

# **POLITICO Analytics & Engagement Report**

Feb. 16–22

Along with the usual story and social media analysis, this week's report includes a section on the best times of the day to post on both Facebook and Twitter for higher engagement and reach.

Overall lessons:

- Writing good social posts is important for every story, not just big features or analyses.
- Facebook live videos have very high reach, but very low engagement.
- Social posts tend to do better first thing in the mornings and in the evenings – even though we primarily work in the middle of the day, we should also make sure we schedule posts for other times, when people likely aren't at work and spend more time on social media.

Let me know if there's anything specific you'd like me to look into for future reports.

– *Taylor Blatchford*

## **Story Analysis**

*See a list of the top 25 stories from the week on the following page.*

### **Takeaways**

Compared to last week, this week's top stories covered a lot more hard news topics, with not as many features and analyses. Here are some that should still be relevant, though, and could be reshared over the weekend or in the future:

- Plan to make Google pay for news hits rocks
- 13 things you didn't know about Brexit
- Ireland's Brexit meltdown
- Europe's Instagram president
- Putin's holy war
- NATO survival will depend on Germany (opinion)

Our seventh-most-viewed story was mysteriously never posted on any of our social media, from what I could find – “Trump offers vindication to vaccine skeptic doctor,” published on Monday. It's good that it did so well on the website anyway, but it's definitely not good that we didn't share it. I'm not sure how this got missed, or how we could prevent this happening in the future. I could do a quick sweep of the B-box and other stories each evening to make sure we've shared all of them? Let me know if there are other ideas.

Weekly Analytics

16 Feb 2017 - 22 Feb 2017

All Users

79.10% Unique Page Views

Report Tab

Page Title	Publishing Date	Unique Page Views	Avg. Time on Page
1. 5 best moments from the UK’s anti-Trump debate – POLITICO	February 20, 2017 9:53 pm	34,136 (5.02%)	00:04:01
2. Awkward first date in Munich – POLITICO	February 19, 2017 8:48 pm	26,492 (3.90%)	00:04:47
3. Plan to make Google pay for news hits rocks – POLITICO	February 15, 2017 7:36 pm	23,640 (3.48%)	00:04:12
