

NO JARGON,
JUST
GREAT
DIGITAL.

DIGITAL
CULTURE

MAXIMISING MARKETING CHANNELS WORKSHOP

THE SOCIAL MEDIA JOURNEY:

Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Success

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A BIT ABOUT ME

- digital marketing consultant
- LECTURER
- HOST OF DM SESSIONS
- LOVER OF THE HOSPITALITY & TOURISM SPACE



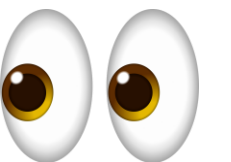
TODAY'S AGENDA

- WHERE WE ARE 45 MINS
- WHAT WE CAN DO 75 MINS

ENGAGING IN AN UNENGAGED WORLD

- **Facebook** interactions are **down 80%**
- **TikTok** brand engagement has **halved**
- **Instagram** has an average engagement rate of **0.43%**

...instead we **lurk**

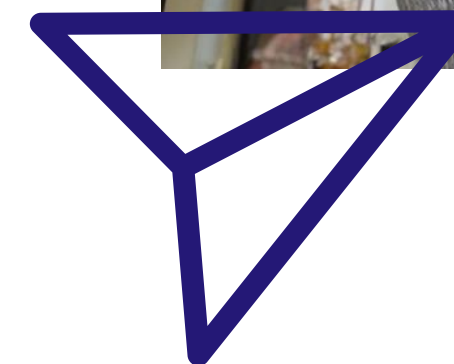
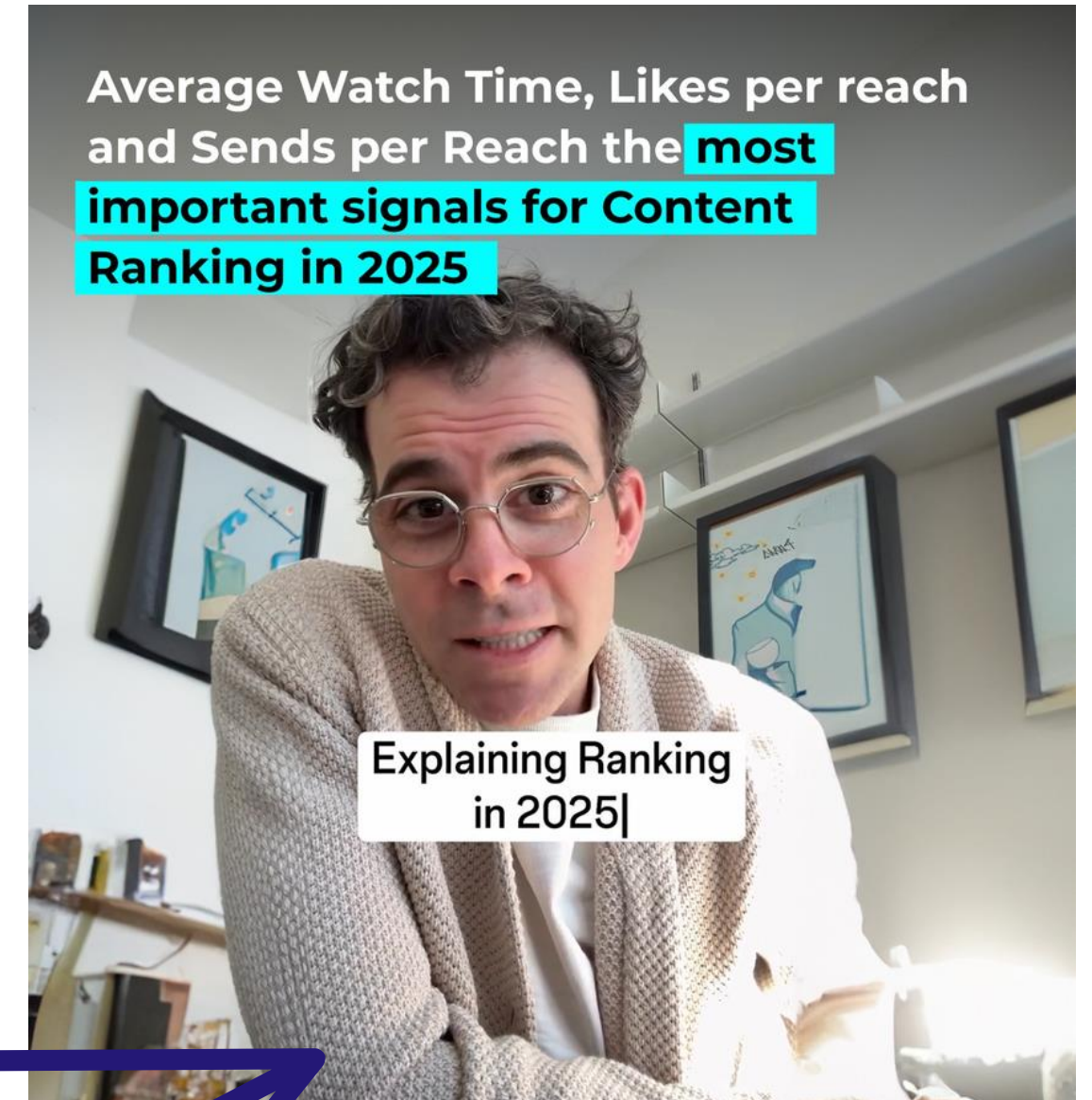


