INSTAGRAM
Study 2024

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With Metricool's 2024 Instagram Study, you have pure gold in your hands.

We have spent six months gathering data on Instagram's evolution in 2024, so you can analyze the data first-hand to make more informed marketing decisions.

Teamwork from the Growth, Design, and Marketing departments, long working hours, multiple analytical eyes, and a few coffees made this study plausible. Thank you for reading this study and to the Metricool team.

What will you find in this 2024 study?

We will dive into Instagram's 2024 evolution compared to the previous year. You will identify key rules that have changed the Instagram game, backed by data. These insights will summarize the year's patterns and trends for 2025. We will also include a "Best Practices" section, adaptable and applicable to your brand or client's marketing strategy.

These striking learnings will guide you to reach your brand's social goals... just a small spoiler.

The social network was determined to change the rhetoric that "growing on Instagram is impossible," and the data proves this. The study found that smaller accounts increased their average reach, confirming algorithm changes, previously shared by Adam Mosseri, Instagram CEO.

The varied content formats are positioned per brand objective, opening new opportunities. Reels are the masters of reach, while carousels achieve the highest engagement, and Stories are used most frequently.

Comparison is key

The study is designed to compare with similar account sizes (number of followers), to benchmark average data and identify areas of improvement, such as posting frequency, reach, interactions, engagement, etc.

Analyze, conclude, and enjoy Metricool's 2024 Instagram Study - see you on the other side!

Isabel Romero
CMO at Metricool

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INDEX

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STUDY SAMPLE

2024 Analyzed Data

391,490
professional Instagram accounts (business and creator)

5,608,075
feed posts

3,739,969
images

1,848,495
carousels

19,611
*reels from feed

3,614,692
reels

23,626,292
stories

*Reels from feed
During the study, you will identify two Reels types. Since Instagram categorizes all video formats as Reels, we differentiate those shared in the main feed from Reels shared exclusively in the reel feed. The former will be included in the Feed posts category.

KEY FINDINGS

A FORMAT FOR EACH OBJECTIVE

Tell me what you want to achieve and I'll tell you what you need

STORIES TAKE THE THRONE

The most used format, with more than 70% of the analyzed posts accounting for Stories.

REELS DRIVE REACH

Instagram Reels bring about the highest reach at 37.87%.

CAROUSELS LEAD ENGAGEMENT

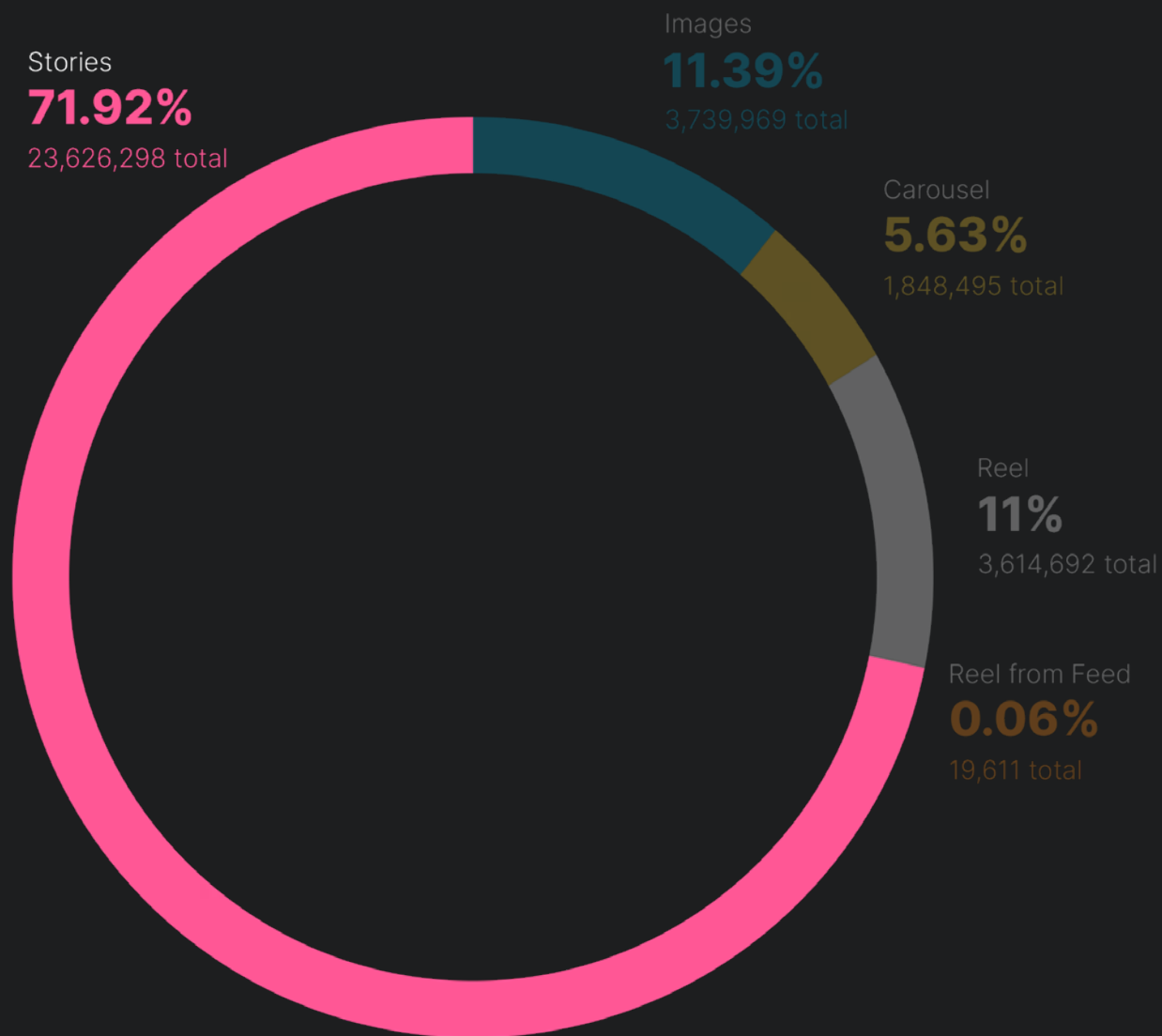Carousels receive the highest engagement ratio at 10.15%, surpassing images and Reels.

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STORIES: BRANDS' MOST-USED FORMAT

71.92% of the analyzed sample study are Stories.

Why do brands favor this format?

- **FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out):** lasting only 24 hours, you want to tune in before you miss out.

- **Foster follower loyalty:** Stories embody closeness and familiarity, on a day-to-day basis.

- **Allow for spontaneous content with little editing.**

- **Generate traffic:** Well-crafted Stories direct users to your website, blog, online store, or Instagram profile.

How can you improve your Stories results? Discover these strategies in the Best Practice section.

Stories
71.92%
23,626,298 total

Images
11.39%
3,739,969 total

Carousel
5.63%
1,848,495 total

Reel
11%
3,614,692 total

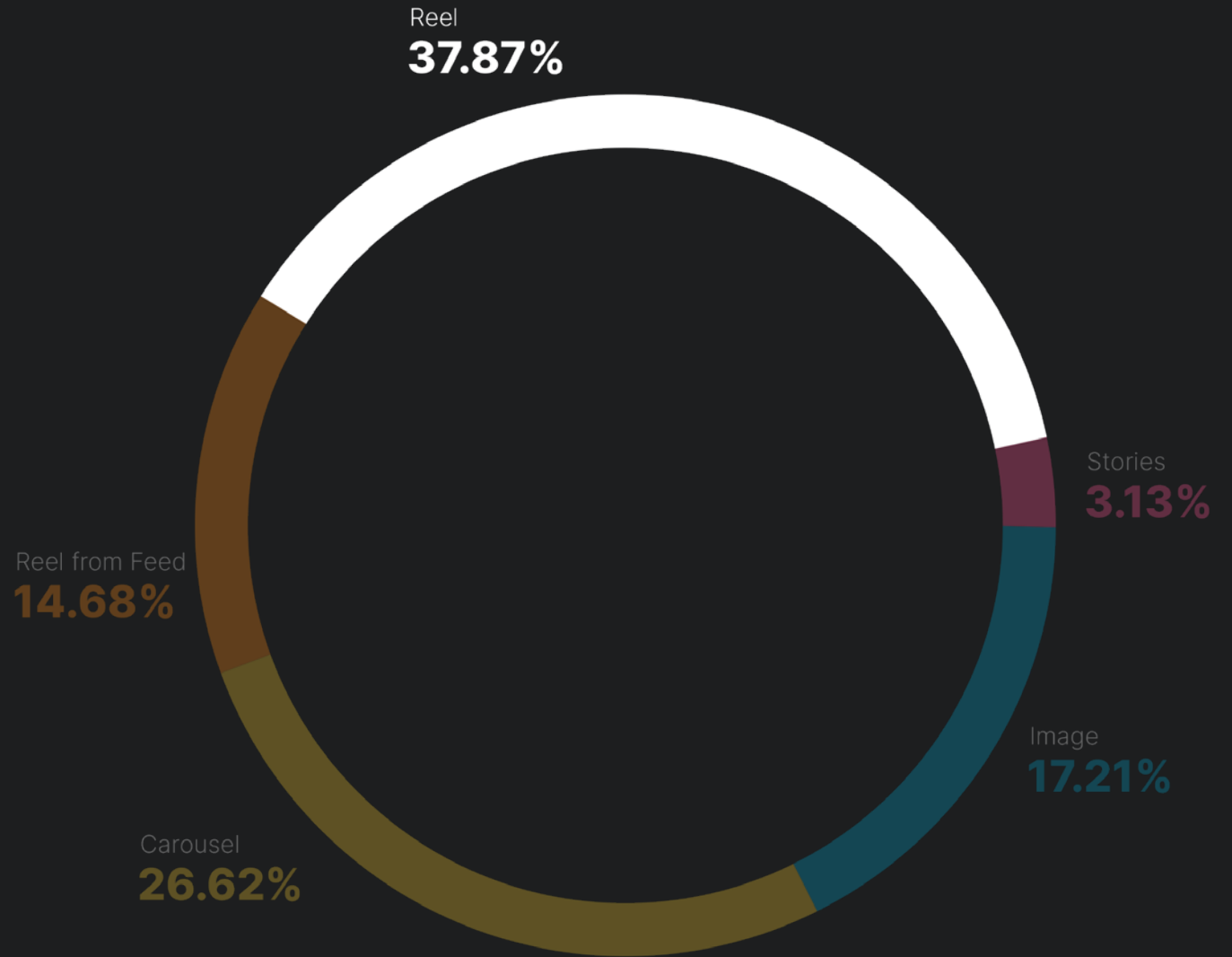Reel from Feed
0.06%
19,611 total

Number of posts by content type

REELS ARE THE STAR OF REACH

This is the format that reaches the most users, at **37.87%.**

The results conclude that reach increased for all account sizes except Huge accounts, which experienced a slight drop of 6.62%.

Learn the keys to improving your Reels strategy in the Best Practices section.

Reel
37.87%

Stories
3.13%

Image
17.21%

Carousel
26.62%

Reel from Feed
14.68%

Reach by content type

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CAROUSELS 'ENGAGE' THE AUDIENCE

With a **10.15%** engagement rate, Carousels exceed those of images and Reels.

What is the secret to Carousel's success?

One key component of carousels is its storytelling capabilities, with up to 20 slides in its latest update. This offers a variety of content value such as product samples, tutorials, lists, tips, etc.

The possibility of "merging" images and videos in the same post is attractive for brands and stimulating for users. The element of surprise entices users to swipe through each piece.

Tips on how to best engage your audience with carousels can be found in the Best Practices section.