4. Trump’s demand upsets German election – POLITICO	February 19, 2017 9:30 pm	22,999 (3.38%)	00:03:59
5. Germany will take own time to boost defense, Merkel tells Pence – POLITICO	February 18, 2017 11:04 am	21,987 (3.23%)	00:02:59
6. 13 things you didn’t know about Brexit – POLITICO	February 14, 2017 7:30 pm	17,435 (2.57%)	00:05:14
7. Trump offers vindication to vaccine skeptic doctor – POLITICO	February 9, 2017 5:04 pm	13,744 (2.02%)	00:03:40
8. Ireland’s Brexit meltdown – POLITICO	February 22, 2017 4:32 am	13,034 (1.92%)	00:04:23
9. Europe’s Instagram president – POLITICO	February 20, 2017 4:30 am	11,767 (1.73%)	00:03:33
10. Putin’s holy war – POLITICO	February 21, 2017 4:30 am	11,039 (1.62%)	00:04:35
11. Trump ridiculed on Twitter for mysterious Swedish claim – POLITICO	February 19, 2017 5:23 pm	8,879 (1.31%)	00:02:38
12. Tillerson warns Russia to respect Ukraine commitments – POLITICO	February 16, 2017 4:50 pm	8,727 (1.28%)	00:02:52
13. David Cameron ‘courted’ for top NATO post – POLITICO	February 18, 2017 5:30 am	8,646 (1.27%)	00:03:19
14. World’s cartoonists on this week’s events – POLITICO	February 18, 2017 6:00 am	7,544 (1.11%)	00:02:49
15. Trudeau: Canada is not playing double game with Trump and EU – POLITICO	February 16, 2017 2:18 pm	7,300 (1.07%)	00:02:19
16. ‘Disappointed’ Pence says he backed Flynn’s ouster – POLITICO	February 20, 2017 7:00 pm	7,293 (1.07%)	00:03:16
17. Scotland will leave EU regardless of UK’s Brexit deal: minister – POLITICO	February 21, 2017 9:13 am	6,913 (1.02%)	00:02:04
18. Wolfgang Schäuble sends new Brexit warning – POLITICO	February 20, 2017 3:00 pm	6,753 (0.99%)	00:02:53
19. Breitbart’s European offensive: all talk, no action – POLITICO	February 22, 2017 4:30 am	6,567 (0.97%)	00:03:37
20. Marine Le Pen advances in poll as riots heighten security fears – POLITICO	February 20, 2017 7:36 pm	6,254 (0.92%)	00:02:53
21. Tony Blair: ‘Rise up’ against Brexit – POLITICO	February 17, 2017 7:58 am	6,032 (0.89%)	00:04:01
22. Polish criticism boosts Donald Tusk’s bid for second term – POLITICO	February 17, 2017 7:17 pm	5,651 (0.83%)	00:03:43
23. NATO survival will depend on Germany – POLITICO	February 15, 2017 4:49 pm	5,462 (0.80%)	00:04:00
24. Marine Le Pen cancels mufti meeting over headscarf – POLITICO	February 21, 2017 10:24 am	5,415 (0.80%)	00:01:58
25. Leaked Trump tape: ‘You are the special people’ – POLITICO	February 18, 2017 6:43 pm	5,286 (0.78%)	00:03:56

