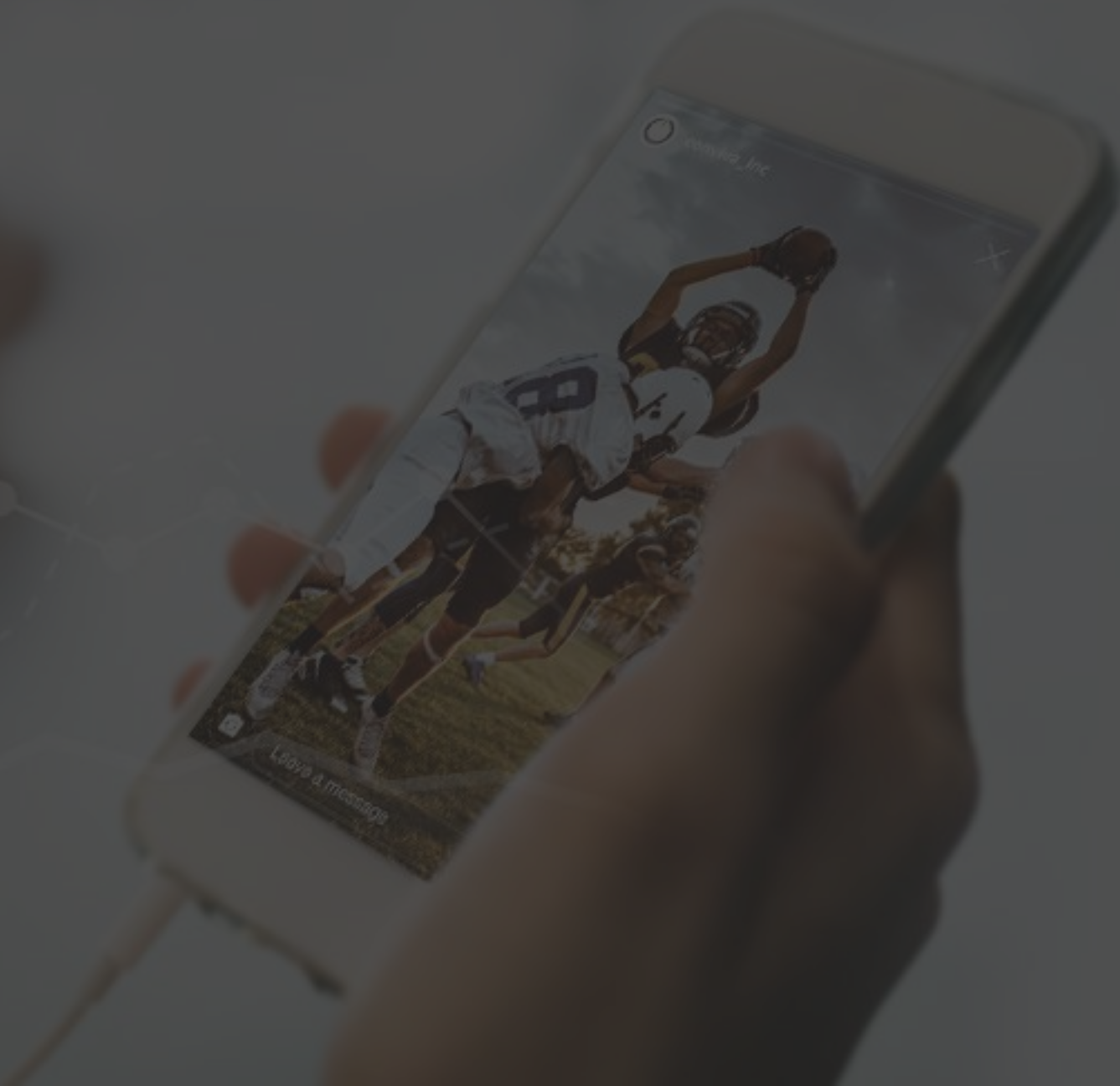


**CONVIVA SOCIAL INSIGHTS**

# 2020 Instagram Stories Benchmark Report



## Instagram Stories continues to be a social focus for brands

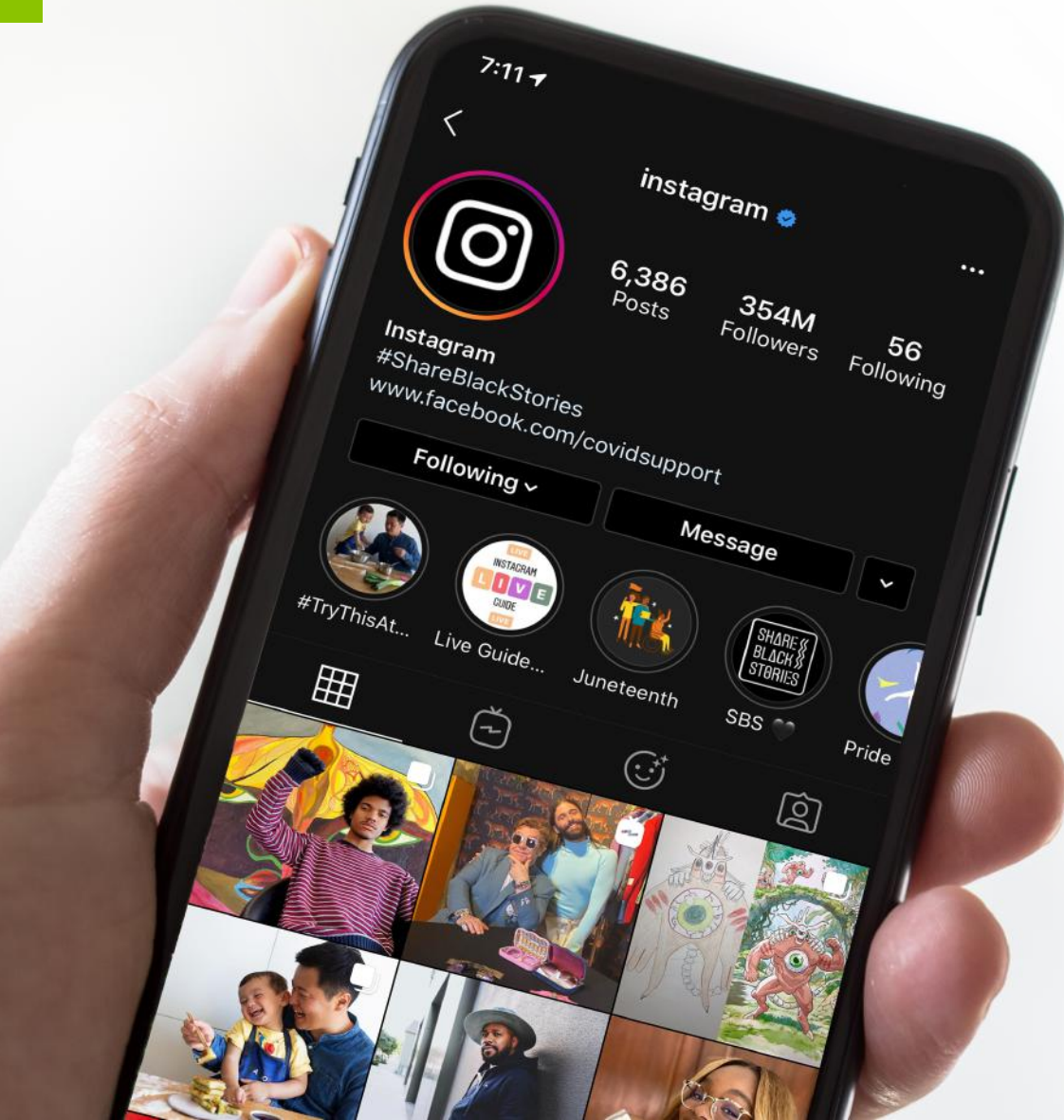
Instagram Stories is one of the most popular social platforms in use by brands today. More than half of Instagram's one billion plus users are consuming Stories daily, according to Instagram. This third iteration of the annual Conviva Instagram Stories Benchmark Report tracks the evolution of consumption for Instagram Stories through the lens of industry verticals and sub-categories. For additional context, Q1 2020 was compared to Q1 2019.

This report includes analysis of over 920 top Instagram accounts, over 28,700 stories, and over 165,000 individual frames to determine the latest publishing and user engagement trends across four industry verticals:

- Sports
- Media
- Entertainment
- Brands

In 2020, more than any other year prior, Instagram has made an effort to give brands, businesses, and creators more tools, especially in the form of stickers, to succeed on Instagram Stories. Some of the enhancements and changes Instagram has enabled over the past year are documented in this report.

This report also provides social media marketers with data-backed, creative recommendations on how improve the results of Instagram Stories campaigns.