Engagement rate by content type

Image

7.36%

Carousel

10.15%

Reels from feed

6.92%

Reels

6.27%

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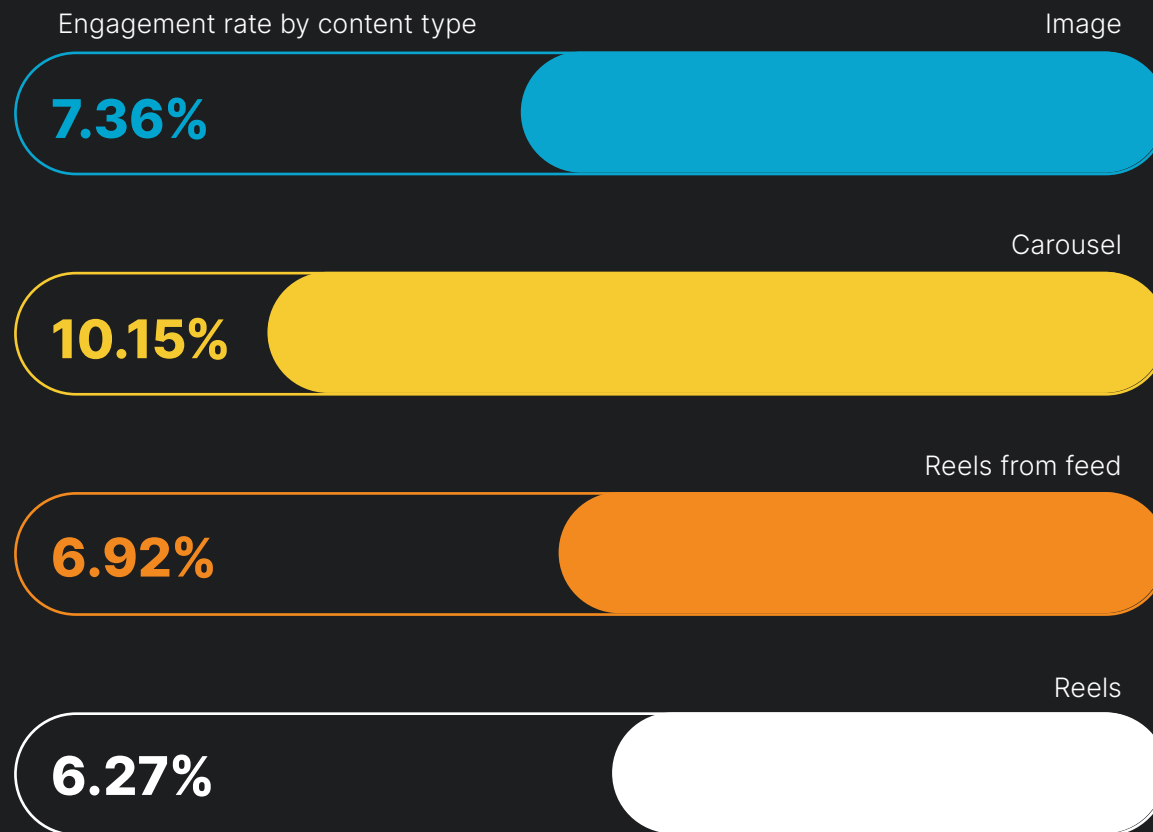
What happened on Instagram in 2024?

DETAILED DATA AND TRENDS ANALYSIS
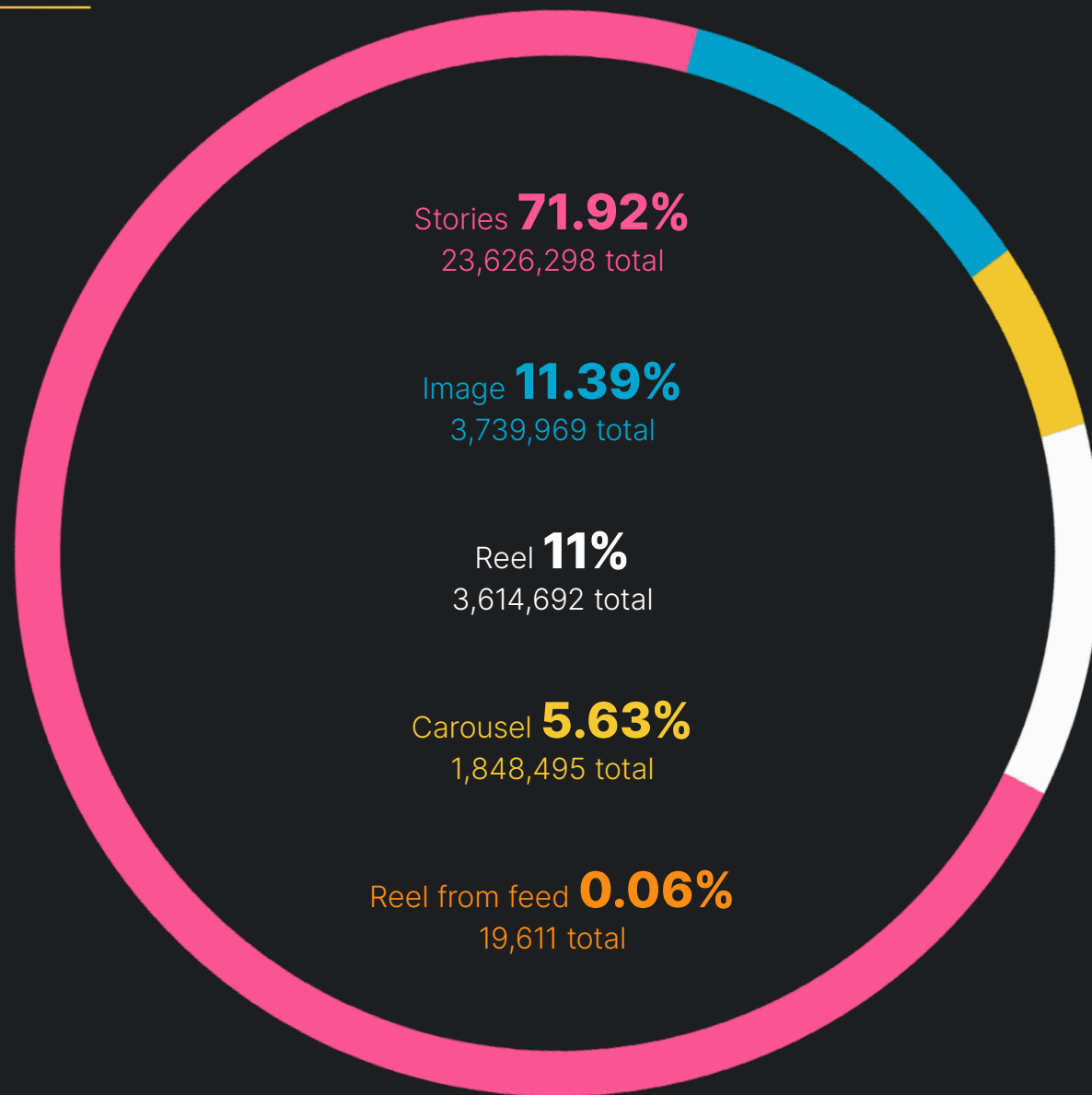
WHAT IS THE MOST USED INSTAGRAM FORMAT?

23+ MILLON

published Stories, making it the most popular format from the study.

71.92% of the accounts analyzed are Stories, the most popular Instagram format in 2024.

11.39% are feed images, the second-most used format.

11% are Reels, of which only 0.54% are published on the main feed.

Stories **71.92%**
23,626,298 total

Image **11.39%**
3,739,969 total

Reel **11%**
3,614,692 total

Carousel **5.63%**
1,848,495 total

Reel from feed **0.06%**
19,611 total

Number of posts by content type

AND, THE MOST USED FORMAT BY ACCOUNT SIZE?

This is calculated by each account's average weekly posting frequency.

Most used format

	Carousels	Images	Reels from feed	Stories	Reels
Tiny Accounts 0-500 followers	1.1	**2.7** second-most used	0.6	**5.7**	**2.1** third-most used
Small Accounts 500-2K followers	1.4	**2.6** second-most used	0.7	**11.1**	**2** third-most used
Medium Accounts 2K-10K followers	1.8	**3** second-most used	0.7	**19.3**	**2.6** third-most used
Big Accounts 10K-50K followers	2.4	**3.7** third-most used	1.3	**30.4**	**3.9** second-most used
Huge Accounts +50K followers	4.2	**7** third-most used	1.3	**46**	**8.6** second-most used

Stories are the most used format for all account sizes

Huge accounts publish Stories the most frequently, exceeding 45 per week, while Big accounts average just over 30.

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IF IT'S THE MOST POPULAR, DOES IT ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST REACH?

Just because Stories are the most used format, this does NOT mean they receive the most reach.

Reels can appear in the "Explore" section, boosting visibility from non-followers, unlike Stories.

If you are looking to reach a wider audience, Reels are the format for you.

37.9% reach

Stories have the lowest reach despite being the most used format. Reels reach the first place at 37.87% while Stories only achieve 3.13%.

Reach by content type

Reel
11,039.43

Carousel
7,758.69

Image
5,161.38

Reels from feed
4,278.75

Story
912.45

CAROUSELS ARE THE CHAMPION OF ENGAGEMENT

Do you want to maintain audience engagement?
Post carousels.

10.15%
average carousel engagement rate

Carousels attain **the highest engagement rate** at 10.15%, above all other formats. Surprisingly, Reels are in last place with a ratio of 6.27%.

Engagement rate by content type
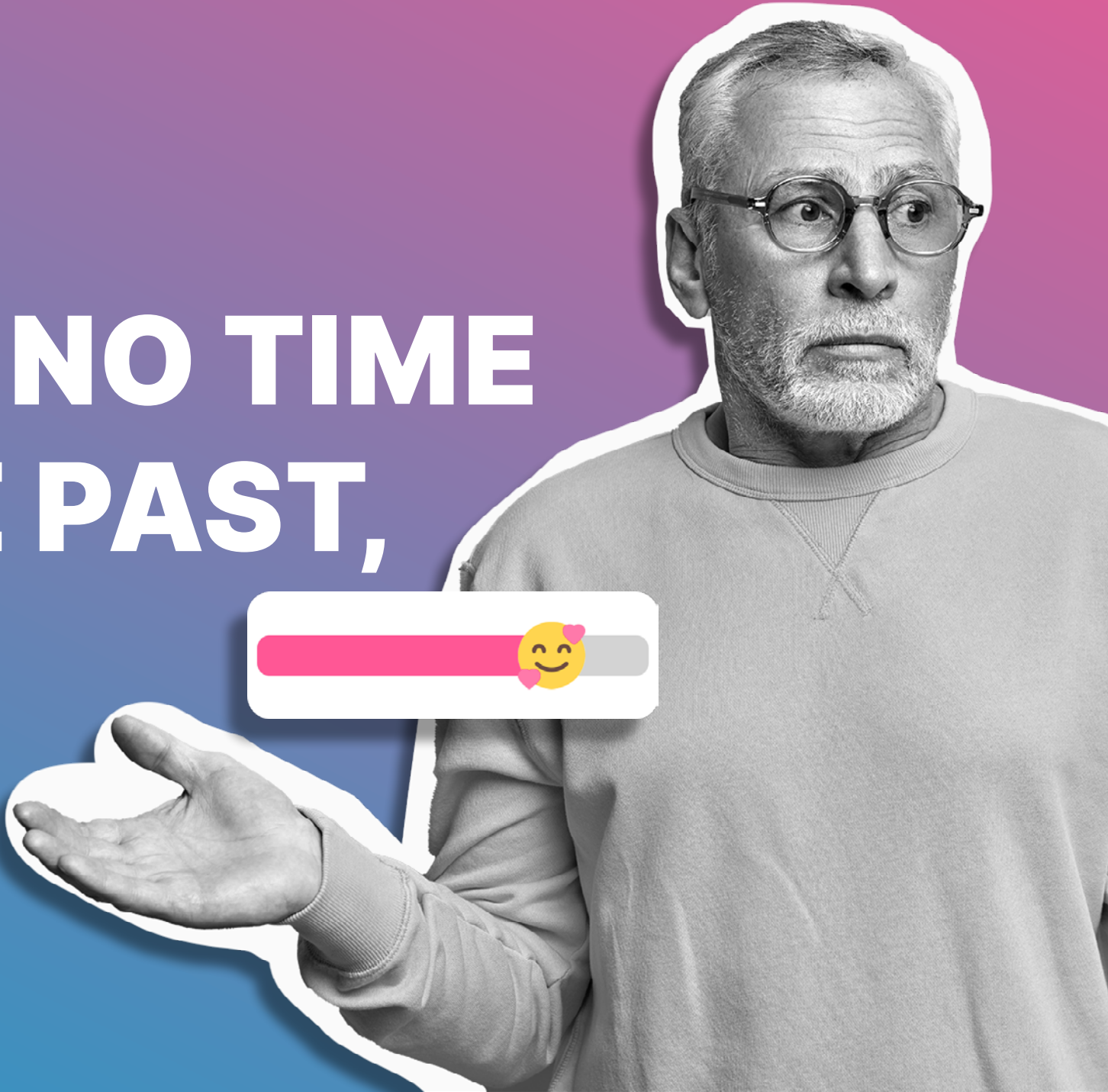
Carousel
10.15%