## Twitter Analysis

### Most impressions (people seeing the tweet)

- No journalist in France or Germany has publicly confirmed that they are willing to work for Breitbart
  - [62,272 impressions](#) from 84 retweets, 95 likes
  - Story: Breitbart's European offensive: all talk, no action
- Trump ridiculed on Twitter for mysterious Swedish claim
  - [25,011 impressions](#) from 66 retweets, 55 likes
  - Story: Trump ridiculed on Twitter for mysterious Swedish claim
- Meet the only MEP representing the German Pirate Party
  - [21,732 impressions](#) from 44 retweets, 40 likes
  - Story: The last pirate
- Tillerson warns Russia to respect its commitments to de-escalate violence in Ukraine
  - [21,610 impressions](#) from 41 retweets, 28 likes
  - Story: Tillerson warns Russia to respect Ukraine commitments
- Support for Germany's far-right AfD has slumped to its lowest level since 2015, according to a new poll
  - [19,772 impressions](#) from 51 retweets, 62 likes
  - Story: German far-right AfD slumps in new poll

### Highest engagement (people interacting with the tweet)

- H.R. McMaster attained legendary status in military circles for his willingness to buck conventional wisdom
  - [7.3% engagement rate](#), mainly from clicks on link
  - Story: Trump's new warrior-scholar
- The world's cartoonists on this week's events
  - [7.2% engagement rate](#), mainly from clicks on link
  - Story: The world's cartoonists on this week's events
  - Third-highest engagement was also political cartoons
- Support for Germany's far-right AfD has slumped to its lowest level since 2015, according to a new poll
  - [5.6% engagement rate](#), mainly from clicks on link
  - Story: German far-right AfD slumps in new poll
- Croatia and Albania ask NATO to revise peacekeeping mission in Kosovo
  - [5.4% engagement rate](#), mainly from clicks on link
  - Story: Croatia, Albania ask NATO to revise Kosovo peacekeeping mission
- Wolfgang Schäuble: "People in the British government are only realizing what Brexit means" now
  - [4.9% engagement rate](#), mainly from clicks on link
  - Story: Wolfgang Schäuble sends new Brexit warning

### Didn't do as well

- François Fillon softens his pitch for health care reform, still plans to cut €20 billion in costs
  - [0.2% engagement rate](#) with 4 retweets, 1 like
  - Story: France's Fillon mellows on health care reform
- Slovakia's parliament votes down a motion of no-confidence in PM Robert Fico over high energy tariffs
  - [0.3% engagement rate](#) with 2 retweets, 4 likes
  - Story: Slovakian prime minister survives vote of no confidence

### Takeaways

This week's top tweets cover an interesting variety of stories, many of which weren't among the most-read stories of the week. I think this is actually a good thing, because our focus is often on promoting the A-box stories multiple times per day, but for smaller or "latest" stories, we often just push them out when they're published and leave it at that. The engagement with tweets that aren't huge feature and analysis pieces shows that it's still important to take time and write good posts for any story, because we never know what could take off socially.