ENGAGING IN AN UNENGAGED WORLD

- **67%** of TikTok users never post
- **92%** of TikTok interactions are passive views
- We'd rather **watch** an Instagram Story **than leave a comment** on a reel or post
- We **hesitate** to follow **new** accounts

ENGAGING IN AN UNENGAGED WORLD

- Engagement still matters but **how to measure** it's success on social media looks different
- In 2024 Instagram announced they view **SENDS** as a **priority metric**, not just comments and likes
- ***“Users spend more time in DMs than they do in Stories, and they spend more time in Stories than they do in Feed”*** - Instagram



BUT WHAT ABOUT US?

- **27% of travellers** make the initial decision to travel to a specific destination based on **social media posts**
- almost **85% of millennials** use **someone else's** social posts when planning their vacations
- **34% book** a hotel because they saw it via **user generated content**

SLIDO

- **what social media channels are you on?**
- **how often do you post?**
- **what are your biggest barriers to use?**

SLIDO RESULTS...?

- **TIME**
- **SKILLS**
- **IDEAS**
- **BUDGET**
- **HARDWARE**

**THE SOCIAL
MEDIA
JOURNEY:**

**FOLLOW THE
YELLOW BRICK
ROAD TO
SUCCESS**



WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE... 🏠

The digital landscape for tourism has changed—just like Dorothy stepping into Oz, your business is stepping into a new world of engagement, storytelling, and connection.

It's time to follow the Yellow Brick Road and explore what's possible.