Image
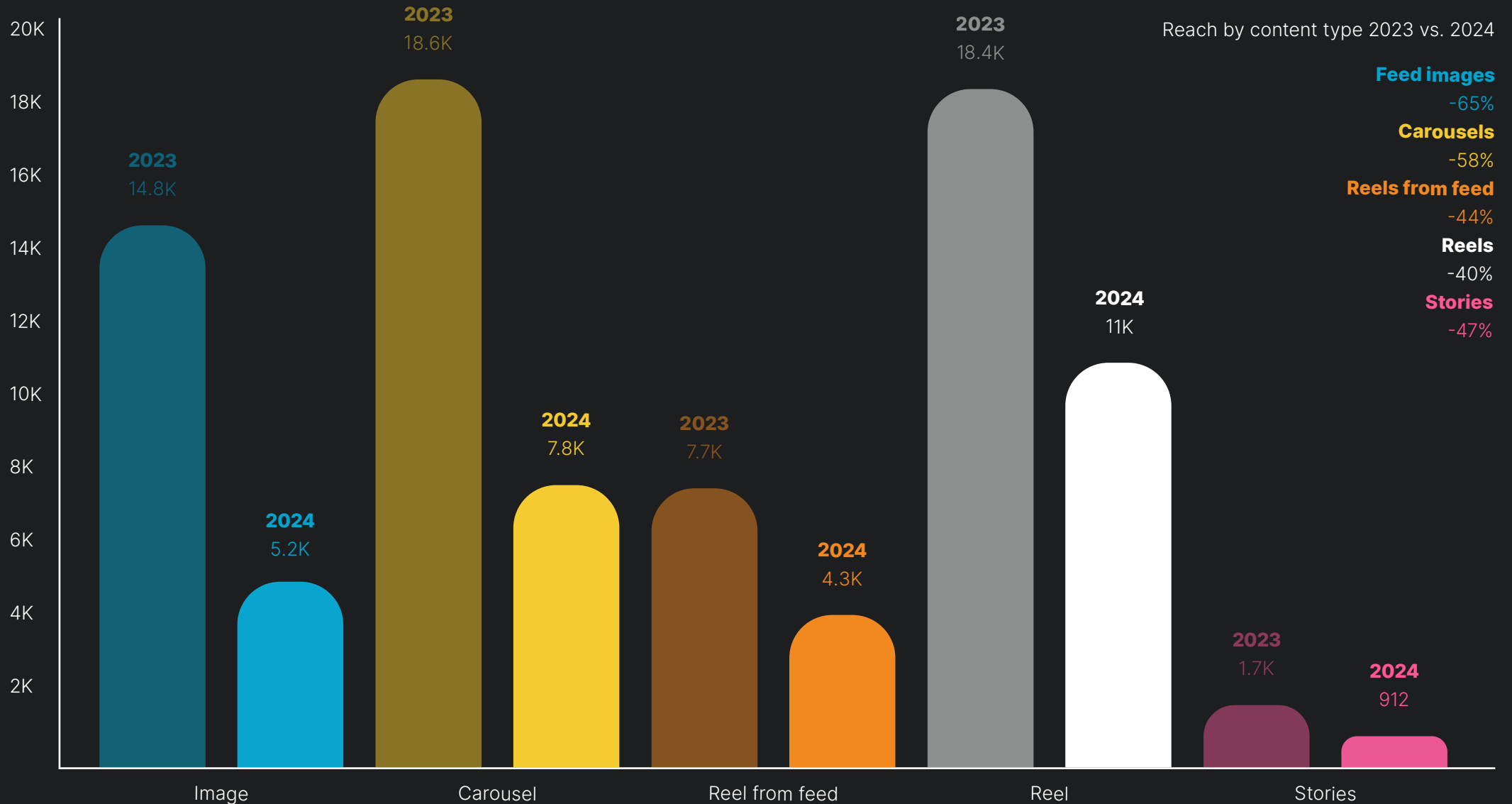**7.36%**

Reels from feed
6.92%

Reels
6.27%

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2023 vs. 2024 data comparison

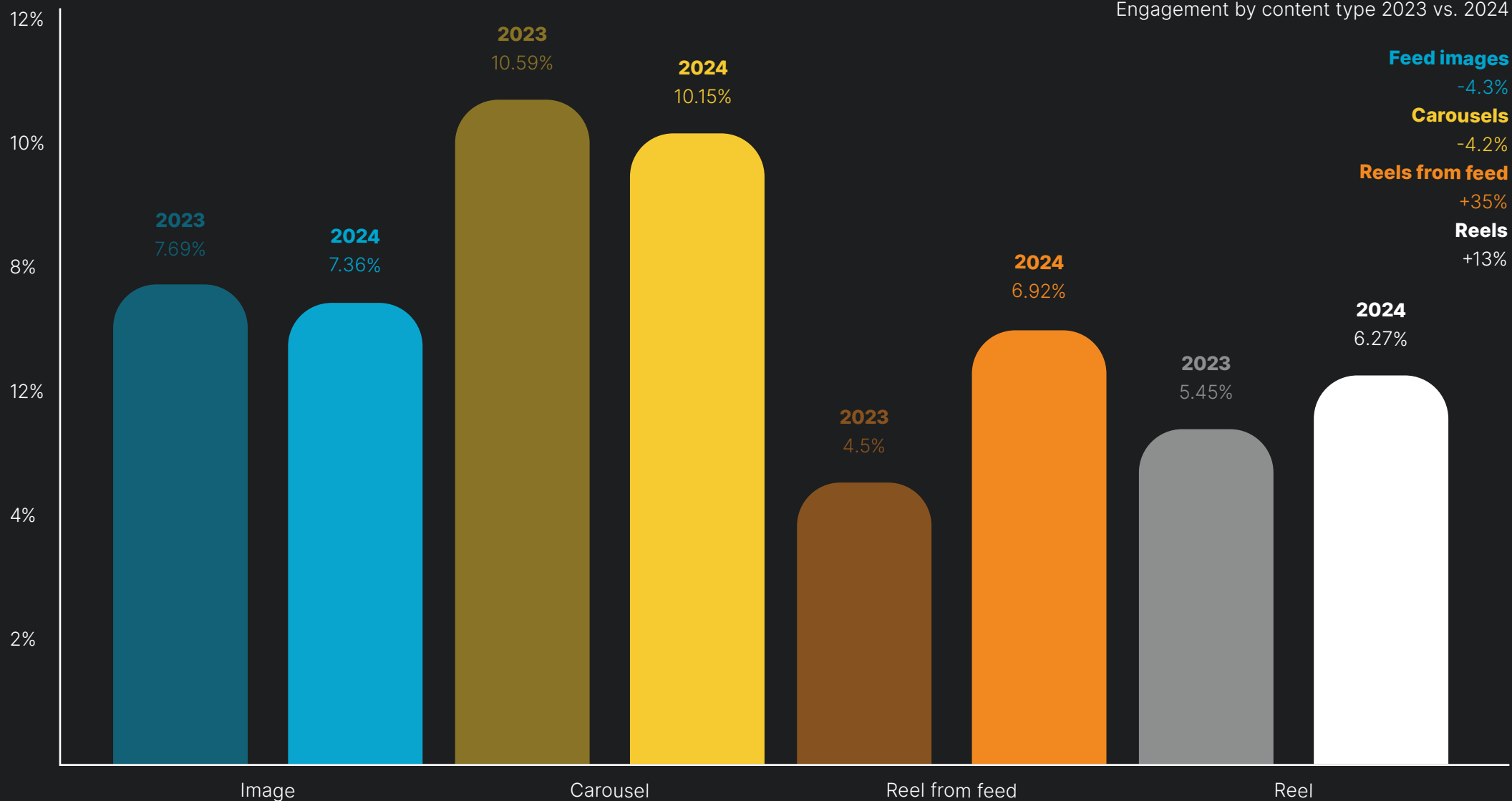# THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PAST, RIGHT?

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REACH PLUMMETS

This is corroborated in Stories, feed posts, and Reels. Even though Reels are the star of reach, they have still experienced a major decrease from 2023. This could be due to the competitive nature of the format, and that more and more brands are utilizing this content type for their strategy.

Reach by content type 2023 vs. 2024

Feed images
-65%

Carousels
-58%

Reels from feed
-44%

Reels
-40%

Stories
-47%

Image — 2023: 14.8K, 2024: 5.2K
Carousel — 2023: 18.6K, 2024: 7.8K
Reel from feed — 2023: 7.7K, 2024: 4.3K
Reel — 2023: 18.4K, 2024: 11K
Stories — 2023: 1.7K, 2024: 912

ENGAGEMENT HOLDS FIRM

Images and carousels experienced a less than 5% decrease in engagement, **while both reel types receive higher engagement.**