I experimented a bit last week with resharing stories from throughout the week that were still relevant (features, opinion pieces, analyses) and those tweets seemed to do really well, so I think that's something we can continue.

## Facebook Analysis

### Most reach (people seeing the post)

- Our journalists talk Mike Pence's Euro tour, Greece, fake news, Malta protests and more. Send your questions to Harry Cooper and Ryan Heath in the comments section below.
  - [Reached 94,106 people](#) with 1 share, 45 likes
  - No story, just Facebook live video
- "You can pass on my respects to the Grand Mufti, but I will not cover up."
  - [Reached 41,802 people](#) with 30 shares, 255 likes
  - Story: Marine Le Pen cancels mufti meeting over headscarf
- "We need a free press. We must have it. It's vital."
  - [Reached 40,284 people](#) with 37 shares, 517 likes
  - Story: McCain: Trump's attacks on press are 'how dictators get started'
- Support for Germany's far-right AfD has slumped to its lowest level since 2015, according to a new poll.
  - [Reached 39,278 people](#) with 31 shares, 540 likes
  - Story: German far-right AfD slumps in new poll
- Could Obama's next job be as leader of the French world?
  - [Reached 36,640 people](#) with 33 shares, 261 likes
  - Story: Oui On Peut? Calls for Obama to contest French election

### Highest engagement (people interacting with the post)

- "You can pass on my respects to the Grand Mufti, but I will not cover up."

- [8.5% engagement rate](#)
  - Story: Marine Le Pen cancels mufti meeting over headscarf
- Could Obama's next job be as leader of the French world?
  - [7.6% engagement rate](#)
  - Story: Oui On Peut? Calls for Obama to contest French election
- Artists sketch the week that was.
  - [7.1% engagement rate](#)
  - Story: The world's cartoonists on this week's events
- Steve Bannon slammed the EU to German ambassador ... shortly before Mike Pence declared US solidarity with the bloc.
  - [7.0% engagement rate](#)
  - Story: Trump aide bashed EU to a German ambassador: report
- The far-right Party for Freedom are still within striking distance of winning the election.
  - [6.0% engagement rate](#)
  - Story: Mark Rutte and Geert Wilders neck-and-neck in Dutch poll

### Didn't do as well

- François Fillon has softened his health care reform pitch, but he still plans to cut €20 billion in costs over the next five years.
  - [Reached 2,800 people](#) with 0 likes, 0 shares
  - Story: France's Fillon mellows on health care reform
- Ivan Rogers, the U.K.'s former ambassador to the EU, on Wednesday said securing a trade deal with the EU and getting it ratified would take "several years."
  - [Reached 3,499 people](#) with 3 likes, no shares
  - Story: Brexit trade deal, ratification could take until 2020: ex-ambassador

### Takeaways

The posts that did well on Facebook this week were very well-written. They're short and punchy, and coupled with the headline and excerpt (some of which were changed to be more appealing for Facebook), I think they did a good job of making the stories interesting to readers. The popular Facebook stories were once again those that appealed to the broader public more than some of our political ones targeted toward a more niche audience.

Facebook live videos are an interesting category, because they consistently reach a huge number of people yet have very low engagement. This week's had 0.3% engagement, which was the lowest of any content we posted on Facebook — of the 102,000 people who saw the post, only 346 clicked on it. I'm not sure what we could do to increase that number. I think encouraging people to comment with questions is good because that automatically invites engagement.