# Highlights

More people are interacting with Instagram Stories compared to a year ago as evidenced by an increase in overall reach rate. Despite an increase in reach, publishing of Instagram Stories decreased slightly in 2020 as stories per week and frames per story declined from 2019 averages. Consumption remained high as completion rate increased for the third year in a row, as tapping through stories has become second nature for users.

Other highlights include:

- Stickers have become an integral part of Instagram Stories as Instagram rolled out new sticker functionality at a rapid pace in 2020.
- Sports accounts posted the highest completion rate and highest reach rate among categories for the third year in a row. Sports posting was down considerably from the year before in a quarter that saw most professional sports leagues postpone their season in early March.
  - Among sports accounts, college sports maintained the most engaged sports audience for the second year in a row, with 12.3% average reach rate.
- Led by global news, as the global pandemic emerged media overtook sports as the category that posted most frequently, posting 2.7 stories a week on average.
  - Local news maintained the highest reach rate among media categories.
- Among entertainment accounts, TV shows maintained a significantly higher reach rate than their partner network/channels while internet-first entertainment channels recorded the highest reach rate for the category at 10%.
- Reach rate for accounts drops significantly once accounts get more than 50,000 followers.
- The only time people exit a story more on an image than video is the first frame.
- Posting longer stories definitively increases your reach per story, even more so than 2019. To consistently increase average reach on Instagram Stories posting 8+ frame stories is optimal.
- Reach rate for accounts that have replies turned on was 2.1% higher than those who have replies turned off.
- The second frame is a prime content spot as it is least likely to be interrupted by an action like a tap back, tap forward, or exit.

# Instagram Stories Key Updates 2019-2020

- 
- March 2019 – Ads can now include interactive functionality
  - March 2019 – Instagram adds checkout functionality to Stories product stickers
  - April 2019 – Instagram rolls out quiz stickers for Instagram Stories
  - May 2019 – Donation stickers launched for Instagram Stories
  - June 2019 – Ability to promote creators' organic branded content posts as stories ads
  - June 2019 – Instagram adds join chat sticker
  - June 2019 – Show lyrics functionality added to the music sticker
  - October 2019 – Instagram launches product launch reminder stickers
  - October 2019 – Stories camera updated to provide easier access to GIFs, countdown stickers, etc.
  - December 2019 – Instagram adds layout option to add multiple photos to a Story at once
  - December 2019 – Instagram begins rolling out Group Stories option
  - January 2020 – Instagram adds SloMo, Echo, and Duo modes to its boomerang camera mode
  - April 2020 – When an IGTV creator posts a link to their IGTV video in their Instagram Story they can add a 15-second preview to their Story
  - April 2020 – Instagram adds new gift card, ordering, and fundraising stickers for Stories
  - April 2020 – Instagram adds new font options for Stories
  - April 2020 – Instagram adds the ability to donate via Live and Stories
  - May 2020 – Support small business sticker added



# Stickers Explanation and Functionality



**Location** – Search for and post your location



**Mention** – Tag another account



**Hashtag** – Add a hashtag to your story



**Food Orders** – Allow your story viewers to order food through your story



**Share Black Stories** – This is an example of a shared story sticker, adding this sticker will allow your post to be seen by others who use this sticker



**Donation** – Select a cause and ask for donations



**Poll** – Create an A/B question users can respond to



**Questions** – Craft a question users can type a response to



**Gift Card** – Allow your story viewers to purchase a gift card for your business



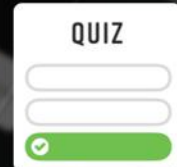
**Support Small Business** – Give story viewers a preview of a small business inside your story, also added to a shared Instagram story



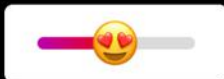
**Register to Vote** – Register to vote directly through Instagram Stories



**Challenge** – Participate in online viral challenges and tag friends to join



**Quiz** – Create a multiple-choice question with up to 4 responses



**Slider** – Interactive sliding feature used to gauge interest



**DM Me** – Invite followers to start a private chat



**Music** – Add music and or song lyrics to your story

# Industry Benchmarks

Sports, Entertainment, Media, and Brands



## Industry Benchmarks

Instagram Stories consumption continues to rise as completion rates increased for the third year in a row. Sports accounts maintained the highest completion rate at 90% while entertainment accounts improved the most, increasing from 81% to 88%.

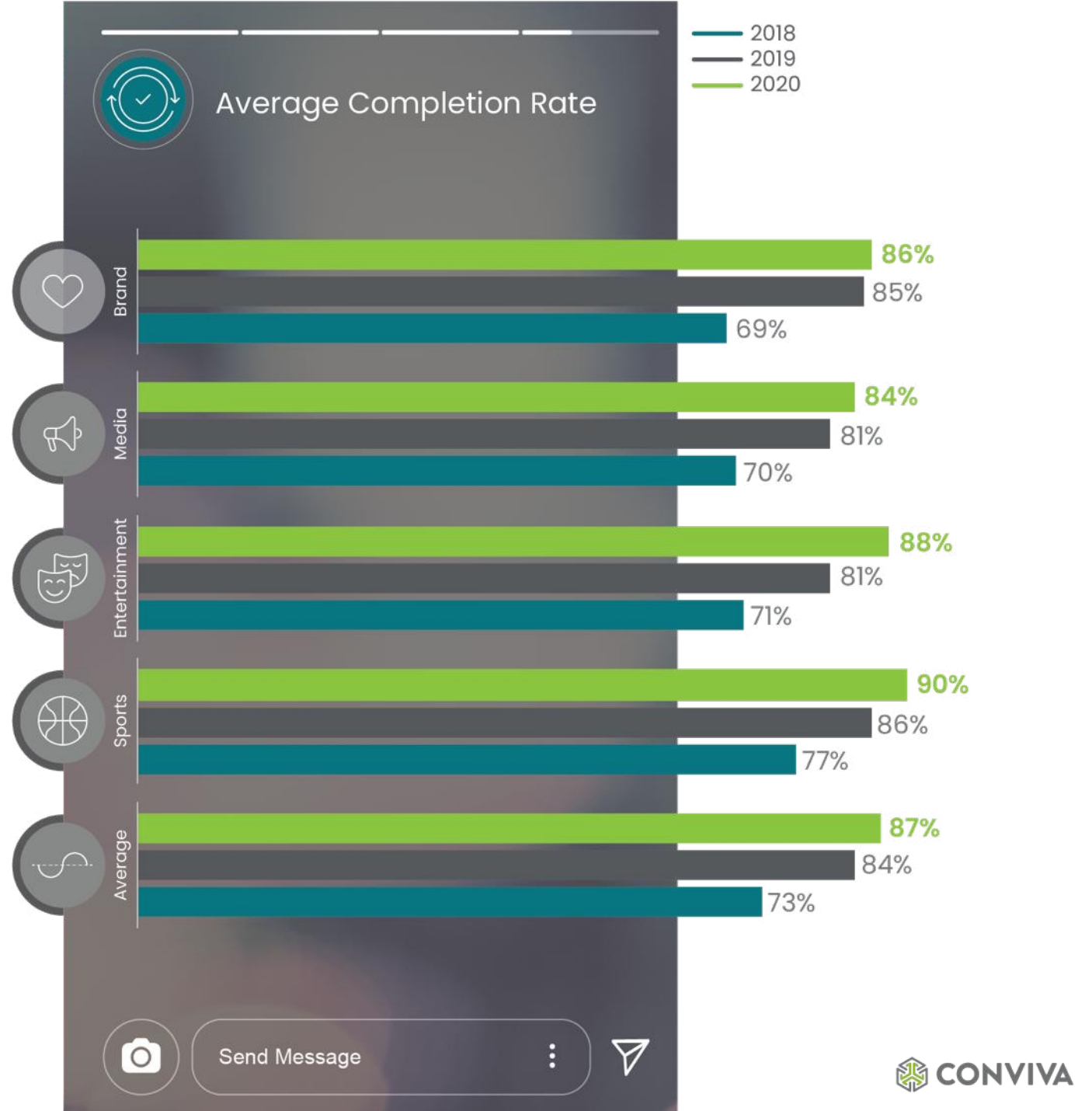
How Conviva defines the industry verticals:

**Brand:** Consumer related product, service brands, events, or locations

**Media:** Newspapers, news organizations, news websites, publishers

**Entertainment:** TV/movie networks, TV shows, audio, and social-first content networks

**Sports:** Sports or Esports teams, leagues, and sporting events



## Industry Benchmarks

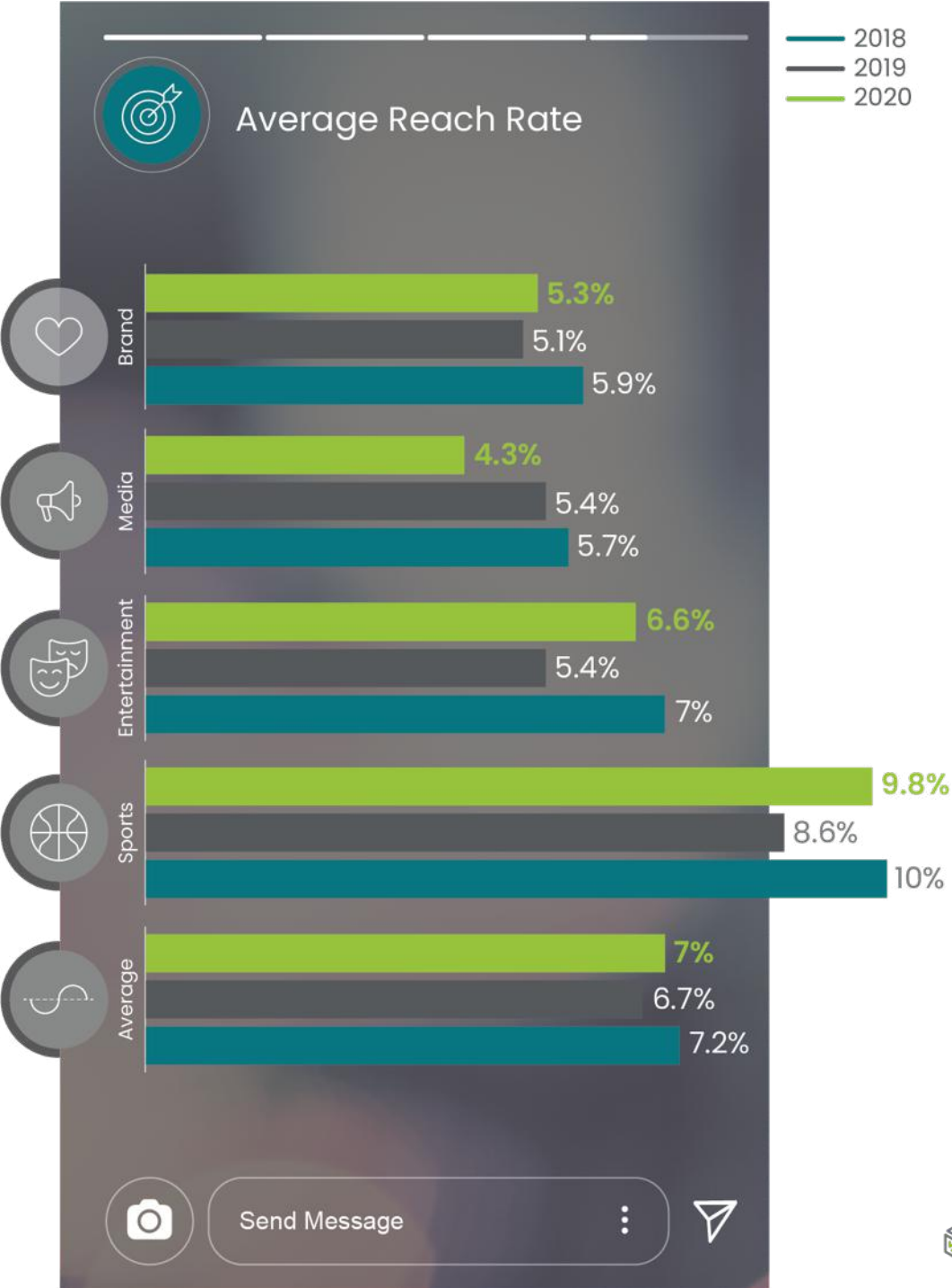
Publishing on Instagram Stories decreased slightly in 2020 as stories per week and frames per story declined in 2020 from 2019 averages. Across all accounts, frames per story was down by 2.4 frames per story on average. Sports accounts saw a decrease in both frames per story and post frequency, during a quarter that saw most professional sports leagues postpone their season in early March. Brands were the only category that posted longer stories compared to the previous year, increasing from 5.2 to 5.5 frames per story.





# Industry Benchmarks

More people are interacting with Instagram Stories compared to a year ago as evidenced by an average increase in overall reach rate from 6.7% to 7%. Sports and entertainment accounts both increased their reach rate significantly by 2.2% on average, while media accounts saw a decline of 1.1%.



## Media Sector Benchmarks

Media accounts are broken into subcategories based on their target audience:

**Global News** – Content focused on global news and events.

**Local** – Serves a specific geographic region or city.

**Niche** – Organizations that focus on a specific topic, not a geographically defined audience.

**Sports Media** – News and media organizations with a sports focus. *This sub-category was first analyzed in 2020 and is therefore missing 2019 comparisons.*

Industry	Completion Rate 2019	Completion Rate 2020	Frames/ Story 2019	Frames/ Story 2020	Stories/ Week 2019	Stories/ Week 2020	Reach Rate 2019	Reach Rate 2020
Global News	80%	<b>83%</b>	8	<b>5.7</b>	3.2	<b>3.6</b>	3.7%	<b>3%</b>
Local	76%	<b>83%</b>	7	<b>5.2</b>	2.5	<b>2.5</b>	6.5%	<b>5%</b>
Niche	81%	<b>85%</b>	6	<b>6.3</b>	2.2	<b>2.4</b>	2.2%	<b>3%</b>
Sports Media	–	<b>87%</b>	–	<b>5.6</b>	–	<b>2.8</b>	–	<b>4%</b>
<b>Sector Average</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>

# Entertainment Sector Benchmarks

Entertainment accounts are broken into subcategories based on their format and focus:

**TV Channel or Network** – Promotes the corporate brand and lineup of shows on a network or platform.

The TV Channel or Network category was further analyzed to compare traditional **Linear TV** to **Streaming**.

**TV Show** – Promotes a specific show's content to build an audience for the show.

**Web or Social First Publisher** – Digital or social-first content that does not have a traditional linear TV presence.

**Audio** – Radio or podcast. *This sub-category was first analyzed in 2020 and is therefore missing 2019 comparisons.*

Industry	Completion Rate 2019	Completion Rate 2020	Frames/ Story 2019	Frames/ Story 2020	Stories/ Week 2019	Stories/ Week 2020	Reach Rate 2019	Reach Rate 2020
TV Channel or Network	82%	84%	6	6.3	3	3.9	1.9%	3.7%
Streaming	–	86%	–	5.0	–	3.1	–	4.2%
Linear TV	–	84%	–	6.8	–	4.5	–	3.3%
TV Show	83%	88%	6	4.5	2	1.5	7%	6.9%
Web or Social First Publisher	77%	88%	8	5.3	4	2.8	4.7%	10.0%
Audio	–	93%	–	3.7	–	3.0	–	6.1%
Sector Average	81%	88%	7.4	4.9	3	2.4	5.40%	6.6%

# Sports Industry Benchmarks

Sports accounts are broken into subcategories based on their affiliation:

**Professional** – Leagues, teams, and events.

**College** – Any university-based, non-professional athletics organization.

**Esports** – Professional online gaming teams, leagues, or tournaments.

**Other** – Any team, league, or event not traditionally included in professional sports. *This sub-category was first analyzed in 2020 and is therefore missing 2019 comparisons.*