Engagement by content type 2023 vs. 2024

Feed images
-4.3%

Carousels
-4.2%

Reels from feed
+35%

Reels
+13%

2023
10.59%

2024
10.15%

2023
7.69%

2024
7.36%

2024
6.92%

2024
6.27%

2023
4.5%

2023
5.45%

12%

10%

8%

12%

4%

2%

Image   Carousel   Reel from feed   Reel

metricool   17

Reels posted on the main feed **increased engagement** by

+34.97%

compared to the previous study. Despite the growth in engagement, Reels do not reach the same level of engagement as **images, 7.36%, and carousels, 10.15%.**
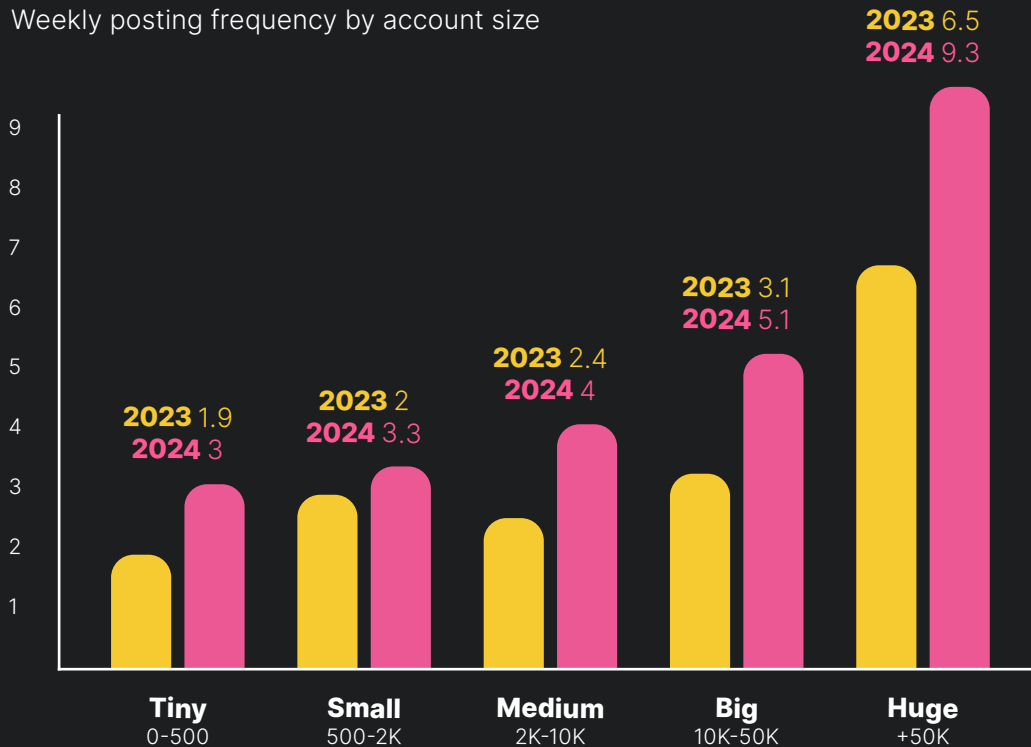
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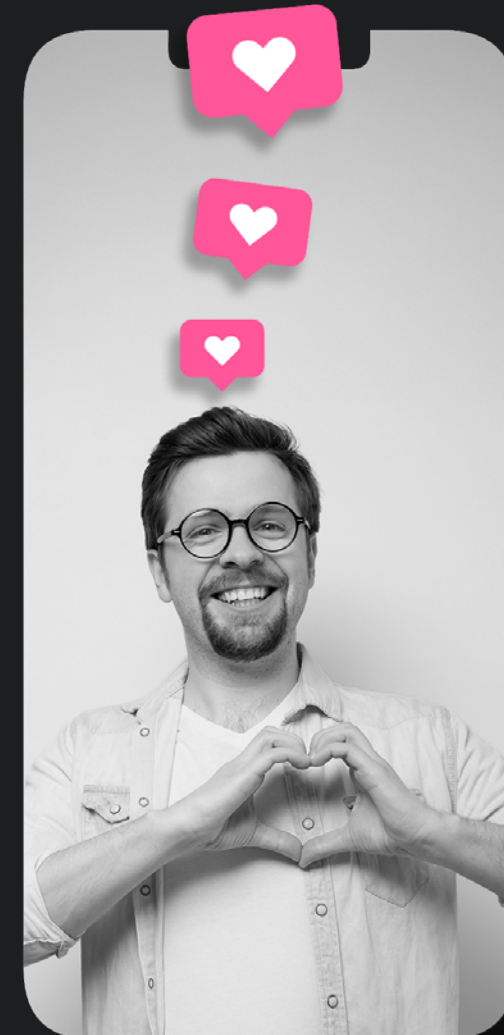
Instagram posts analysis

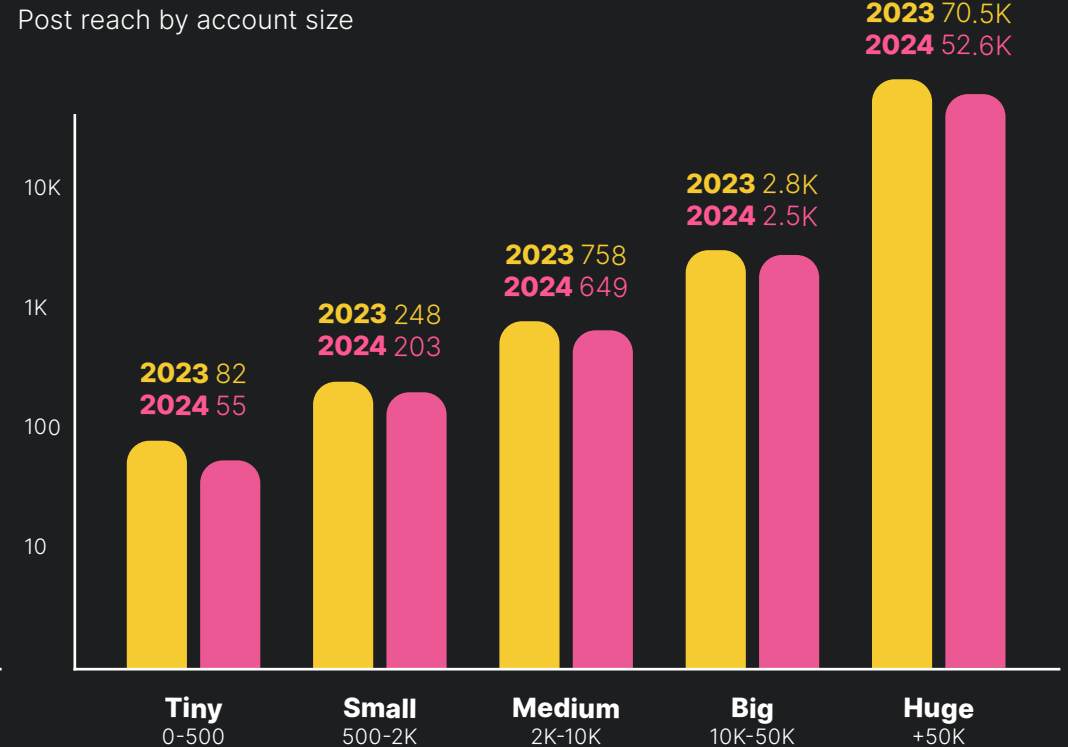# INSTAGRAM CLASSICS NEVER DIE: **ARE FEED POSTS STILL RELEVANT?**

IF I PUBLISH MORE, WILL I ACHIEVE HIGHER REACH?

This isn't necessarily the truth. According to the data, the weekly posting frequency of feed posts has increased across all account types, while reach has decreased.

Weekly posting frequency by account size

	2023	2024
Tiny	1.9	3
Small	2	3.3
Medium	2.4	4
Big	3.1	5.1
Huge	6.5	9.3

Post reach by account size

	2023	2024
Tiny	82	55
Small	248	203
Medium	758	649
Big	2.8K	2.5K
Huge	70.5K	52.6K

	Tiny 0-500	Small 500-2K	Medium 2K-10K	Big 10K-50K	Huge +50K

Tiny and Small accounts increase weekly posting frequency from 2 posts on average to 3 and 4 per week respectively. However, the reach decreased by 32.34% and 17.98%. As you can see, not everything works on Instagram. Quantity does not equal greater reach. Before posting for the sake of posting, analyze the data, understand what interests your audience, and create highly-valuable content.

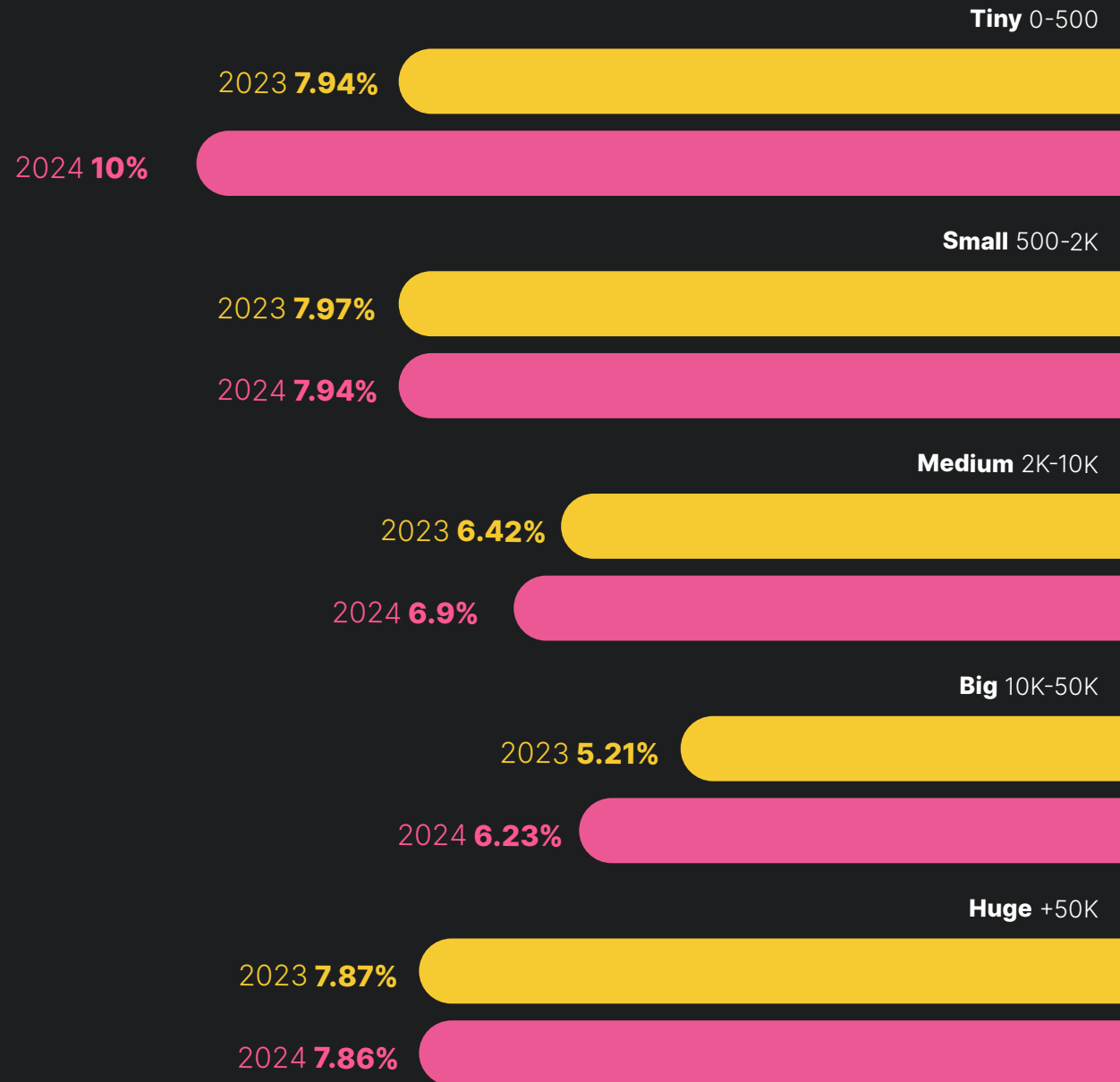metricool

ENGAGEMENT REMAINS INTACT

Engagement "reverses" the decline in reach, yet reveals key applications. While reach to new users reduces, **community loyalty is prevalent.**

Engagement variation 2023 vs. 2024

- Tiny Accounts: +20.76%
- Small Accounts: -0.38%
- Medium Accounts: +6.96%
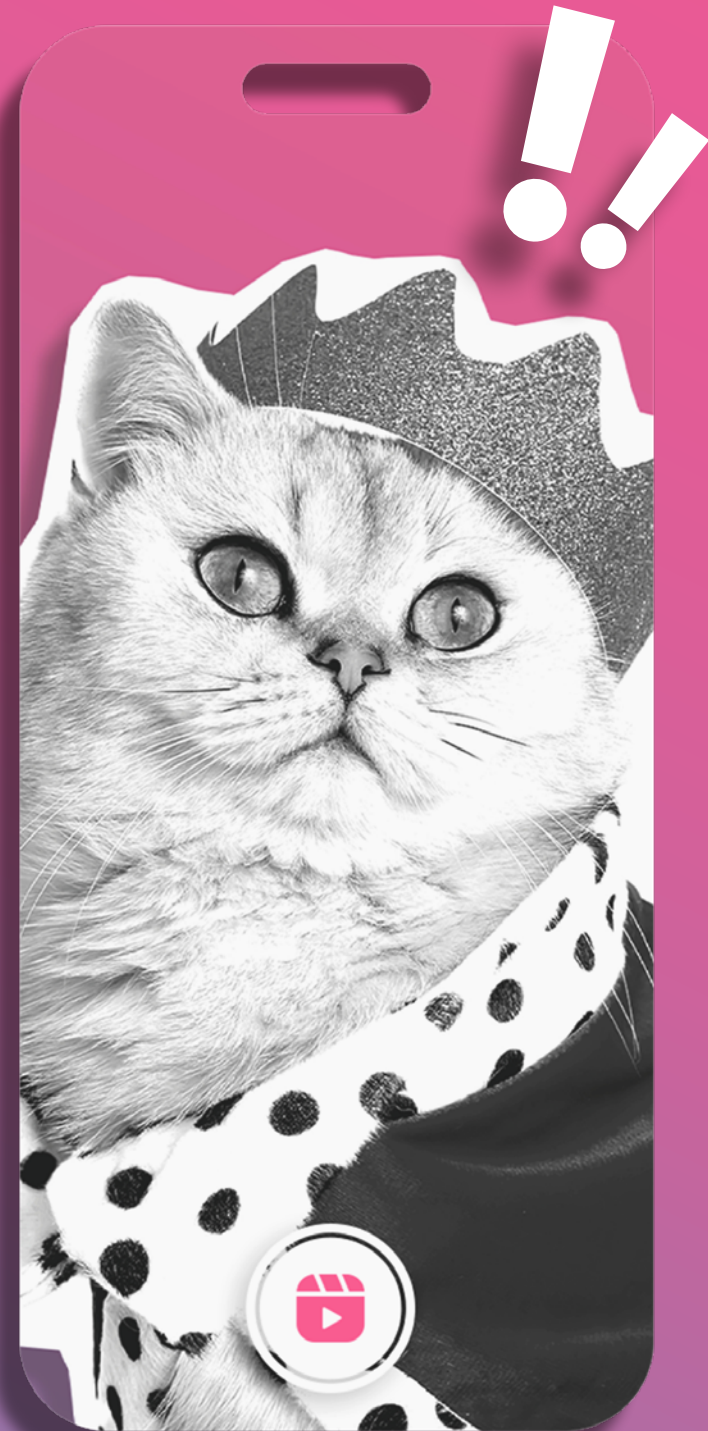- Big Accounts: +16.37%
- Huge Accounts: -0.13%