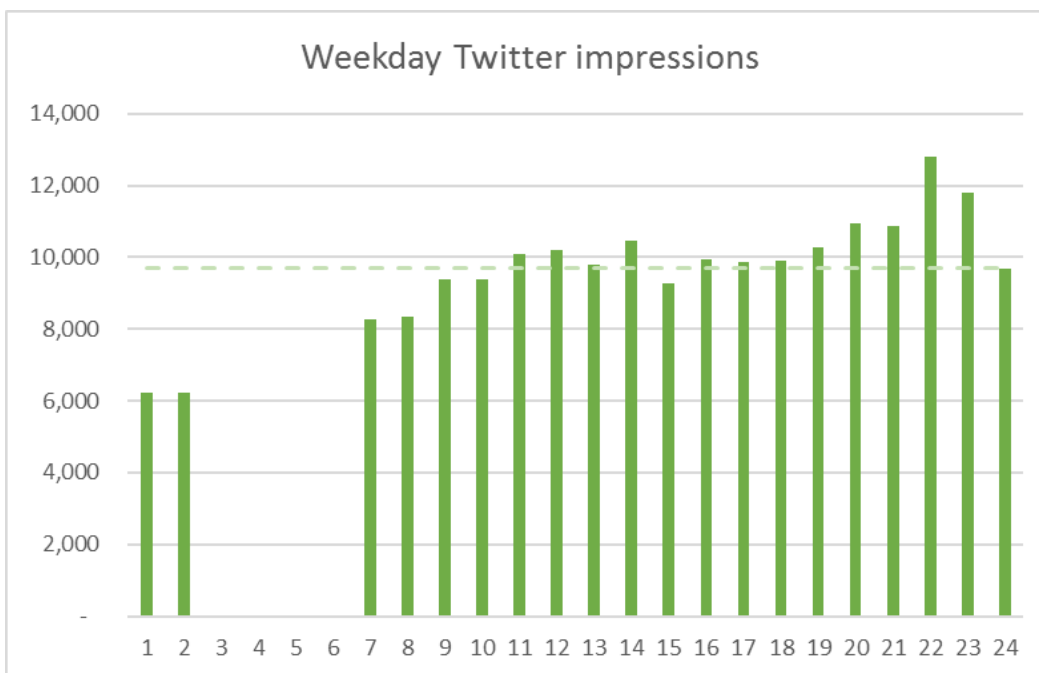
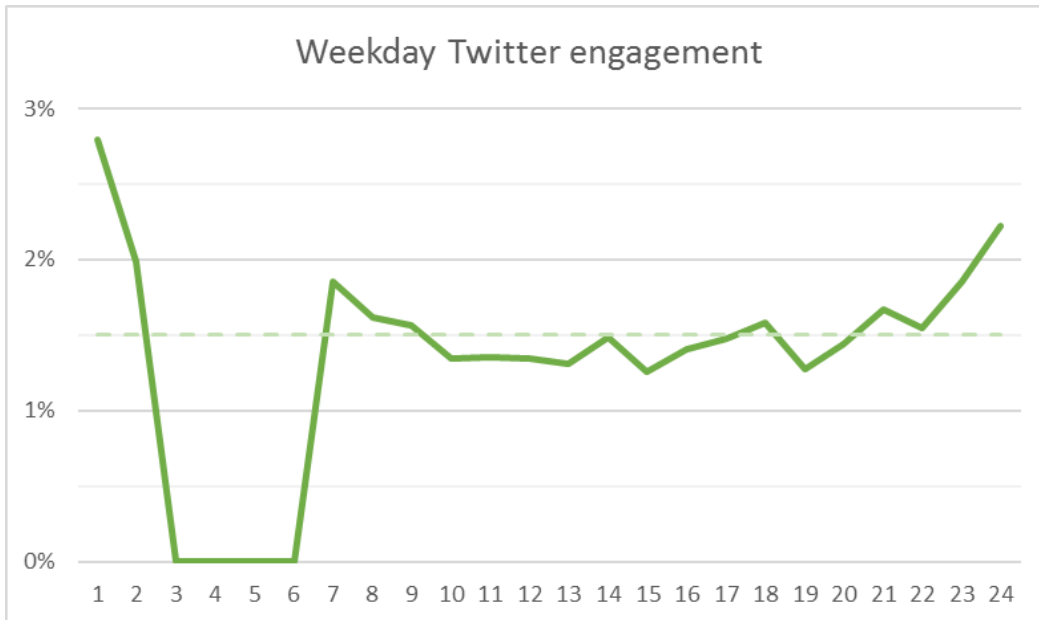
The John McCain story about Trump's attacks on the press did really well on both Facebook and Twitter, even though it didn't make the week's top 25 stories. When people are clearly interested in a topic and are sharing/retweeting it themselves, that's a sign that we can promote it more heavily. That story was posted on a weekend, when more people typically see our posts (see below section), which could have been helpful.

