagram and X), but 4th placed is TikTok - which is growing much quicker than Meta, Snapchat, Reddit and X combined.



Despite the clear growth and higher average disposable income, Boomers still feel underrepresented in advertising - particularly in social. An overlooked, yet increasingly reachable and engaged audience for brands, we can expect to see much more of a focus on Boomers next year.



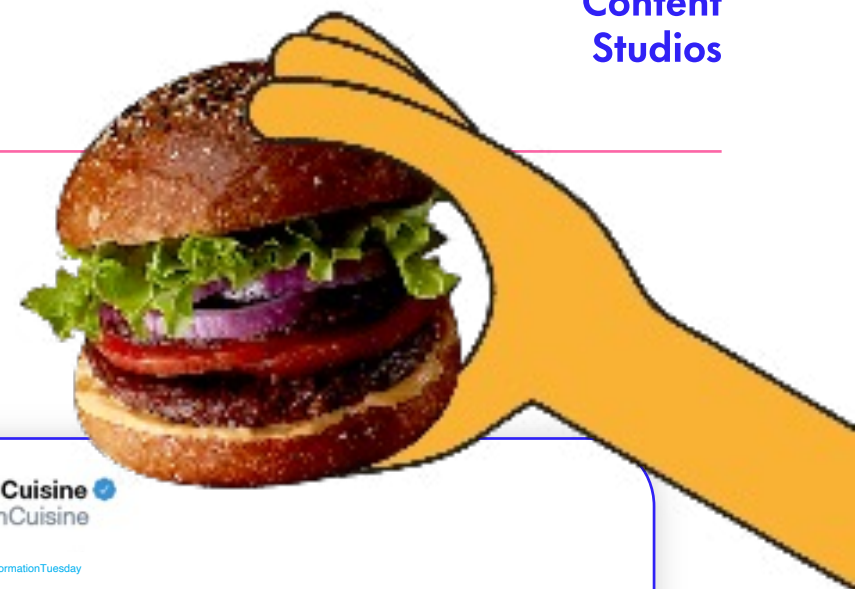
# Entertainment Rules Social Media

Recently, social advertising has had a glow up. Consumers are saying that, in the last 3 years, ads have become less intrusive and more entertaining. The era of preachy social responsibility talk is taking a backseat; consumers just want the good stuff – product information and discounts. The Cost-of-Living crisis played a big part in this, as people's priorities have shifted. Everyone's tightening their belts and wanting value.

Video is still key for entertainment. The UK spent £13.8 billion on digital ads in H1 2023 - driven mostly by an 11% increase in video ads, according to the IAB.

We saw an explosion in popularity around the 'Social Admin' and 'unhinged Social Media Manager' brand personas, largely because of TikTok's growth as a persona-led platform. However, as more brands look to use this strategy, it will ironically become less distinctive.

→ **With more brands taking an entertainment-led approach and creating more organic-style video content, standing out is going to be tough. Just having an 'admin persona' won't be distinctive enough on its own anymore. Reacting fast to trends, being bold and staying authentic will be key. At McCann, we're supporting brands with our Brand Voice package, helping them define and operationalise their personality on Social.**



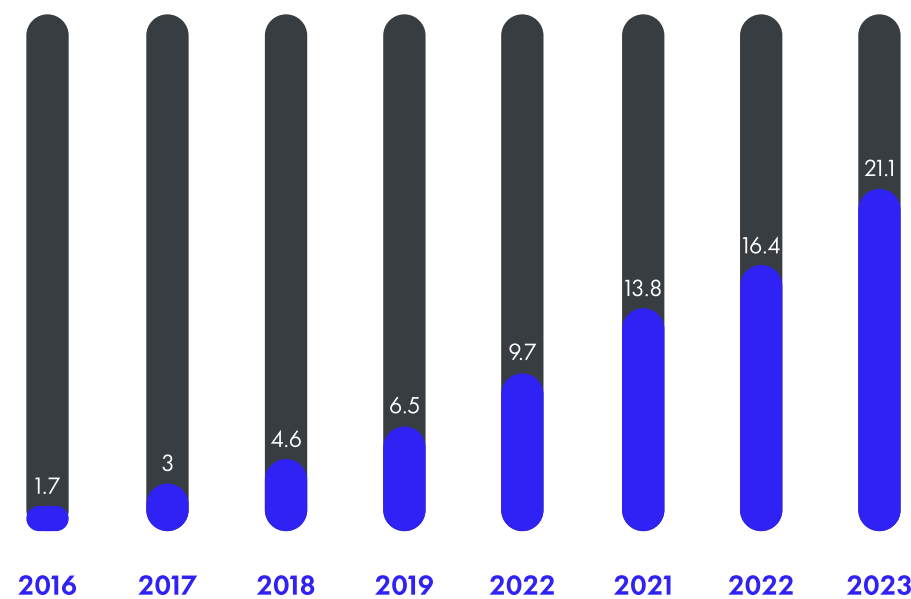


# Influencer Revolution: \$250B Industry Demands Better

We can all agree that influencers and creators are well and truly here to stay. Next year, 89% of brands will increase spend in this area. With the Creator Economy now being worth \$250 billion globally, there's undoubtedly a heightened and immediate need for improved measurement and governance. It's like the stock market, but we're trading in digital charisma.

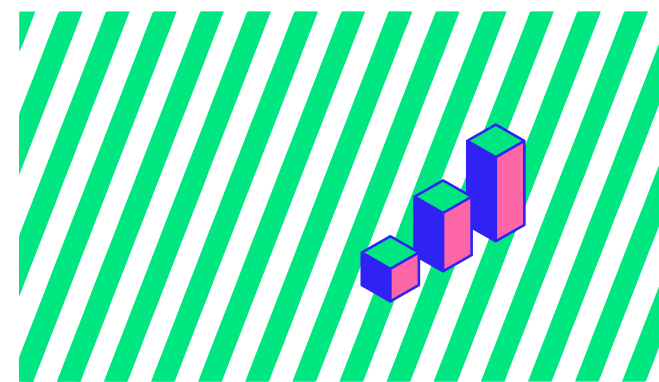
In the beginning, influencers measured success using vanity and proxy metrics like impressions and engagement. However, these KPIs are non-optimal - i.e. they aren't shown to directly impact commercial goals. The best brands are already using trackable links and both brand and conversion lift studies, but we shouldn't stop there. It's time for influencer marketing to step up and be put through the same rigour used for TV and digital marketing to analyse the increased investment. As, understandably, if you're investing big then you better know what you're getting in return.

Influencer marketing market size worldwide from 2016 - 2023  
U.S. Billion Dollars



Source: Statista, May 2023

→ Expect Influencer and Creator spend to keep increasing, but with far more advanced measurement. At McCann, we've integrated influencer and social marketing together to negate isolated measurement and create a holistic approach. As we move into 2024, the numbers will only get bigger and the spotlight will only get brighter on the influencer and creator digital red carpet.







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