All account sizes increased engagement compared to the previous study, except for Small and Huge accounts, which dropped by less than 1%.

Despite a decline in reach, brands create more engaging communities, especially those with smaller audiences.

Instagram posts analysis

Tiny 0-500

2023 **7.94%**

2024 **10%**

Small 500-2K

2023 **7.97%**

2024 **7.94%**

Medium 2K-10K

2023 **6.42%**

2024 **6.9%**

Big 10K-50K

2023 **5.21%**

2024 **6.23%**

Huge +50K

2023 **7.87%**

2024 **7.86%**

Engagement rate for posts by account size

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Instagram reels analysis

REEL

THE ~~REAL~~

WINNER OF

INSTAGRAM

IF YOU WANT TO REACH NEW ACCOUNTS, REELS ARE A MUST

Reels retain the crown as **king of reach**. All account sizes increased weekly post frequencies by more than 40% compared to the previous year.

It's with this metric that we notice the latest algorithm updates. Who publishes **does not matter as much as what is posted**. Smaller accounts are rewarded the most, with reach increasing by 32.26%. On the other hand, large accounts need to rethink how to reach new users, as reach declined by 6.62%.

Reach variation 2023 vs 2024

- Tiny Accounts: +7.3%
- **Small Accounts: +32.62%**
- Medium Accounts: +8.7%
- Big Accounts: +17.32%
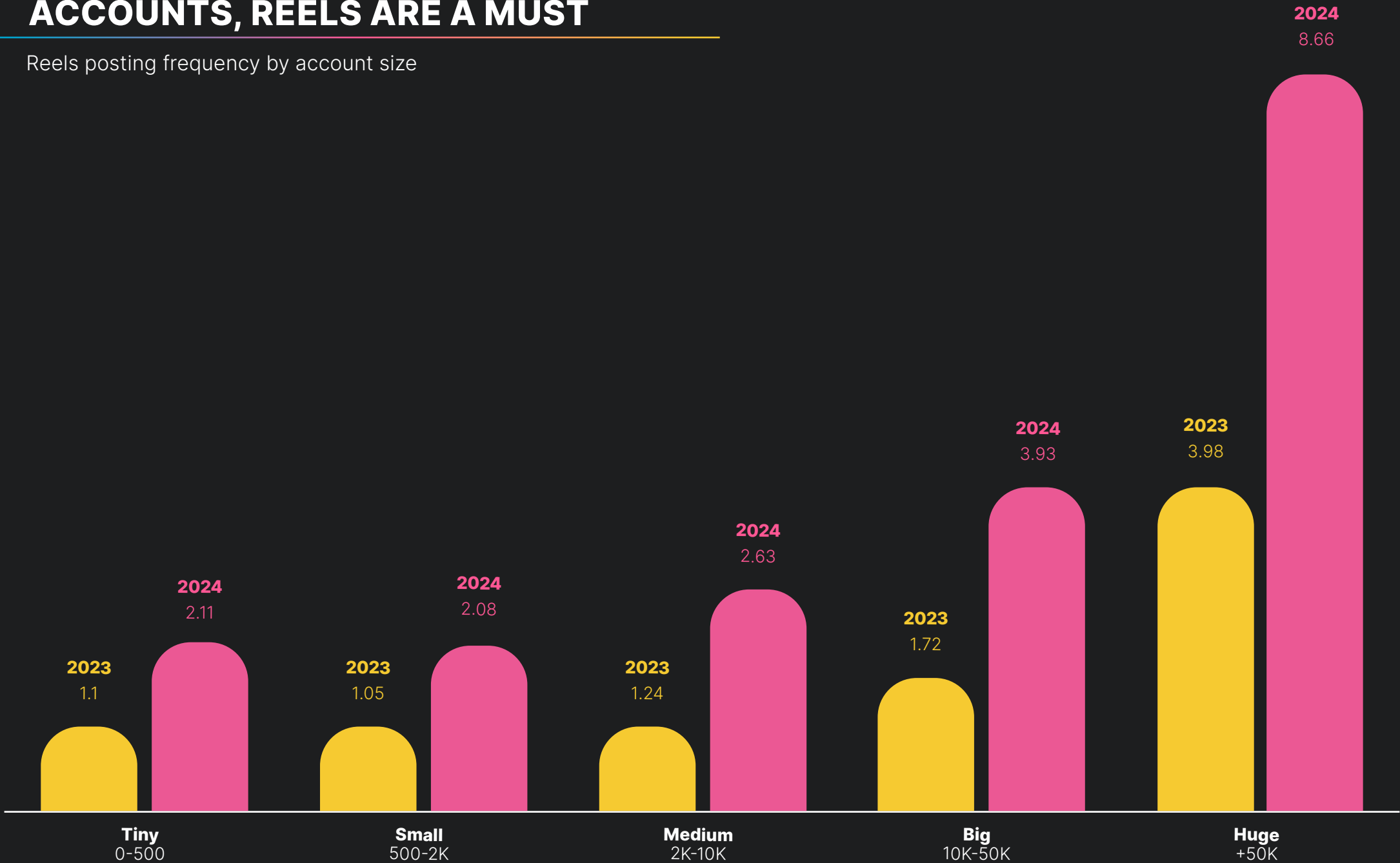- Huge Accounts: -6.62%

Tiny 0-500

2023 **470**

2024 **507**

Small 500-2K

2023 **712**

2024 **1,057**

Medium 2K-10K

2023 **2,304**

2024 **2,524**

Big 10K-50K

2023 **6,270**

2024 **7,583**

Huge +50K

2023 **58,435**

2024 **54,569**
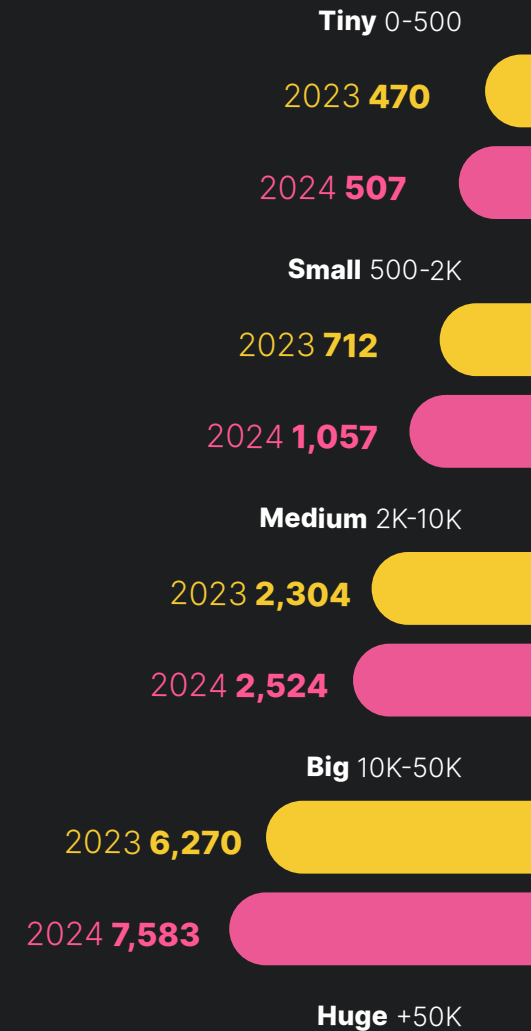
Reels reach by account size

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IF YOU WANT TO REACH NEW ACCOUNTS, REELS ARE A MUST

Reels posting frequency by account size

Instagram reels analysis

Huge +50K
2024 — 8.66
2023 — 3.98

Big 10K-50K
2024 — 3.93
2023 — 1.72

Medium 2K-10K
2024 — 2.63
2023 — 1.24

Small 500-2K
2024 — 2.08
2023 — 1.05

Tiny 0-500
2024 — 2.11
2023 — 1.1

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REELS ENGAGEMENT CLIMBS

Reel engagement increased by 13.08% from the previous year regardless of account size. Furthermore, engagement soars across the board except for Small accounts.