## Posting Times

For the below analyses, I exported data from both Twitter and Facebook that included everything we've posted from Dec. 1 to Feb. 21. I calculated the average engagement rates and impressions broken down by hour, and then filtered them into separate categories for weekdays and weekends. The dashed lines in the graphs below are the averages for that specific category.

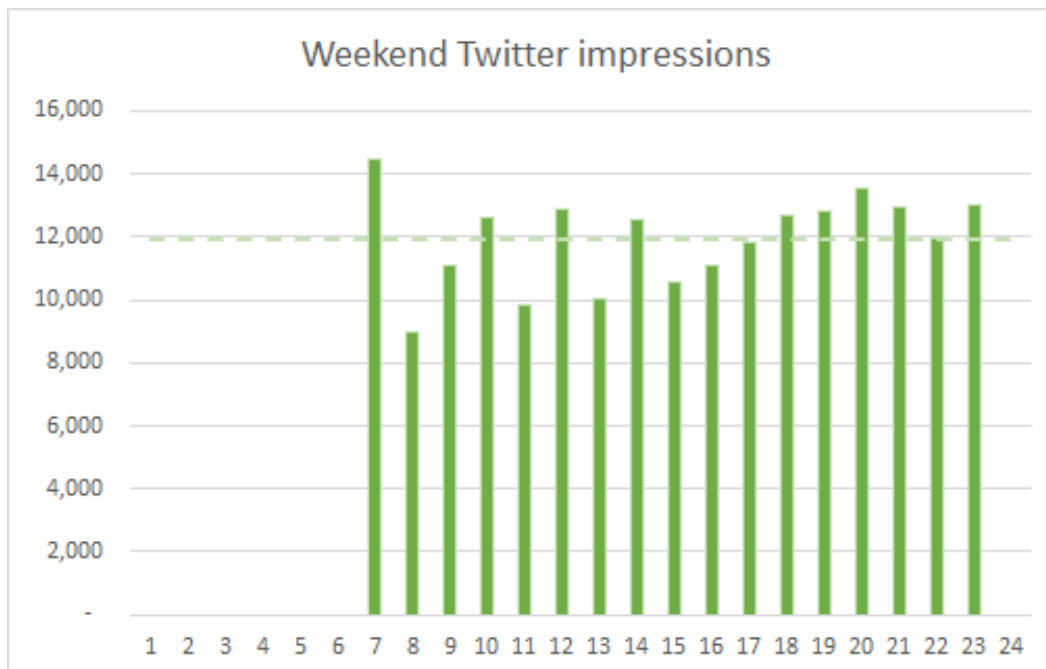
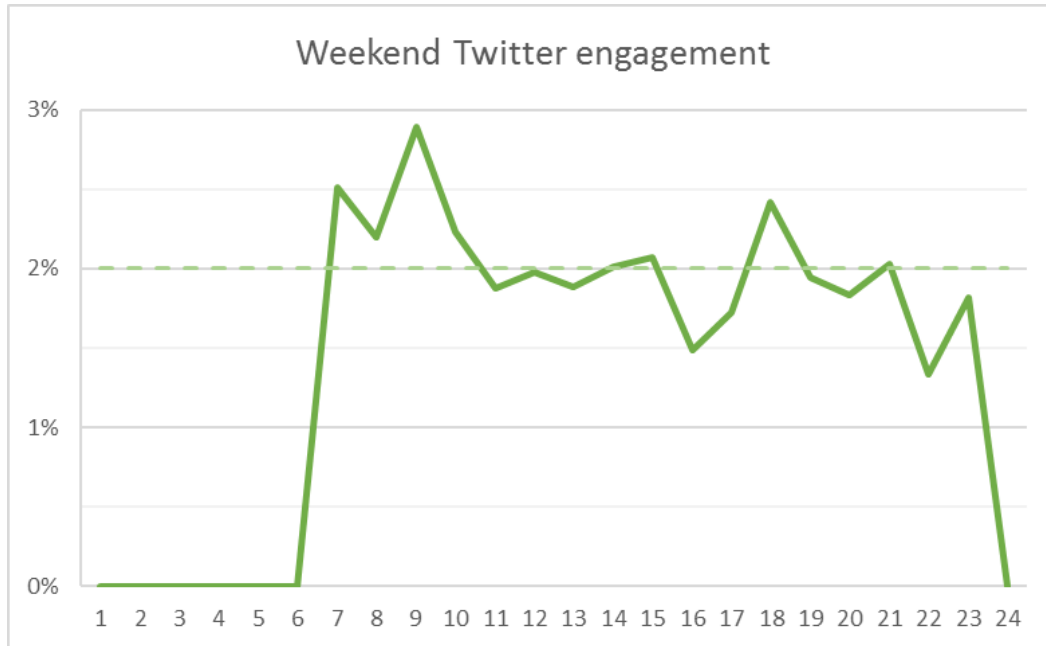
### Twitter