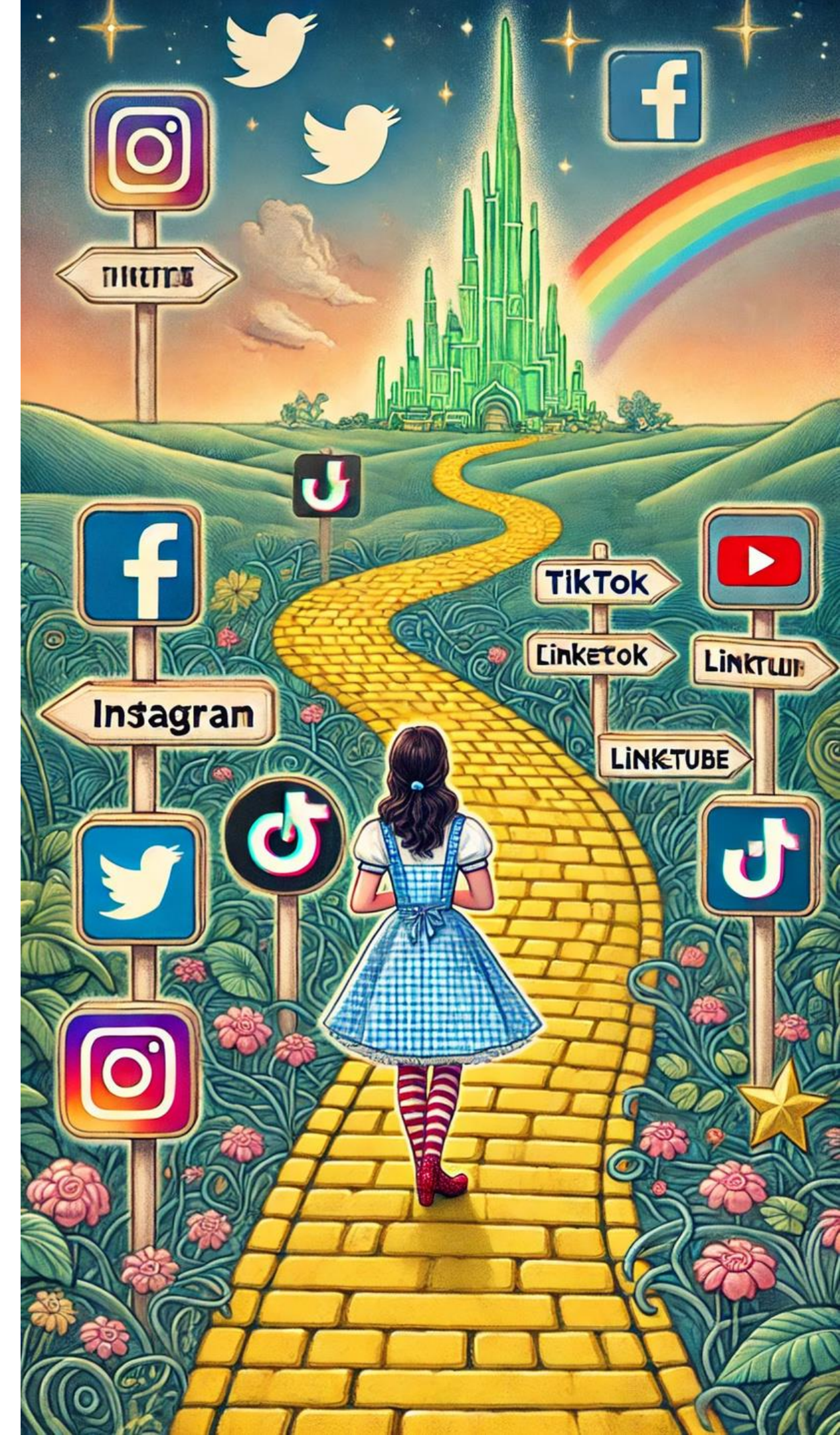


THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD OF SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS



Social media isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. You need to understand where you are, where you're going, and how to navigate each platform strategically—just like Dorothy on her journey.


(...just without the dodgy AI)



WHO'S COMING WITH US?

 Lion – Bravery → Businesses must be bold, try video, experiment with new formats.

 Scarecrow – Strategy → Don't post for the sake of it; understand your audience and plan.

 Tin Man – Authenticity → Real stories, user-generated content, and emotional connection.

...PS Everyone Likes Dog Content! 

- The travel industry revolves around experiences, and customers move through a journey from inspiration to post-trip sharing.
- Understanding this journey allows tourism businesses to create the right content at the right time, increasing engagement, bookings, and customer loyalty.
- A well-mapped customer journey ensures businesses meet travellers' needs at every stage, from dreaming about a destination to booking, experiencing, and sharing their trip.



The five key stages of the travel customer journey:

- **Inspiration** – Where customers discover destinations.
- **Planning** – Researching accommodations, attractions, and activities.
- **Booking** – Decision-making and transactions.
- **Experience** – The actual trip and on-site engagement.
- **Remembering & Sharing** – Customers posting reviews and UGC.



We need to make sure we're at each stage of the users journey to greet them with content that is

- Authentic
- Relevant
- Quality
- Right Format for Platform
- Informative



In order to do that we need to know our customer.