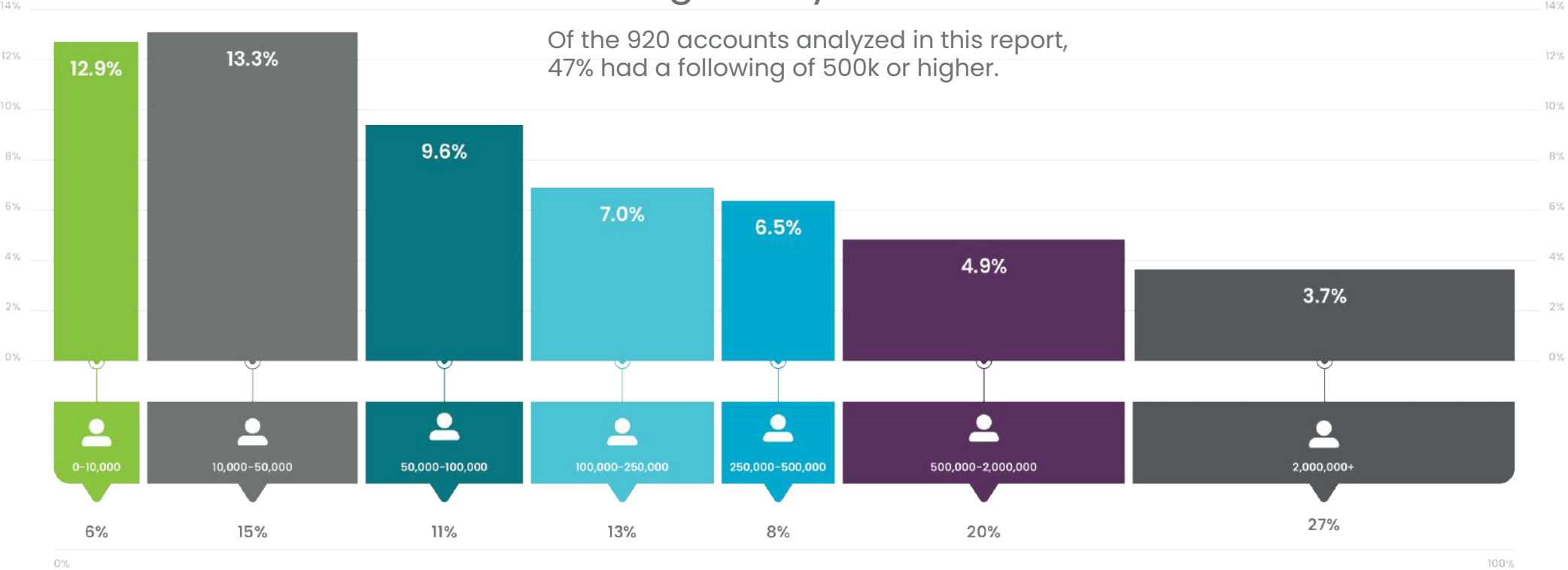
Industry	Completion Rate 2019	Completion Rate 2020	Frames/ Story 2019	Frames/ Story 2020	Stories/ Week 2019	Stories/ Week 2020	Reach Rate 2019	Reach Rate 2020
Professional	85%	<b>88%</b>	7.3	<b>6.5</b>	4.1	<b>3.7</b>	5.0%	<b>4.4%</b>
College	85%	<b>90%</b>	11.3	<b>5.1</b>	2.6	<b>2.3</b>	14.1%	<b>12.3%</b>
Esports	89%	<b>91%</b>	3.7	<b>3.1</b>	2.8	<b>1.3</b>	7.7%	<b>5.5%</b>
Other	–	<b>94%</b>	–	<b>3</b>	–	<b>2.3</b>	–	<b>6.9%</b>
<b>Sector Average</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>5.36</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>

# Data Analysis



# Average Story Reach Rate

Of the 920 accounts analyzed in this report, 47% had a following of 500k or higher.



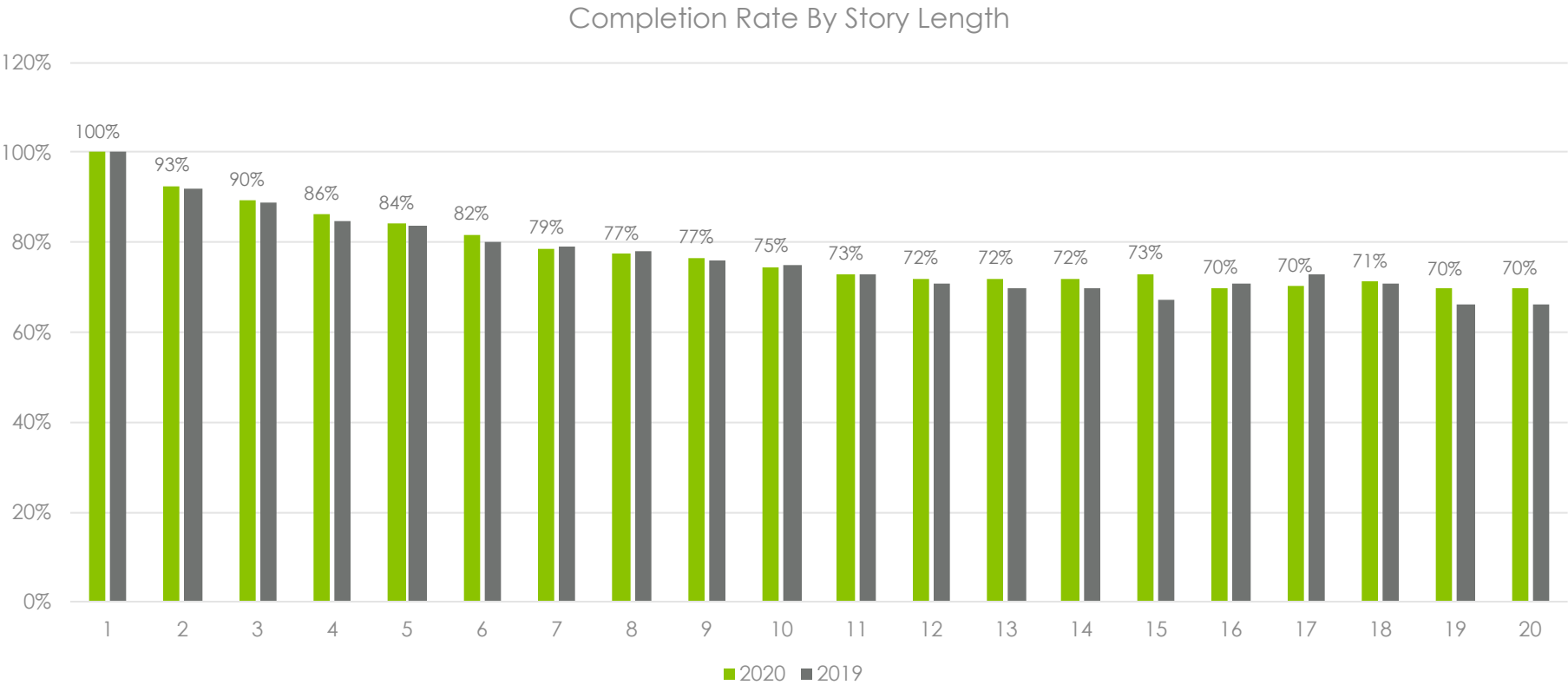
## Makeup of Accounts by Followers

Accounts with under 50k followers have very similar reach rates, however, reach rate declines significantly for accounts that have higher than 50k followers as they continue to grow.

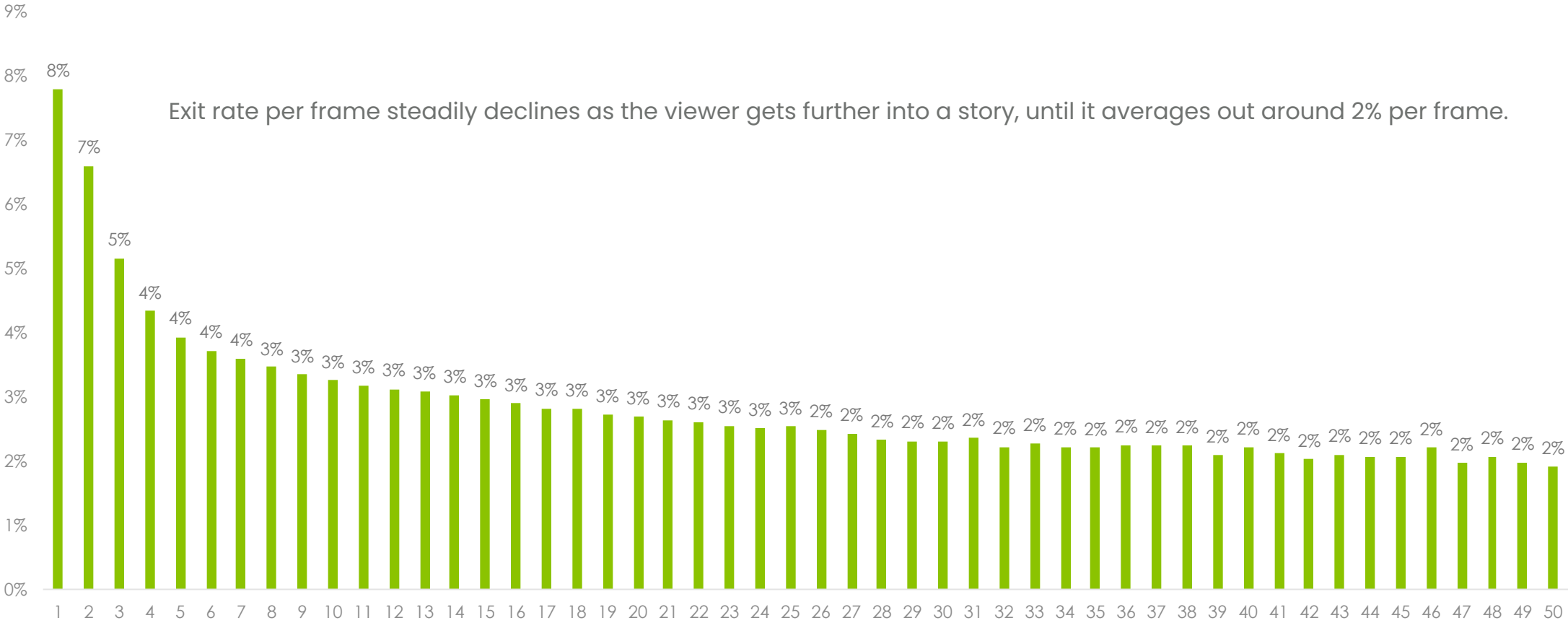
# Completion Rate by Story Length

Average completion rate across most story lengths increased slightly as compared to 2019.