During the week:



- Lots of people engage with our tweets between 7 and 9 a.m., so whoever's working first thing in the morning has a good opportunity to drive lots of traffic to the site.
- More people see our tweets during work hours, but fewer people engage with them, possibly because more accounts are tweeting during that time.
- We get higher than average engagement rates and impressions between 8 p.m. and midnight – a good opportunity to reshare popular content from throughout the day.

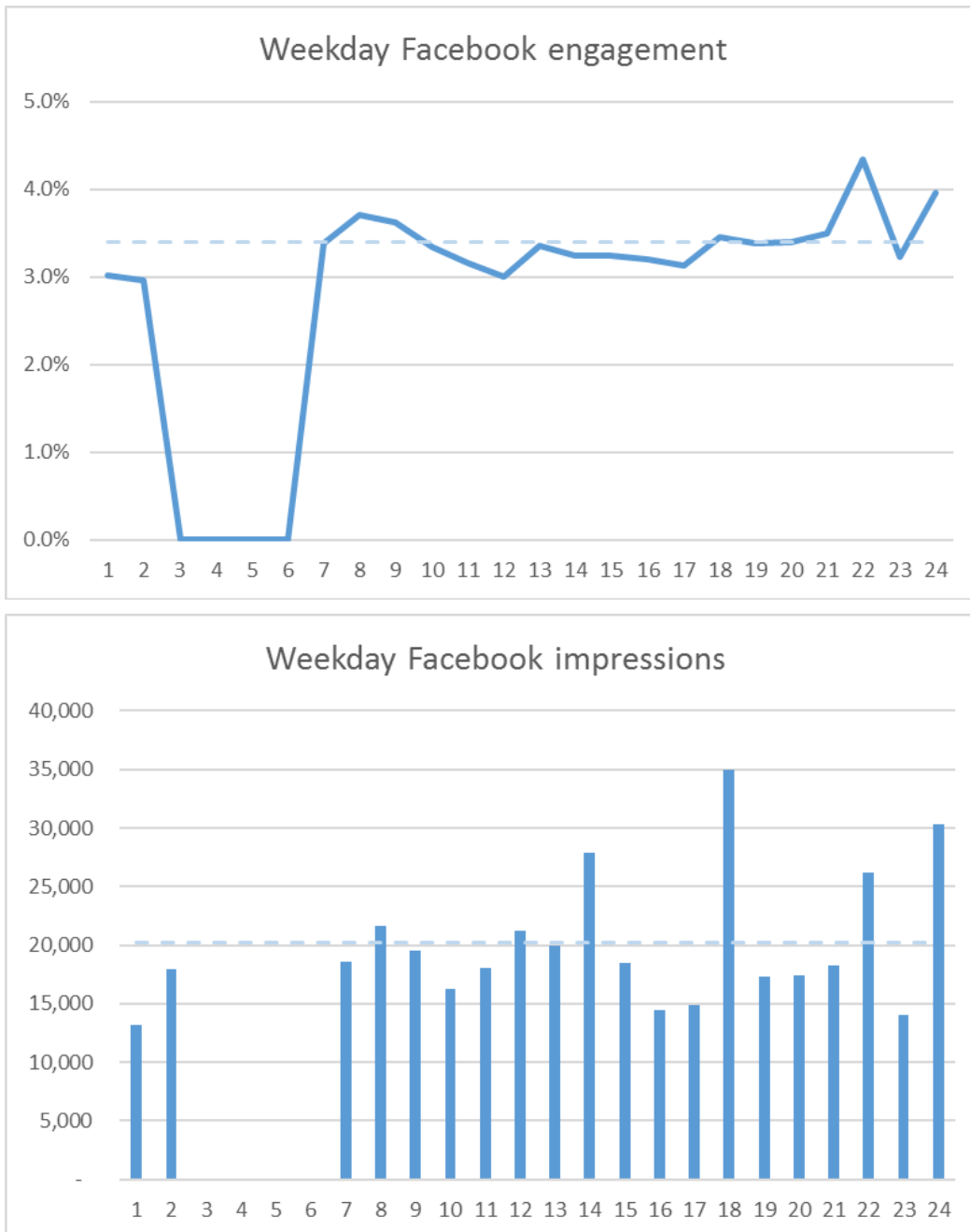
On weekends:



- Tweets sent on the weekend have a higher average engagement rate (2% compared to 1.5%) and number of impressions (11,900 compared to 9,700) than those sent during the week. Tweeting on the weekend works well, and we should use that to our advantage.
- Tweets on the weekend get the most engagement between 7 and 10 a.m. and 5 and 7 p.m.
- The most people see our weekend tweets in the evening from 6 p.m. to midnight.