- Google Analytics
- Social Media Insights
- CRM
- Booking Platforms / OTAs
- Email Insights
- Surveys / Feedback
- ...TALK TO YOUR CUSTOMERS



CONTENT PILLARS

A content pillar is a subset of topics or themes which create the foundation for your overall content strategy.

ENTERTAIN

Quizzes, competitions, polls, Q&A, reels etc

INSPIRE

Endorsements, about us, cause drivers

EDUCATE

Guides, infographics, blogs, how to guides, tips & tricks

CONVERT

why join, why us etc

Pillars stop you posting too much of the same thing and think about what your followers might be missing from you.



PERSONA: YOUNG FAMILY STAY



AGE: 35-40

JOB: Admin

LOCATION: L'Derry

BUDGET: ££-£££

HOLIDAY: Family
Self Catering

ABOUT

Young family - parents are 35-40, and want to stay in Centre Parcs but can't afford it but Castlewood is a great alternative and they can bring their dog!

GOALS

- Affordable
- Family Stay
- Lots to do
- Bring Dog

CHANNELS

- Instagram
- TikTok

ISSUES

- Awareness
- Don't know about Accommodation Options
- Don't know Antrim well
- Public Transport

TALK TO THEM ABOUT

- Things to do
- Places to eat
- Treetop Adventure
- Accommodation options / Hot Tubs

BE BRAVE LIKE THE LION 🦁

- Video & Short-Form Content Reign Supreme – TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are key drivers of travel inspiration.
- UGC (User-Generated Content) is essential – If people don't see real travellers experiencing your brand, they won't trust it.
- Livestreams & Real-Time Engagement Win – Answering traveller questions in real time builds credibility.



BE BRAVE LIKE THE LION 🦁

- Embrace Video & Storytelling
- Stand Out in a Crowded Market
- Engage Fearlessly



BRAINS LIKE THE SCARECROW

- Avoid the 'Trend Trap' - Not every trend is for you!
- Plan & Schedule Content
- Know Your Audience
 - Who is following you, and what do they expect?
 - Using insights to improve engagement



HEART LIKE THE TIN MAN ❤️

- Travel is an emotional purchase
- People trust real people
- Authenticity increases customer loyalty



HEART LIKE THE TIN MAN ♥

- Lean in to authenticity - find human connection & tell your story- **Less selling, more storytelling**
- User Generated Content Matters Because it is real
- It's ok to have a brand personality
- Engage in Meaningful Conversations – Ask & answer questions authentically.