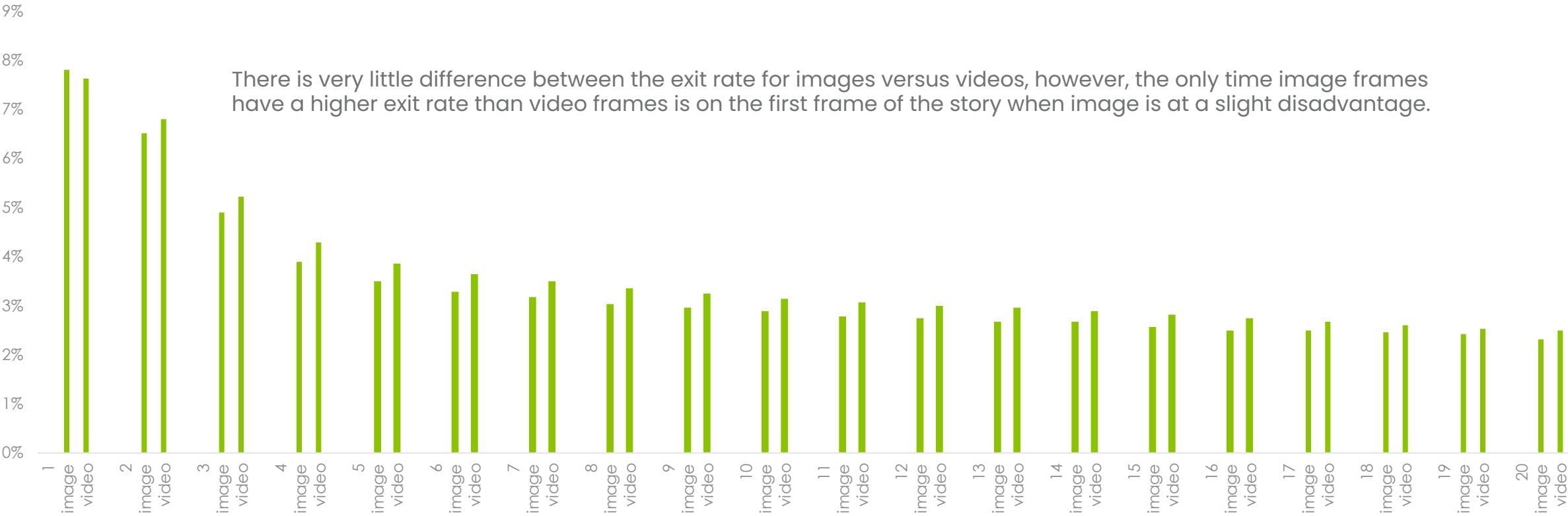
In 2020, average completion rate maintained above 70% through the first 20 frames.



# Exit Rate by Frame



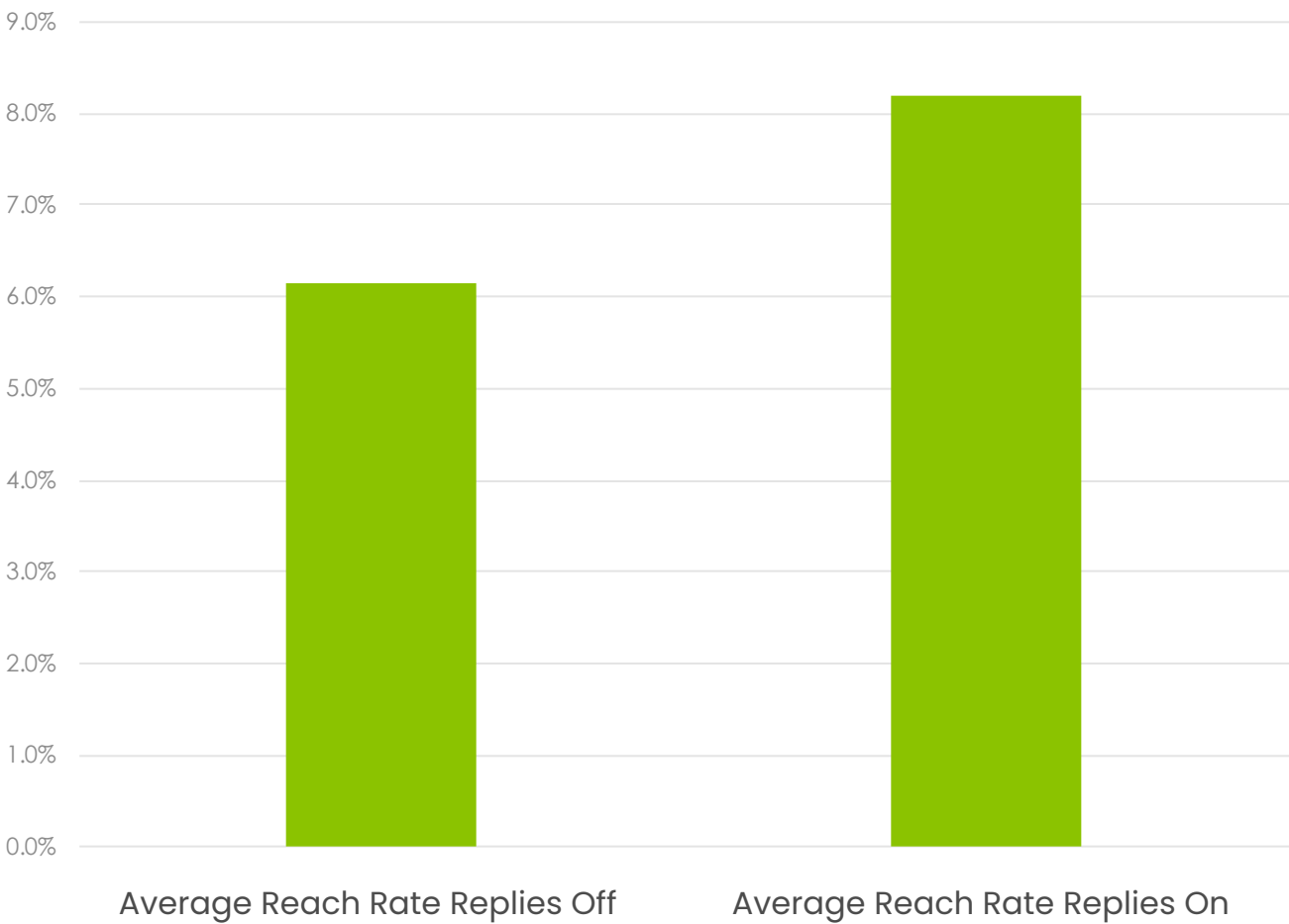
# Exit Rate by Frame Type



# Replies On vs Off

For accounts with replies turned on the reach rate was 2.1% higher than those with accounts turned off. In 2020, 66% of accounts had replies turned on.

This is a full reversal from 2019 when 66% of accounts had replies turned off. In 2019 accounts with replies turned on had 3.2% higher reach rate.



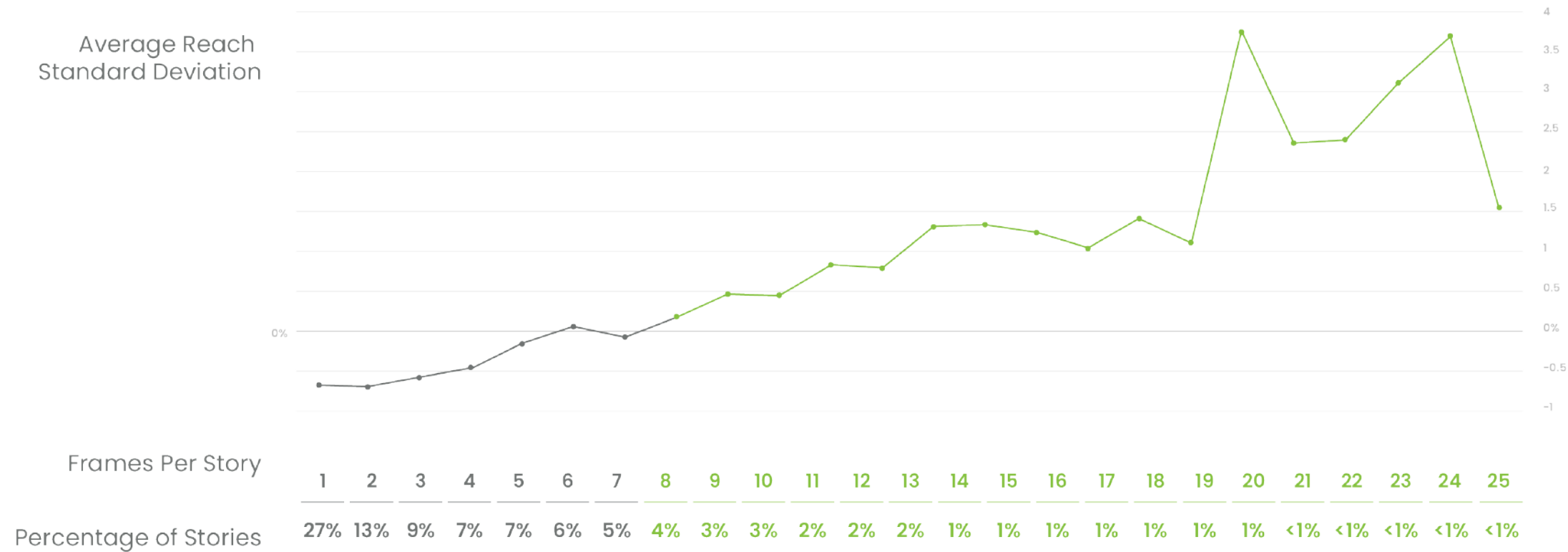


# Story Length Optimized by Unique Reach

Reach increases with additional frames in a story.

