

# SOCIAL TRENDS 2022



## TREND 1 The Brand Strategy Trend

### Find Communities and Creators That Can Help Your Business Thrive

Digital communities are more prevalent than ever, especially on social media. Facebook groups, for example, have more than a billion regular active users<sup>1</sup>, and TikTok is home to countless niche communities like #CottageCore and #PlantTikTok that are generating billions of views.

Like-minded individuals are coming together online, bonding over shared interests (no matter how obscure), having meaningful conversations, and influencing each other. This is what makes these communities so impactful—and by finding existing communities that your brand naturally fits into, you can join the conversation to build trust and earn support.

Better yet, by partnering with creators in those communities and leveraging their influence, you can get closer to and better engage with your audience where they feel most inspired and excited online.

In our [Social Trends 2022 report](#), we encourage you to stop thinking about your followers as your community—because real community is so much more. Here, we'll show you how to use social listening to identify communities that can help enhance your brand.

Our report also talks about supporting content creators who keep those communities afloat. But you'll have to find them first, and trust them to share content about your brand. You'll be shocked at how easy it can be.

<sup>1</sup> Social Media Today. Facebook Adds New Sponsored Post Options for Groups. 2020.

## Listen and you shall find

Monitoring social media for mentions of your brand or product is a great way to reveal insights you can use to improve the customer experience, but take it one step further by listening for keywords and hashtags related to your industry as a whole.

This can help you discover relevant online communities with members that could become your customers and advocates—as long as you use what you learn to make the right moves. There's a lot to know about [social listening and how to take action](#) in response to the data you've gathered, but you need to start somewhere. Hootsuite Streams allows you to monitor conversations, mentions, keywords, and hashtags to identify communities that could unlock new opportunities for your business.



Here's how to get set up for social listening with Streams:

- 1.** In Streams, select a New Board option to add to your dashboard. We recommend starting with **My posts and mentions**, which will allow you to see how people are engaging directly with your brand on social media. Then, add additional streams as needed. The **My industry** stream can also help you dig up some great insights.
- 2.** To monitor things like hashtags and keywords, set up searches with Search Streams. You can search different networks in different ways. Select your search terms and once your stream is live, you can modify it at any time.
- 3.** It's helpful to organize your streams using **Tabs**. Use multiple tabs to group streams by social network, campaign, engagement, or search type—just click the plus sign and rename it to create a new Tab.  
**Pro tip:** Organize your streams and tabs based on your social media goals.

**Bonus:** Check out [this overview](#) to become a Streams expert.

# Mind those sliding into your DMs

Found the communities you've been searching for? Next, scope out the driving forces behind those thriving communities—the content creators.

Perhaps your exceptional social media stalking skills have come in handy and you've found some creators simply by scouring the new communities you've discovered. Good on ya! But there are other ways to spot creators that can help you connect with your audience.

One of the easiest? Keeping tabs on your [Hootsuite Inbox](#). This feature brings social conversations, like DMs and mentions, together in one place and could be a goldmine for finding advocates or influencers.

You might even come across digital creators who are essentially *asking* to have a relationship with your brand (hello, lowest-hanging fruit!). **Hint:** Start with these eager beavers by engaging with them now.

Here are some things you should know about Hootsuite Inbox so you don't miss any of those potentially game-changing messages.

- **Quick overview:** Inbox is populated with private and public messages from anyone who directly engages with your brand across many platforms. It allows you to interact with conversations and helps you respond efficiently so you can build and strengthen relationships.

- **Setup:** The first step is to ensure your social accounts are properly connected so messages and mentions appear in your Inbox.

- **Engaging with users:** You can respond to conversations by selecting individual messages in the conversation list. Reply to comments in a thread, tag a user with an @mention, or respond directly with a private message.

- **Collaborating with your team:** Assign direct messages or public mentions to other team members, who can be notified by email when a message requires their attention.

[Watch this video](#) for a speedy lesson on how to use Inbox.

And then there's [Hootsuite Insights](#). With a [Team, Business or Enterprise plan](#), you can use Insights to monitor top authors, thought leaders, and influencers. These are likely the content creators you'll want to keep an eye on for potential collaborations or partnership opportunities down the road. But before you dive in with creators, be sure to have a solid [influencer marketing strategy](#) so your goals are always top of mind.



**Pro tip:** Be open to influencers with smaller audiences. Unlike mega-influencers or celebs with millions of followers, influencers with fewer followers typically have audiences that are highly invested and more engaged.

Smaller influencers also tend to build deeper connections with their followers, making them feel more like friends than fans. And since peer influence is a major driver of purchase decisions, this can be a huge plus for your business. Moral of the story? Don't discount the little guys.

# Trust others to speak about your brand

You've chosen some creators you want to collaborate with and you're ready to get started. But there's one problem: You're a stickler when it comes to your brand guidelines and deviating from them in any way is a big no-no. Unfortunately, if you're working with content creators, you can't think like that.

When others lead the development of your content, it may have a bit of a different flair. And that's okay. On social media, you have more leeway to be flexible with your brand and have a little fun. Your "social voice" doesn't necessarily have to be 100% consistent with your brand voice—and believe it or not, it won't change how your audience feels about your product.

Letting go of the need to always be perfectly "on brand" allows you to put more trust in digital creators who can then deliver content that gets results—content that

wouldn't be nearly as impactful or authentic if you tried to do it yourself. And if you ask us, that's way more valuable than following brand guidelines to a T.

You might find that incorporating user-generated content into your social strategy can help achieve your business goals (and save time and money). With the Hootsuite-integrated TINT app, you can find relevant user-generated content to share on your own social channels to help boost brand awareness, engagement, and sales.



See what's possible when more eyes are on your brand. Request a demo and make them wonder how you did it.