+13.08%
increase in reel engagement

Tiny accounts strengthen audience engagement by 10.76%

Small accounts decrease engagement by 9.37%

Tiny 0-500
2023 **5.39%**
2024 **6.04%**

Small 500-2K
2023 **6.62%**
2024 **6%**

Medium 2K-10K
2023 **5.93%**
2024 **6.06%**

Big 10K-50K
2023 **5.17%**
2024 **6.04%**

Huge +50K
2023 **5.46%**
2024 **6.33%**
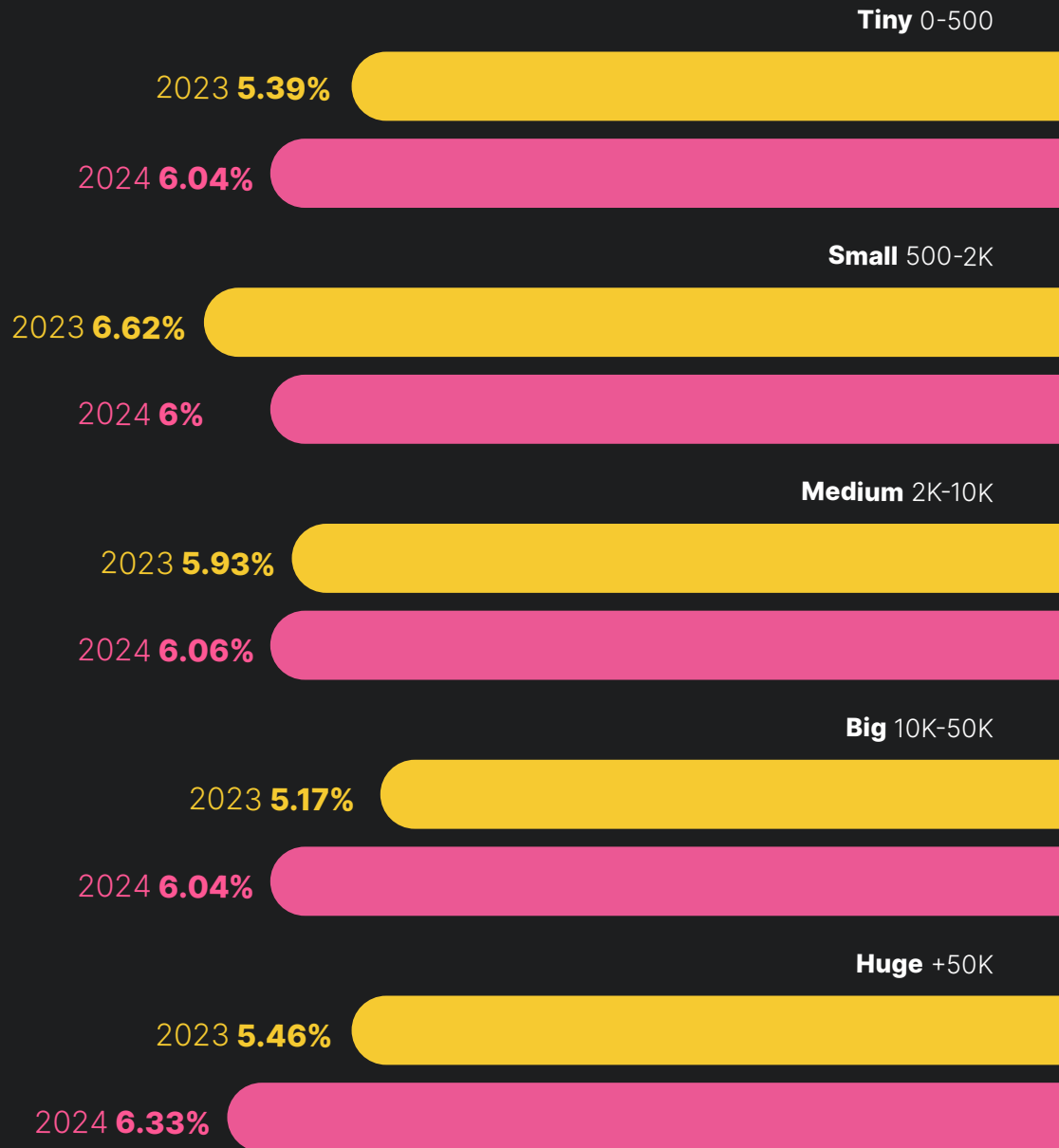
Reels engagement rate by account size

Instagram story analyisis

THERE ARE STILL "STORIES" TO TELL ON INSTAGRAM

REACH IN STORIES HAS TAKEN A TURN

Reach in the Story format is not taking off, in fact, it is **progressively decreasing** compared to the previous year. However, the weekly posting frequency of Stories is up more than 25% across all account sizes. Tiny accounts have it clear: **Stories are an ideal format for creating content**. An increase in weekly posting frequency of 42.51% over the previous year. And the rest are not far behind. Except for Huge accounts, the others have increased their weekly posting frequency by at least 40%.

Tiny 0-500
2023 **3.3**
2024 **5.74**
2023 **49**
2024 **45**

Small 500-2K
2023 **6.45**
2024 **11.11**
2023 **130**
2024 **113**

Medium 2K-10K
2023 **11.33**
2024 **19.29**
2023 **277**
2024 **233**

Big 10K-50K
2023 **18.11**
2024 **30.4**
2023 **756**
2024 **593**

Huge +50K
2023 **29.19**
2024 **46.09**
2023 **6,677**
2024 **4,988**
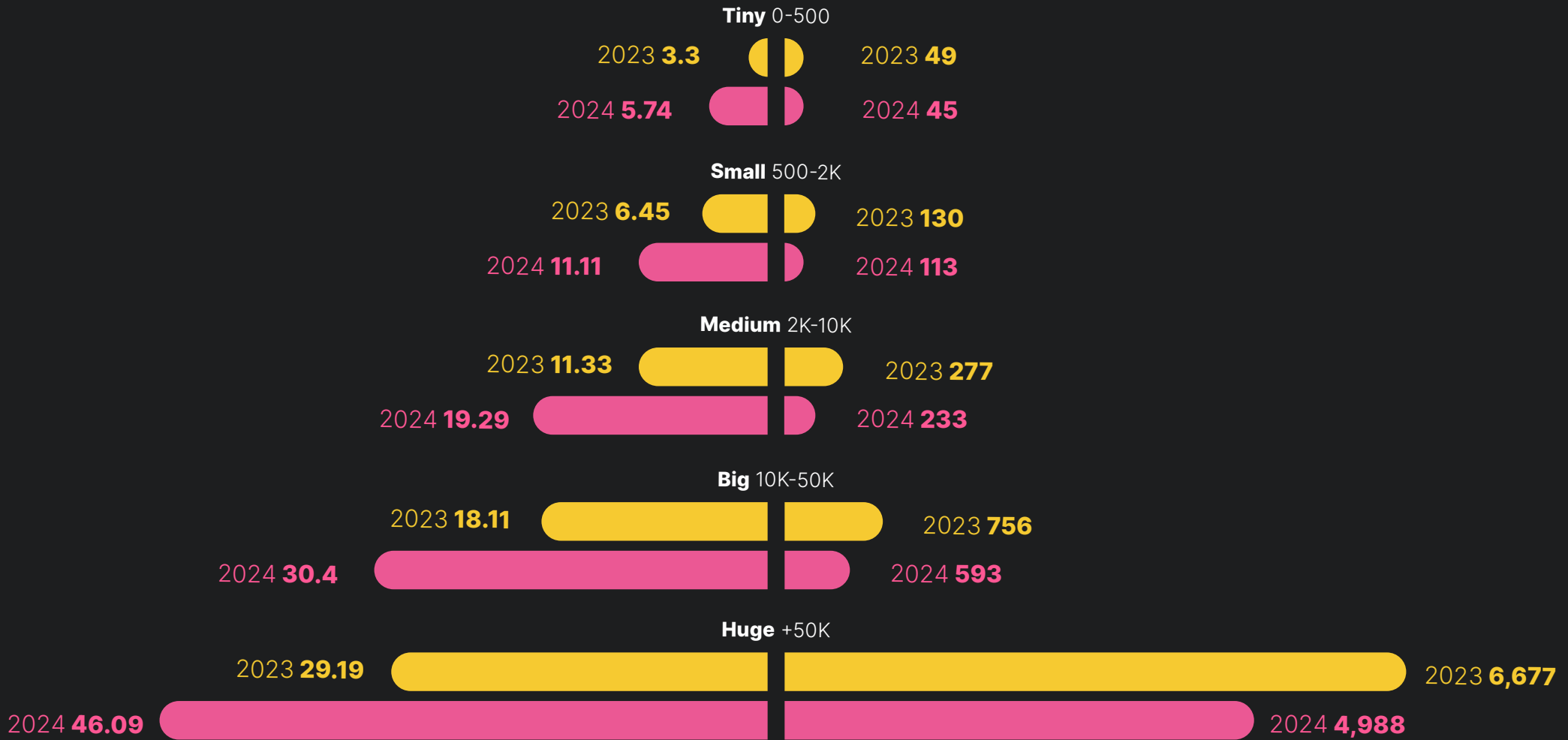
Stories weekly posting frequency by account size   Stories reach by account size

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Best time and day to post

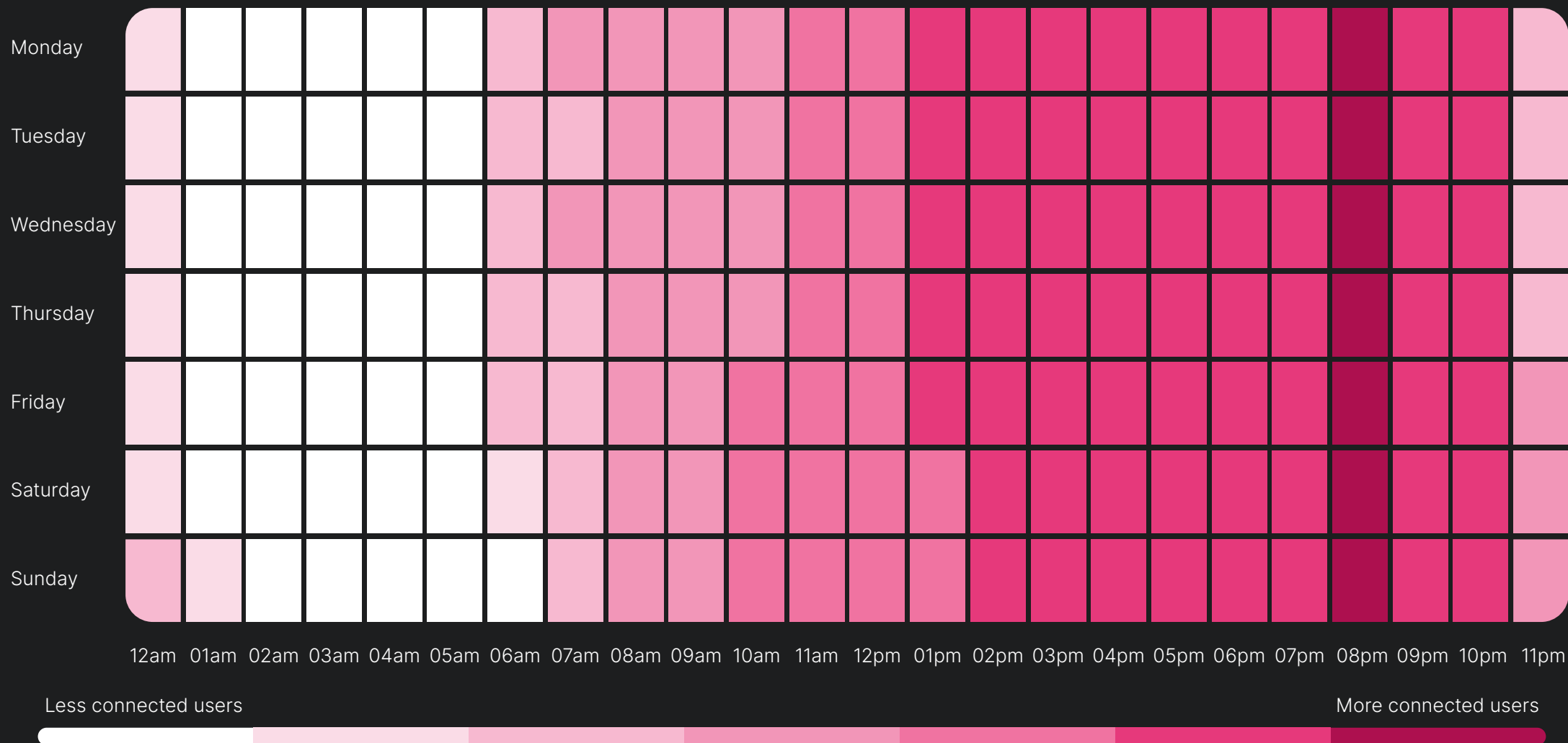# EVERYTHING HAS ITS MAGIC HOUR. BUT, **WHAT IS INSTAGRAM'S?**

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME TO POST?

The time with the highest average number of connected users **is 8 pm**, globally. We grouped time zones to extract global data, so this applies regardless of time zone.

*We analyzed the best time based on the data provided by the Meta API.

Less connected users   More connected users

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The best time to publish continues to be 8 pm, a figure that has not changed from the previous study. The podium is completed by **7 pm and 9 pm: the ideal times to publish your content.**

The best days are **Wednesday and Friday**, unlike the previous study, which were Monday and Thursday.