Most stories below 8 frames in 2020 had a below average reach for the account, while in 2019 this tipping point was at 6 frames.

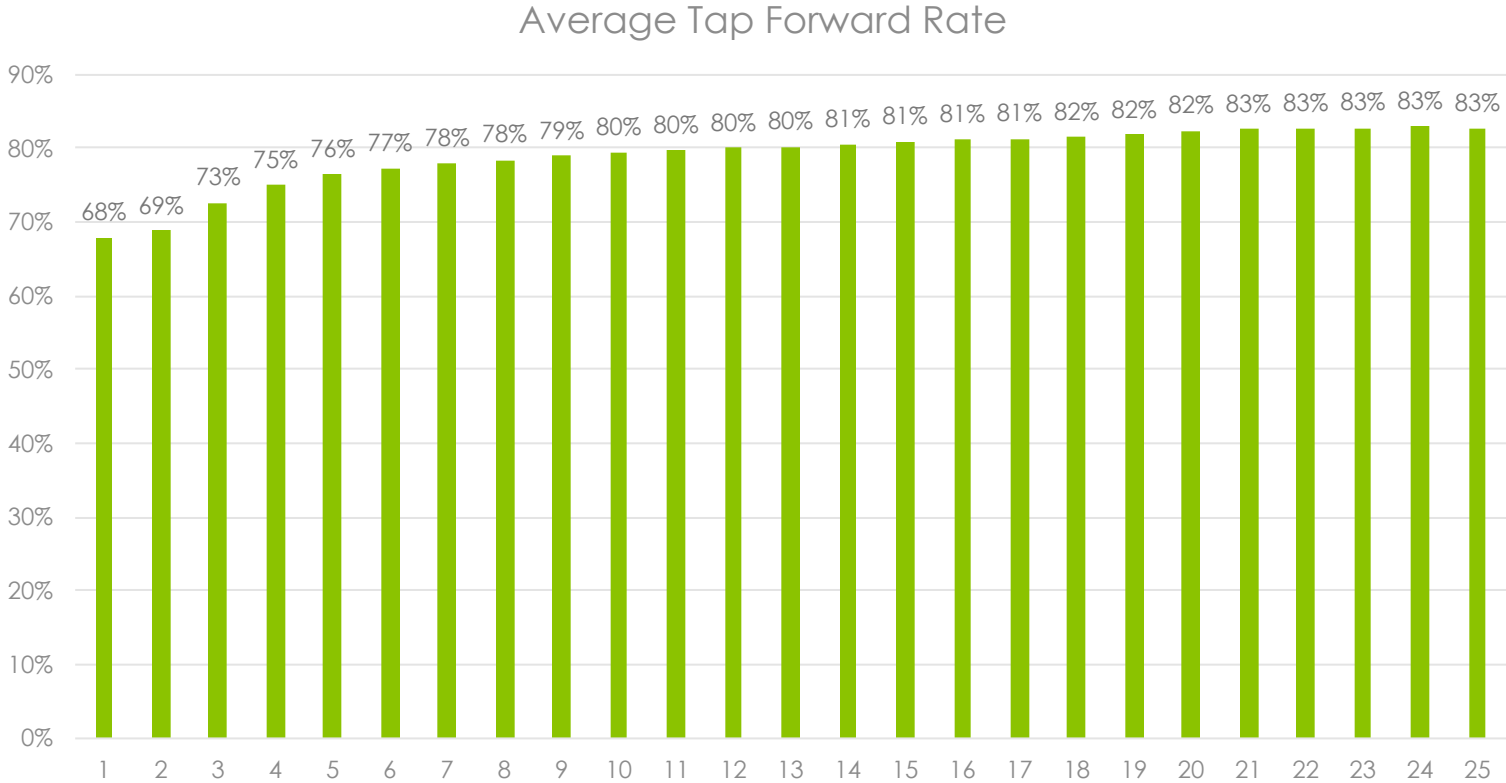
Despite this, only 26% of stories analyzed for this report were 8 frames or greater. The remaining 74% of would likely benefit from additional frames.



# Tap Forward Rate

Tapping through a story has become second nature. The average tap forward rate through 25 frames was 80%. Viewers were most likely to passively watch the first couple frames which tallied the lowest percentage of tap forwards at 68% and 69% respectively.

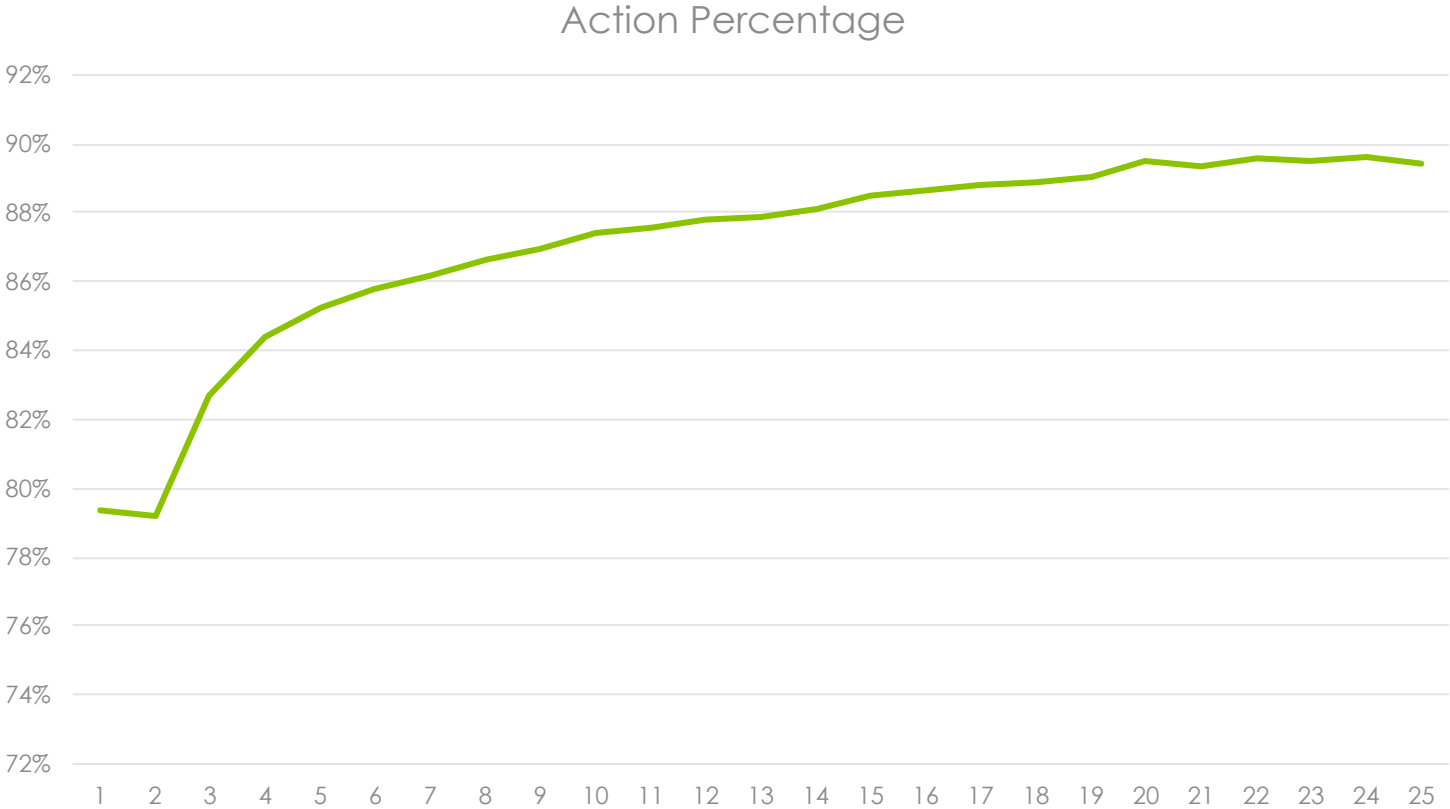
Conversely, the highest tap back rate occurs on the 4<sup>th</sup> frame of stories, when 5% of viewers take this action.