## Facebook

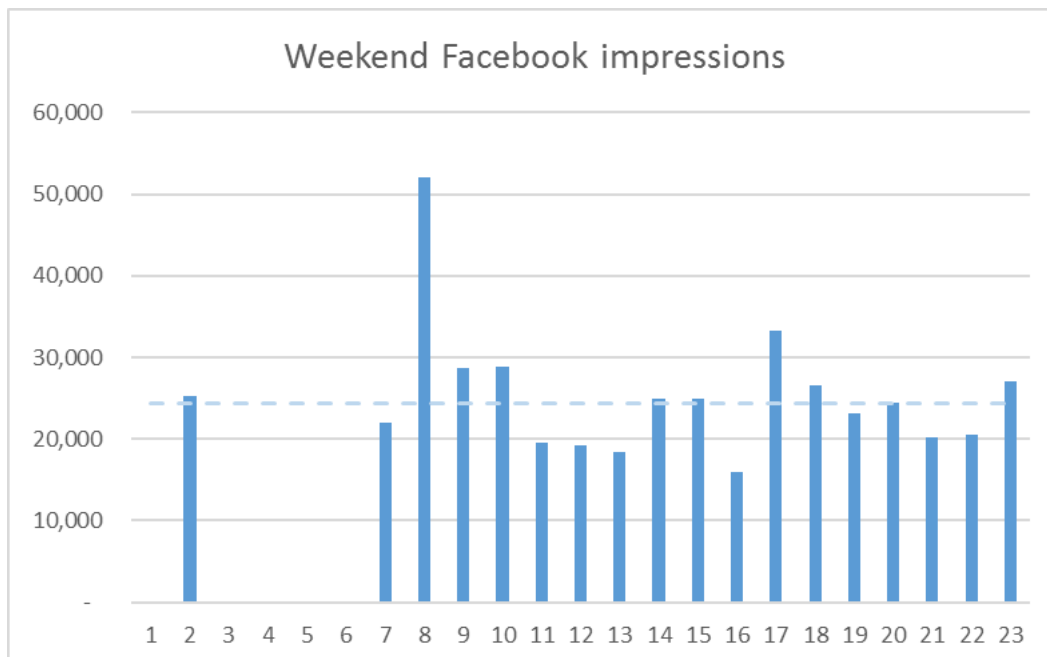
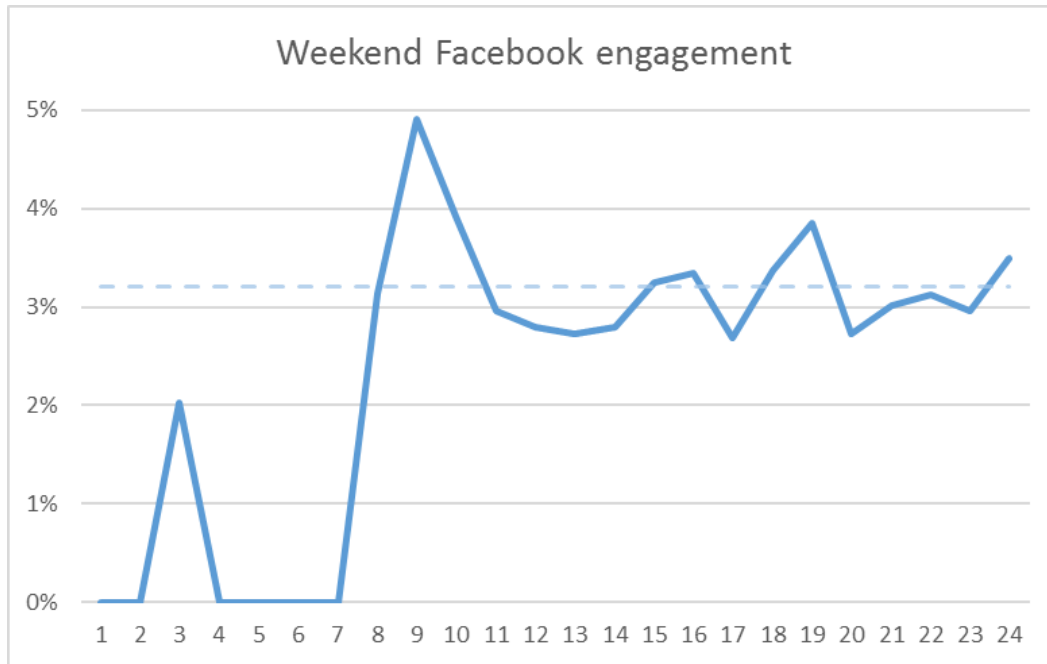
During the week:





- Facebook engagement patterns are pretty similar to Twitter's. Our posts receive the most engagement from 7 to 9 a.m. and after about 6 p.m.
- Also similarly, more people tend to see our posts during work hours, but fewer people engage with them.

On weekends:



- Our weekend Facebook posts also have a higher average number of impressions (24,000 compared to 20,200) than weekday posts. Average engagement rates are about the same.
- Weekend impressions/engagement are by far the highest between 8 and 10 a.m. There are also peaks between 2 and 4 p.m. and about 5 and 7 p.m.