THURSDAY

SUNDAY

SATURDAY

TUESDAY

FRIDAY

WEDNESDAY

MONDAY

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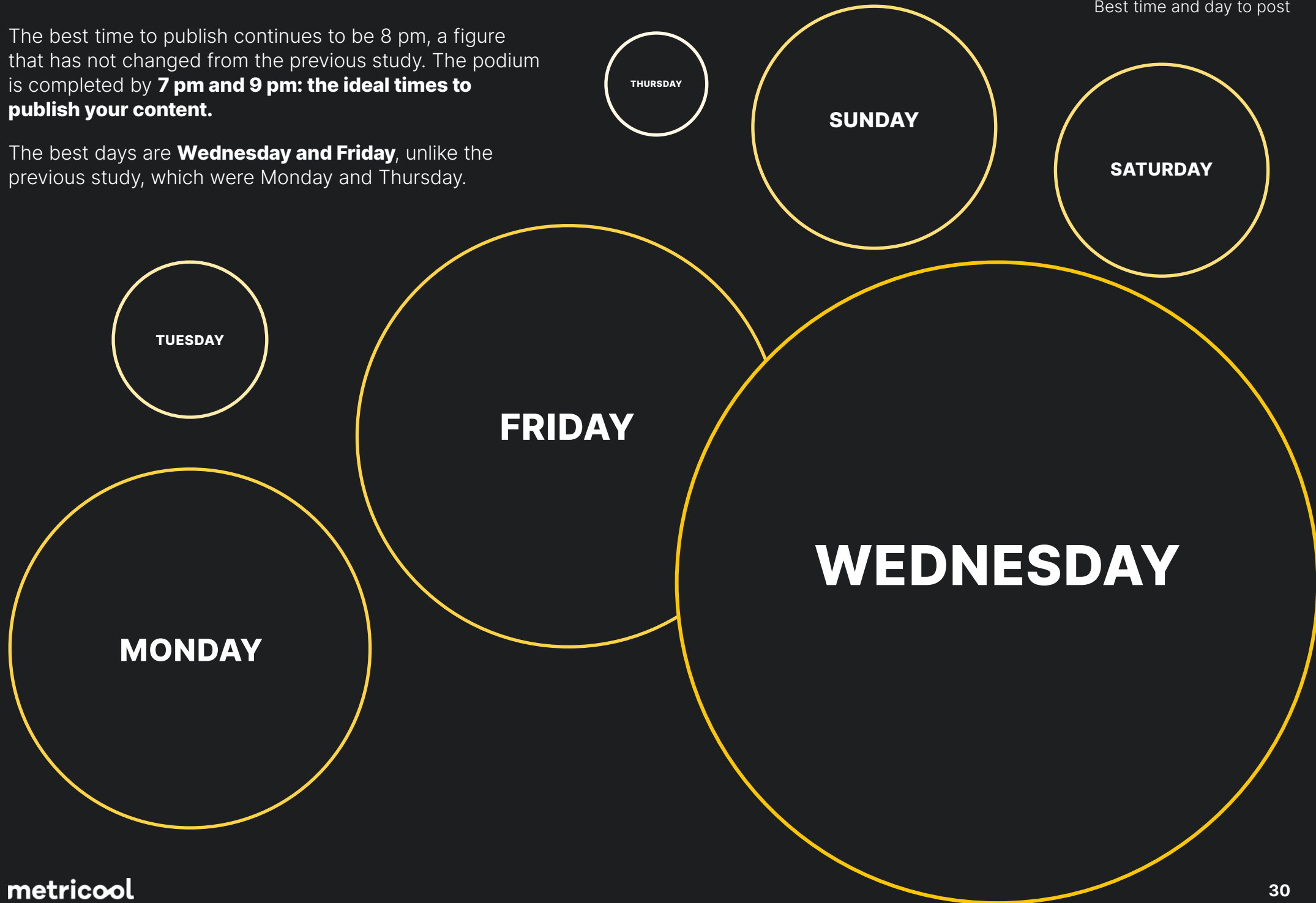
BEST PRACTICES

CHOOSE THE RIGHT FEED FOR YOUR REEL

The reach data confirms the strength of Reels: publishing it in both feeds increases the chances of generating good engagement. While the video appears in the main feed for all users to watch, if the content is well-crafted, Instagram's "Explore" page will pick this up.

We recommend publishing Reels to both feeds, (main feed and Reels feed) to maximize visibility. Choose where to post your Reels, on both Instagram and Metricool.
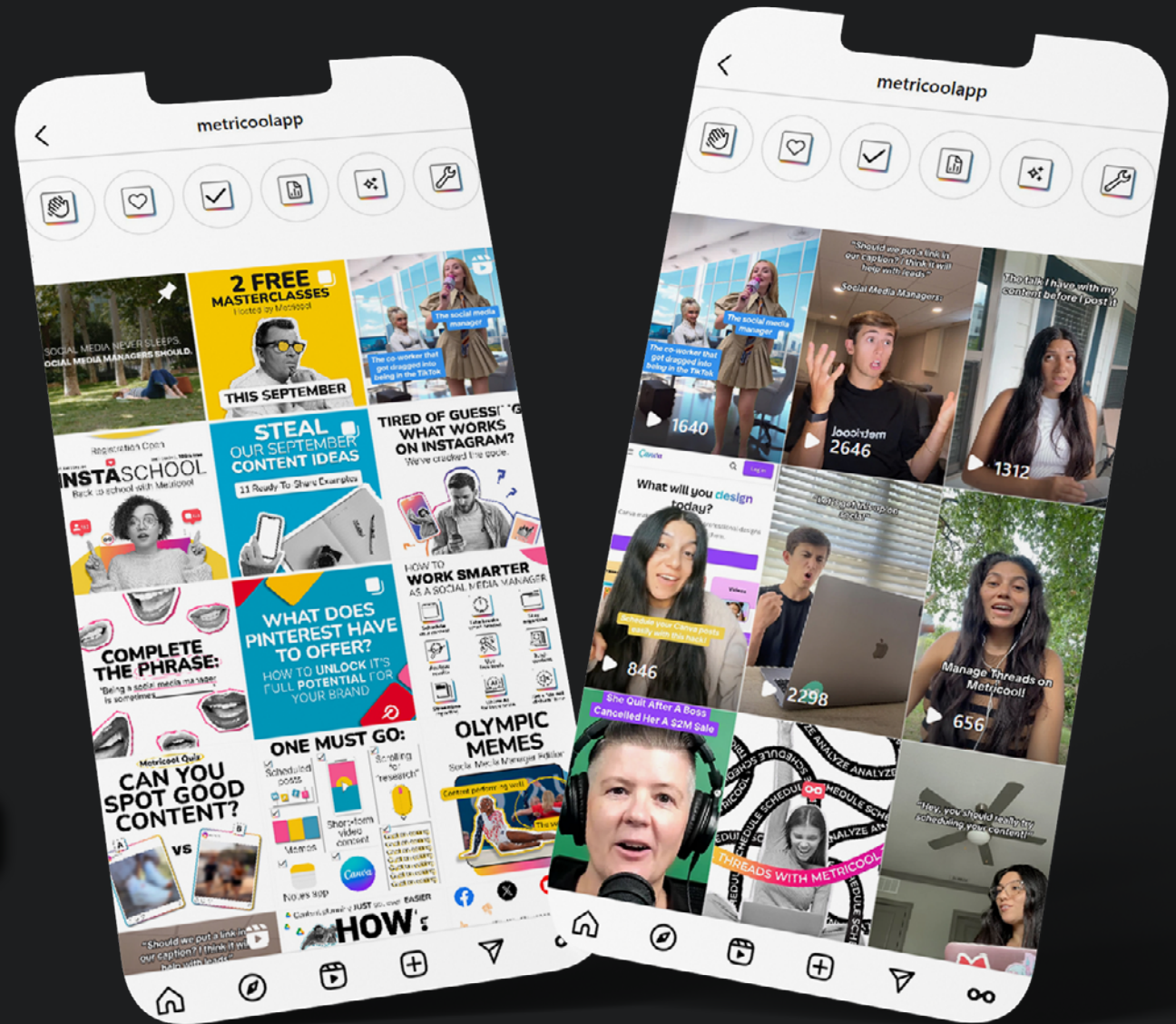
Show Reel on feed

Main grid and Reels grid

But wait there's more...

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CREATE STANDOUT THUMBNAILS FOR YOUR REELS

If you are going to post a reel to your main feed, remember to add a cover page: keep in mind that if someone comes to your account you are going to need to use your best techniques to get them to watch the content.

How to choose a good cover for your Reel?

- Think of a **good hook** to attract the user to click on your Reel: it should be a headline that offers a concise summary of what will be seen in the content.

- Choose a **thumbnail** that clearly conveys the subject of the video, users hate to be fooled.

- **Consider the different sizes** for the Reels feed and for the main feed. A challenge for you or your design team.

- **Remember your branding**, the Reel is a part of your feed, it is not a separate entity.

Square format for the main feed in line with branding and that does not clash with the rest of the posts

Title that shows a quick summary of the video's topic and provides value to the user

Clear **thumbnail** that carries the headline to identify what the user will watch when clicking on the video

Adapted format for the Reels feed, **vertically**, so that it does not cut any design, elements, or text.

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UNDERSTAND INSTAGRAM'S ALGORITHM

Adam Mosseri, CEO of Instagram, is transparent about the changes and inner workings of the algorithm and often openly advises brands and content creators:

- **Mosseri confirms that Instagram's objective** is to prioritize short videos and that there are no plans to extend the length to 10 or 20 minute videos.

- He assures one of the **key metrics is the number of shares.**

- Rule out that the dreaded 'shadowban' exists. **There are several reasons why your content doesn't have the reach you expect.**

- He advises **focusing more on the story you want to tell** and the brand you want to build rather than on the production of the video.

Check out the below resource to help you understand the algorithm in depth:

How the Instagram Algorithm Works in 2024

Now, we do a number of different

EDIT YOUR REELS AND STAND OUT FROM THE REST

This may sound contradictory to what we have said above, but this is what Adam Mosseri says about the production of Reels.

It's not about leaving aside the editing and quality of the video and focusing only on the story, but rather that the video is the medium and the story is the background to connect with your target user.

The story is in your hands and your creativity, but the editing belongs to the tools. Here is a video to learn how to edit with CapCut.

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CREATE ENGAGING STORIES

The Instagram Stories algorithm works according to three signals.

- based on viewing history

- based on how you interact

- the user's link to the account.

Here are some tips that will help you with your audience and align with the algorithm:

Changing scenery is a useful technique to retain audience's attention. Vary the angle, because it is crucial for users to subconsciously notice that they are seeing something different.

Action: Split up telling a story in a series by trying out different shots that speed up what you are saying and encourage the user to stay until the end.

Jay Shetty, life coach, author, speaker, and podcaster used polls to guide viewers through a series of questions, with a link for inspiring life coaches to sign up for his training course. This simple strategy encourages users to not only ask themselves if these goals pertain to them, but explore his course.

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Add an interaction sticker: encourage the user to participate in your content. If they participate, this will tell Instagram that the content is interesting to them and the more they participate the more chances you have of your brand appearing at the front of the story timeline.

Action: Use different stickers like polls, reactions or questions. Instagram is constantly adding new stickers and you should take advantage of them while adding value with your content.