# Action Percentage

The lowest percentage of user actions, including tap forwards, tap backs or exits, occur on the second frame.

The second frame is therefore a prime content spot as it is least likely to be interrupted.



Action percentage calculated as (Tap Forwards + Tap Backs + Exits) / Total impressions

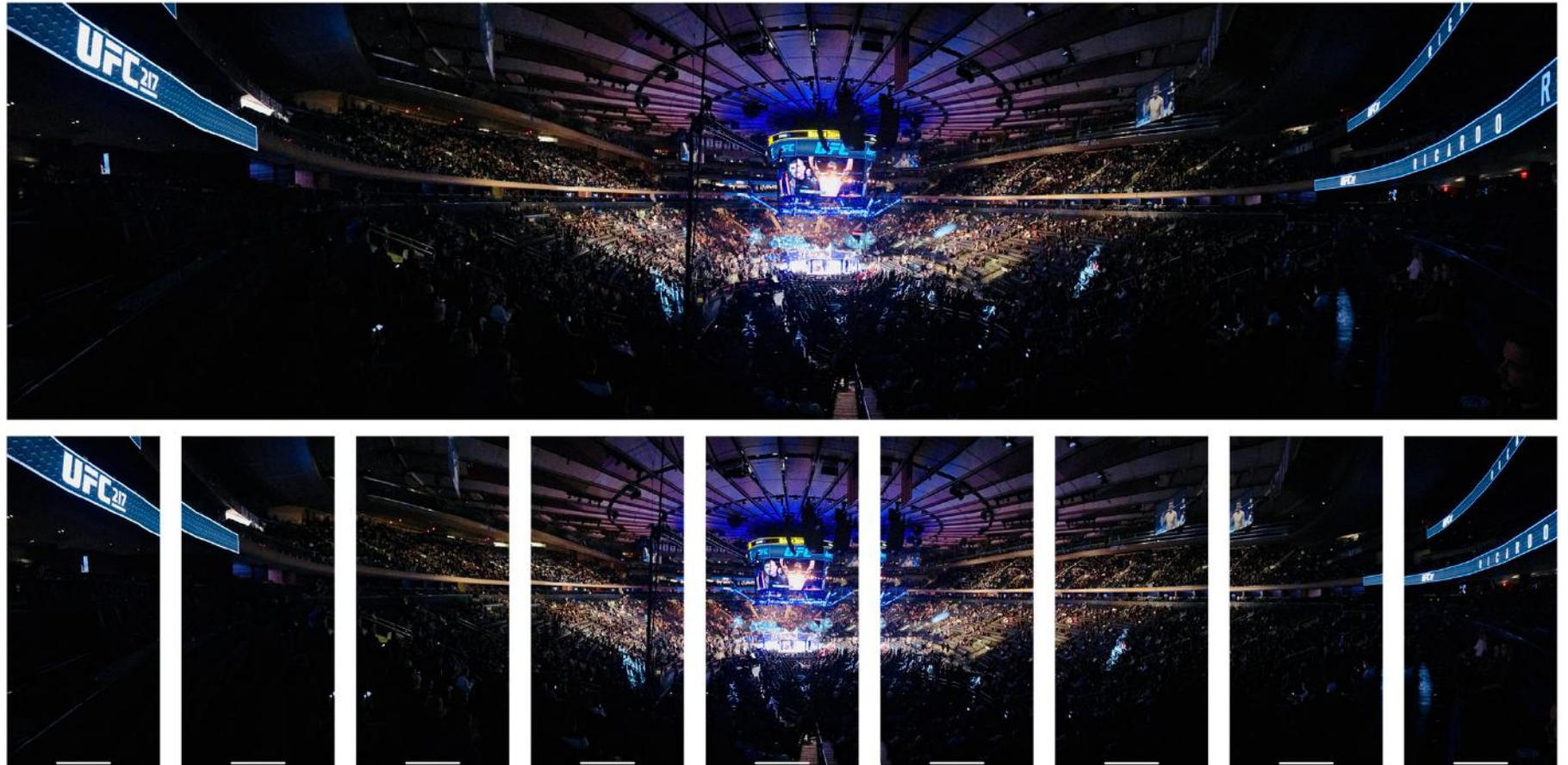
# Top Performing Creative Examples



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## Creative Tricks for Instagram Stories

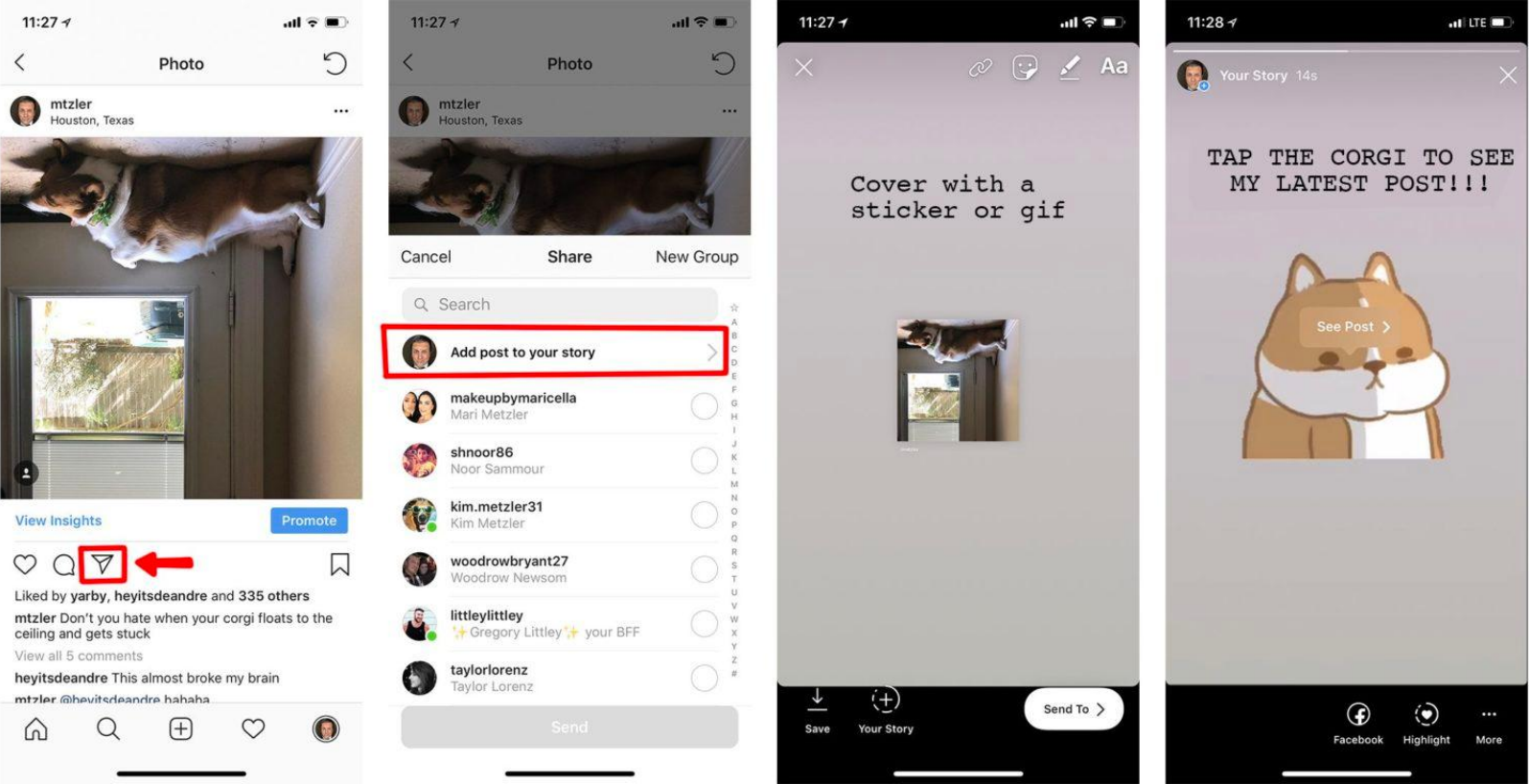
Take a panorama and break it up into multiple images for an engaging story that encourages people to tap forward and back.





# Creative Tricks for Instagram Stories

Share your feed posts to your Instagram Story and get creative with stickers to drive engagement to your latest post.



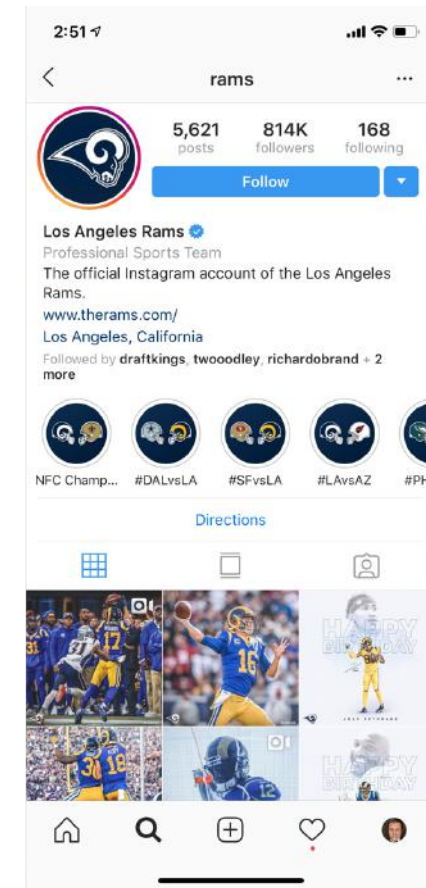
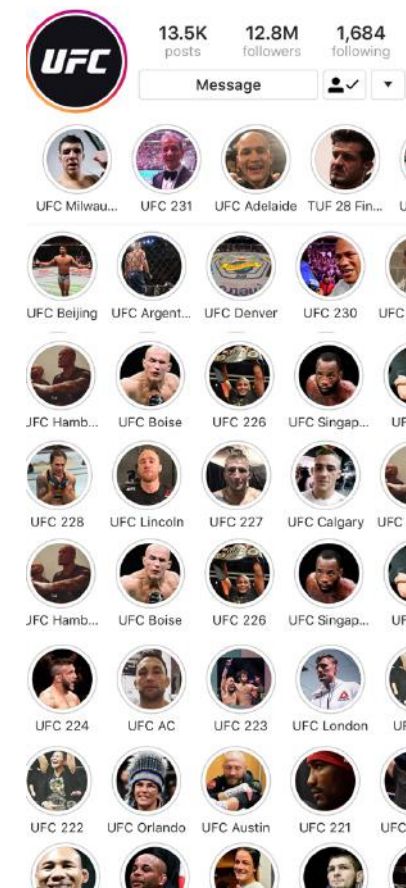
# Creative Tricks for Instagram Stories

Use your Instagram Stories Highlights to share important information or create a chronological timeline of important events.

The UFC has created a Highlight for every single one of its fights going back years.

The LA Rams document their games using a similar strategy by creating custom icons for each game.

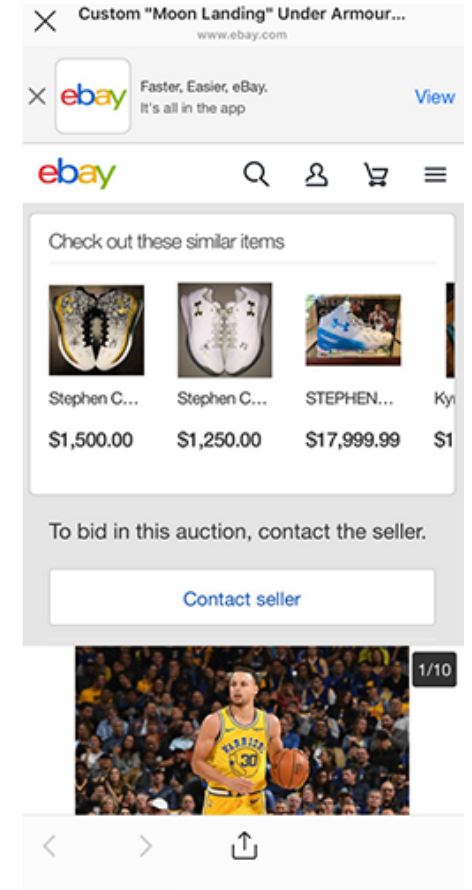
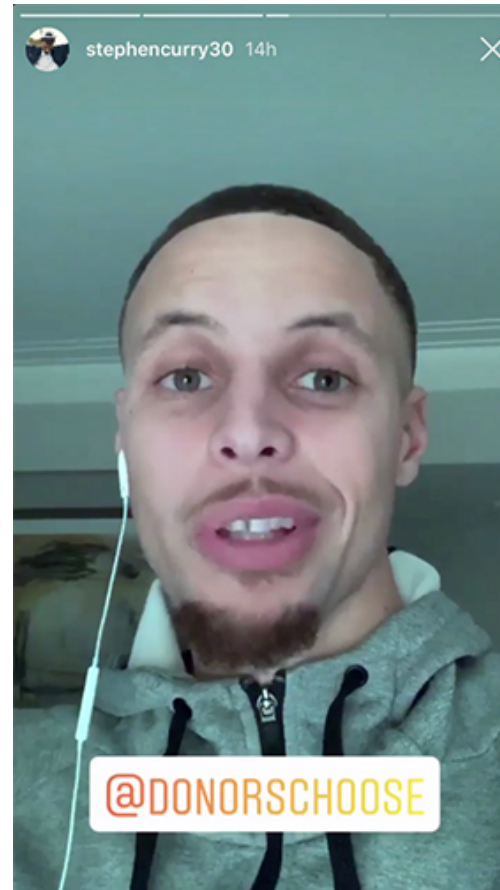
Reminder: **There's no limit to how many Highlights you can create.**



## Creative Tricks for Instagram Stories

Use the timer to create a sense of urgency.

When Steph Curry auctioned off the moon shoes he received from NASA for STEM education programs in Oakland, he did so using the countdown feature. Not only did he link to the shoes on eBay directly, but he synced the Instagram timer with the auction timer on eBay.



# What Brands Are Saying



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## What Brands Are Saying

### Caroline Warren

Strategist, New Media & Content  
Marketing  
Major League Baseball



"Instagram Stories have become **a very important part of our social strategy**; we utilize it as its own unique storytelling system. IG Stories are a great way to showcase **a more personal perspective of baseball**, and they also allow us to **interact more creatively with our fans**."

### Rosty Elkun

Digital Marketing Manager  
Awesomeness at Viacom



"In the past year, we've seen our Instagram Stories reach rate increase by 100% and our average reach increase by 150% by fully **committing to what our analytics are telling us**. That includes **paying close attention to the KPI's provided by the IG API** and applying our learnings accordingly.

We have many tools & platforms available to us, but the key separating Conviva from other service providers, aside from the amazing platform performance, are our account managers. Our Conviva managers feel like part of our brand team. They always put great time and effort into their work and insights to make our content perform better, and actively suggest things we can do to improve rather than just waiting for us to ask specific questions. **Our Conviva team makes all the difference** in our day to day use of the platform, and they are why we are able to find the best value for our company by working with this platform."



## What Brands Are Saying

**Chris Corter**

Director, Digital Operations  
Fox Sports



**"When it comes to branded content within IG stories, stickers are the best kept secret.** This past year, we were able to naturally integrate brands stickers within our "Field Pass" franchise. This was a huge win for us. **Our stories and all-access content brings fans straight to the source of the action,** so there's a delicate balance of combining branded elements within stories. It starts with understanding how users will interact with these new features without disrupting our story telling. **A positive user experience has a direct correlation to positive brand perception.** In the end, this campaign **performed 4.4 times better than other similar campaigns** from Apparel & Accessories."

**Carmen Collins**

Employee/Employer Brand and  
Social Media Lead  
People & Communities  
Cisco



"The @WeAreCisco Instagram channel is currently one of our most engaging, but we consider it essentially 4 channels in one: newsfeed, Stories, Live and IGTV. We use each IG channel strategically – especially as the Instagram newsfeed algorithm has been tightening for organic content. One of the ways we've focused on **increasing our Stories reach is through trends.** For example, we created an AR filter for employees to share the reasons they love working at Cisco, with a randomizer that landed on a different reason each time – and then shared those that tagged us back into our Stories. **We also developed several gif templates** (this or that, what's on your desk, etc.). Both strategies saw our number of tap backs (thanks Conviva!) go up by 3-4X our average, and Stories helps us with our business goals of awareness of Cisco as a great place to work through our employees, making connections and driving applies."

## About Conviva

Conviva is the leader in social and streaming media intelligence, powered by its real-time platform. More than 250 industry leaders and brands – including CBS, CCTV, Cirque Du Soleil, DAZN, Disney+, HBO, Hulu, Sky, Sling TV, TED, Univision, and WarnerMedia – rely on Conviva to maximize their consumer engagement, deliver the quality experiences viewers expect, and drive revenue growth. With a global footprint of more than 500 million unique viewers watching 150 billion streams per year across 3 billion applications streaming on devices, Conviva offers streaming providers unmatched scale for continuous video measurement, intelligence, and benchmarking across every stream, every screen, every second.

## Any Questions?

Visit [www.conviva.com](http://www.conviva.com) or contact Conviva at [pr@conviva.com](mailto:pr@conviva.com).