Here are some examples of how brands use different stickers:

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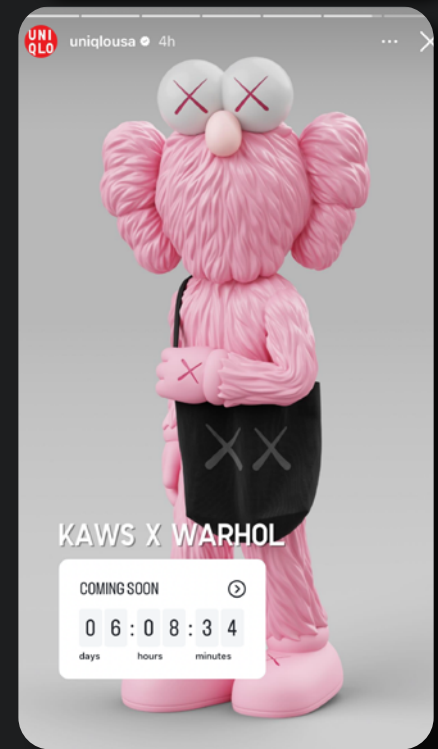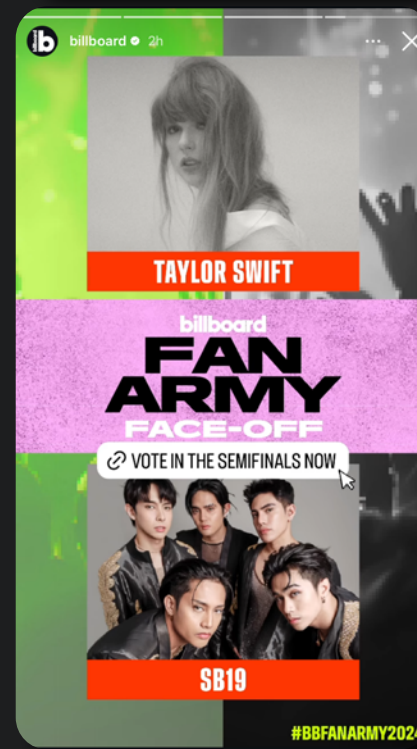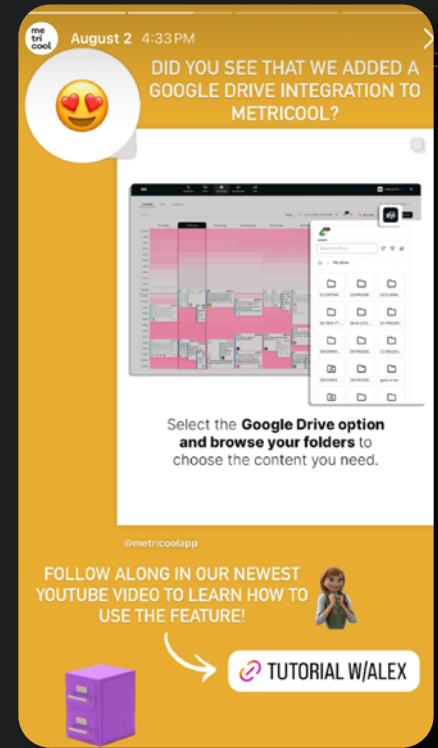
Big brands often use stories to showcase a product in a visually appealing and dynamic way. They use interaction stickers and storytelling to capture the audience's attention and, in the end, direct users to the product on their website.

Action: Tell a story and create intrigue to retain the audience (with interaction stickers), and then redirect them to a product or a specific landing page in order to achieve a conversion (participate in a contest, purchase a product, fill out a form, etc.).

Uniqlo takes advantage of "back to school season" to promote some of their basic clothing staples.
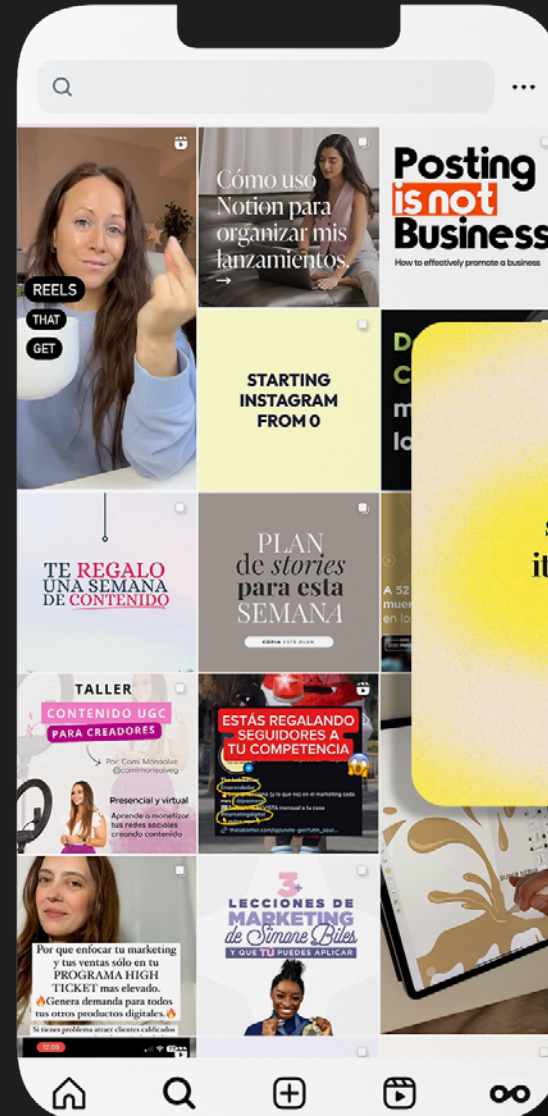
THE CAROUSEL RESURFACES ON INSTAGRAM: ENGAGE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

How to get the most out of carousels?

Notice the cover

This part of the carousel is important because it is the first thing they see in the feed. But it is also relevant because it is the only image people will see in the 'Explore' tab.

Keep in mind that you must draw attention in a very small space. Make sure the text is large or stands out. Some brands even opt for centering everything in the text.

The second image is pure strategy

The second image of a carousel is where you have to bring out your most strategic side. Why? Instagram displays this second image a few hours later: that is, it gives a second life for people to see your carousel.

You have another shot to win the match against your competitor and keep the user who is looking for the information. If this second image doesn't attract attention, you've lost!

Take a look at these examples:

After marathoner Sifan Hassan won her first Olympic gold medal, **Nike** continued its "Winning Isn't for Everyone" campaign, highlighting Hassan's emotional finish.

Playing on the "demure" discourse after a viral TikTok, **The Washington Post** weaves its brand into pop culture, commenting on what is and isn't "demure".

Canva's play on color palettes shows the product in action, encouraging users to create unique mood boards.
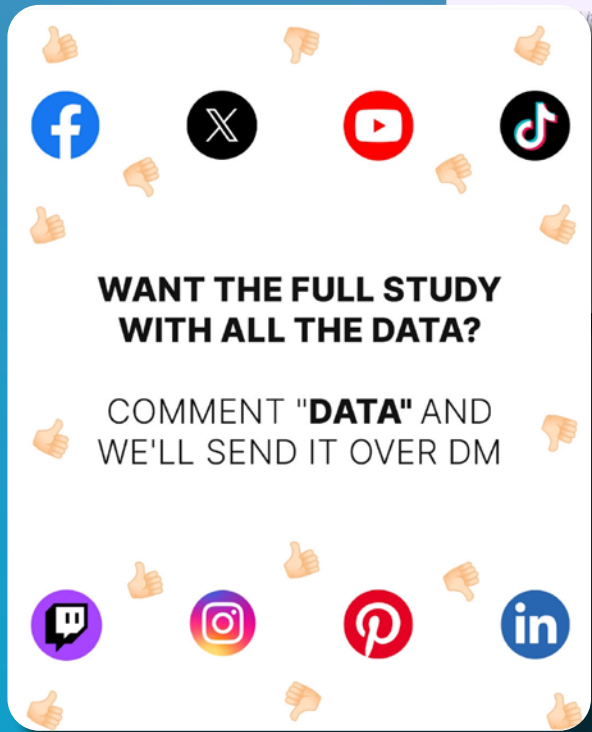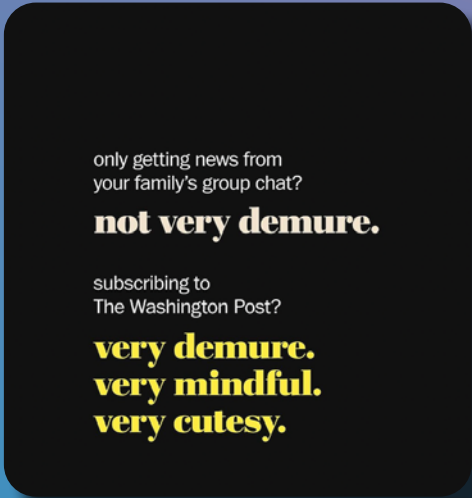

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A good ending to a great story

It's key that you end with an interesting call to action on the topic you are addressing in the content: action verbs to encourage them to share, like or comment a keyword and in return you offer them a gift or resource.

Here are three examples:

- A direct suggestion to subscribe.

- A call to action to comment with a keyword.

- A open question to participate in the comments.

only getting news from
your family's group chat?

not very demure.

subscribing to
The Washington Post?

very demure.
very mindful.
very cutesy.

Do you use
social media
for search?

...t in the comments! Feel free to ask any and all of your social media SEO questions!

girl power GPM
marketing

**WANT THE FULL STUDY
WITH ALL THE DATA?**

COMMENT "**DATA**" AND
WE'LL SEND IT OVER DM

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MAINTAIN A POSTING FREQUENCY: QUALITY IS BETTER THAN QUANTITY

Posting more in the feed does not automatically mean having greater reach. No matter how much you increase your weekly posting frequency, it is important to focus more on quality than quantity.

Make sure to prioritize a posting frequency that allows you to maintain that quality and not just publish posts for the sake of publishing.

How do you know if you are posting quality content?

- **Analyze the data of your posts before publishing.** Which have performed better to guide you in your strategy?

- **Find out what your audience is interested in, it's all in the data:** any interaction gives you clues about what they like.

- **Create valuable content:** quality is in the value you bring to your community. Ask yourself if your content is relevant, original and if it encourages interaction.
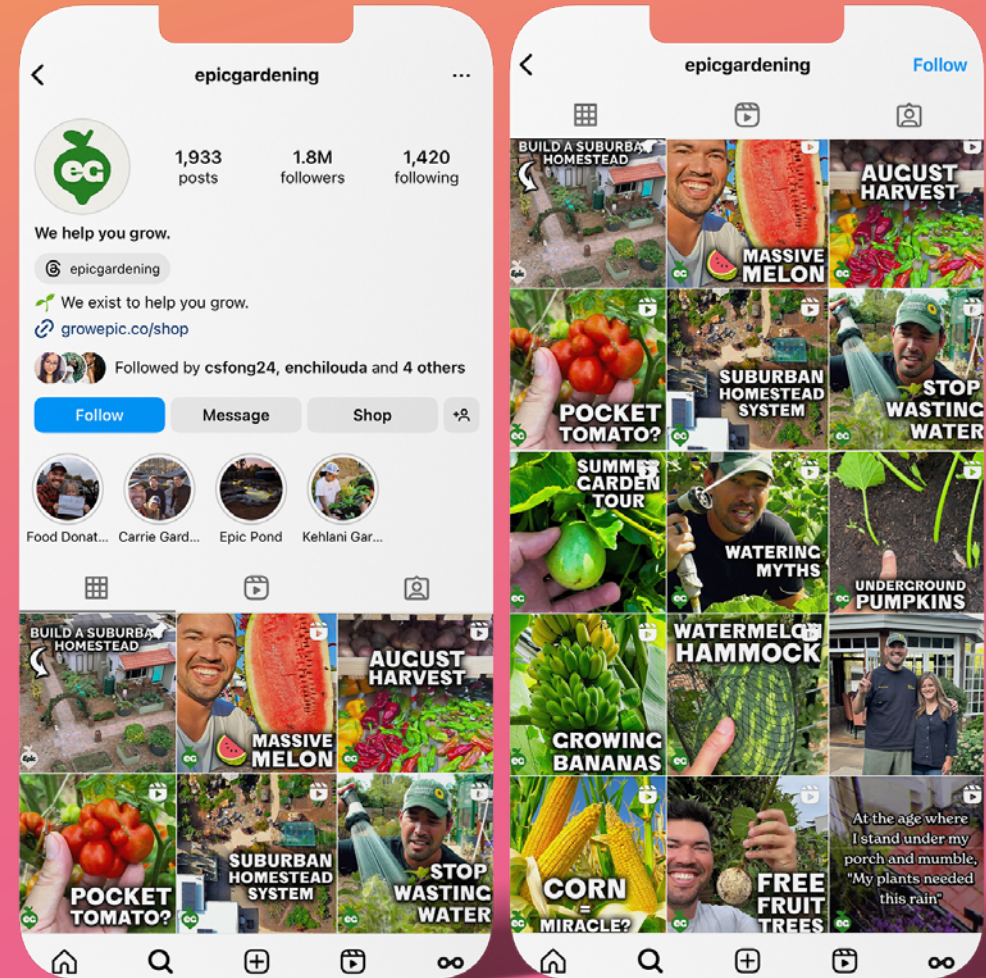
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Now it's your turn to analyze the performance of your Instagram account with Metricool and take action.

Create your FREE account

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