DOGS ARE PART OF THE JOURNEY TOO 🐕

36% of UK households have a dog (13.5m) -
25% of those households own 2

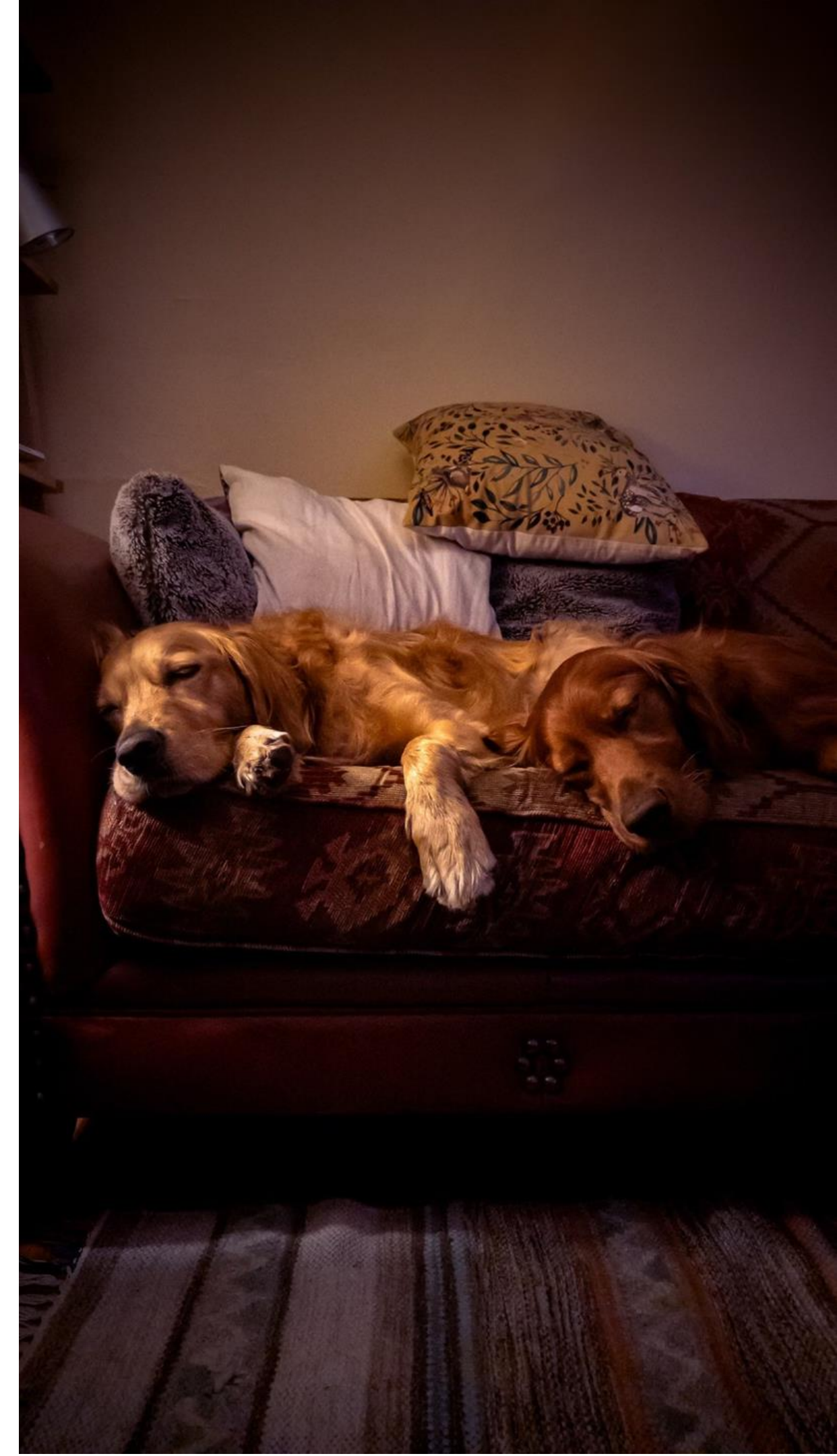
83% of people say they feel guilty leaving
their dog behind when they go on holiday

56% will opt to take their pooch away with
them if they can



DOGS ARE PART OF THE JOURNEY TOO 🐶

	Average Monthly Searches				Percentage Increase Since 2020
	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Wales	11,600	14,150	15,740	18,000	55%
Scotland	12,310	14,050	17,080	18,990	54%
England	227,890	300,760	305,330	316,470	39%
Northern Ireland	3,390	3,480	3,870	3,970	17%



📌 CHOOSING THE RIGHT PATH: WHERE TO FOCUS?

📷 Instagram & TikTok → Inspiration & engagement

📘 Facebook → Community, reviews & ads

📺 YouTube & Pinterest → Research & trip planning

🔍 Google & TripAdvisor → Credibility & bookings



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TAKE A BREAK!
BACK IN 15

DIGITAL
CULTURE

PUT YOURSELF IN YOUR CUSTOMERS SHOES



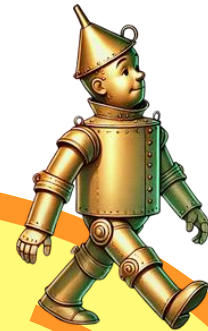
An average traveller has **400 digital moments** on average before making the booking decision, and **almost 90% of those are mobile.**

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

1

INSPIRATION (DREAMING PHASE) ✨

USERS BROWSE SOCIAL CHANNELS, SAVE POSTS & ENGAGE WITH INFLUENCERS & BLOGGERS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS



2

PLANNING (RESEARCH PHASE) 📖

COMPARE HOTELS, ATTRACTIONS & RESTAURANTS VIA INSTAGRAM & TIKTOK, SEARCHING FOR REVIEWS ON GOOGLE AND WATCH INDEPTH YOUTUBE VIDEOS

3

BOOKING (DECISION PHASE) 💳

CHECK FOR DISCOUNT CODES & LAST MINUTE DEALS. LOOKING FOR SOCIAL PROOFING (UGC & REVIEWS)



5

REMEMBERING & SHARING (POST-TRIP) 🏠

POST RECAP VIDEOS ON INSTAGRAM & TIKTOK. THEY LEAVE REVIEWS ON GOOGLE, FACEBOOK, AND TRIPADVISOR.

4

EXPERIENCE (ON-TRIP ENGAGEMENT) 🌐

THEY SHARE REAL-TIME STORIES & TIKTOKS DURING THEIR TRIP. THEY TAG LOCATIONS & BUSINESSES IN THEIR POSTS. THEY LOOK FOR ON-THE-GO RECOMMENDATIONS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA & GOOGLE.



INSPIRATION (DREAMING PHASE) ✨

 60% of travellers use social media for trip inspiration. Users browse social channels, save posts & engage with influencers & bloggers for recommendations

How To Be There

- ✓ Showcase the experience, not static images
- ✓ Use short-form video (Reels & TikToks) to grab attention.
- ✓ Work with influencers & create user-generated content (UGC) to increase reach & engagement.
- ✓ Make your location discoverable via hashtags, geotags, and trending sounds.

Best Platforms for Inspiration?



PLANNING (RESEARCH PHASE)

 86% of travellers say they would book with a brand that provides useful, engaging content during the planning phase. Users compare hotels, attractions, and restaurants via social channels and watch indepth videos on YouTube.

How To Be There

- ✓ Keep your business profiles up to date (GMB, links on profiles, OTAs etc)
- ✓ Use Instagram Highlights for FAQs e.g., Room Types, Menus, Prices, Do you allow pets?
- ✓ Create carousel posts (e.g. “Top 5 Things to Do in /at”)

Best Platforms for Planning?



BOOKING (DECISION PHASE)

 70% of travellers rely on user-generated content (UGC) before making a booking. Users check last-minute deals via social media. They look for social proof (reviews & UGC) before booking and use DMs to ask last-minute questions.


How To Be There

- ✓ Ensure easy booking through social platforms (link in bio, clickable buttons).
- ✓ Post “Last-Minute Offers” on Instagram Stories & Facebook.
- ✓ Offer instant support via Messenger or WhatsApp.
- ✓ Encourage UGC & guest testimonials—share positive reviews!

Best Platforms for Booking?



EXPERIENCE (ON-TRIP ENGAGEMENT)

 83% of travellers post about their trips on social media while traveling. Travellers share real-time Stories & TikToks during their trip, tagging locations & businesses in their posts. They look for on-the-go recommendations via social & Google. They ask for support via WhatsApp & Messenger.

How To Be There

- ✓ Encourage tagging & check-ins (e.g., “Tag us for a feature!”)
- ✓ Repost customer Stories & UGC (with permission).
- ✓ Run in-destination challenges (e.g., “Post a pic here & tag us to win!”).
- ✓ Use WhatsApp or Messenger to provide instant traveler support.

Best Platforms for On Trip Engagement?



REMEMBERING & SHARING (POST-TRIP) 🏠

📊 76% of travelers say they post travel photos after their trip, influencing others. They post recap videos on Instagram & TikTok. They leave reviews on Google, Facebook, and TripAdvisor. They engage with brands post-trip (memories, loyalty programs, referral codes).

How To Be There

- ✓ Repost user-generated content & thank guests for sharing.
- ✓ Encourage reviews on Google & TripAdvisor.
- ✓ Engage in post-trip follow-ups (loyalty programs, exclusive offers).
- ✓ Talk to your customers - what would they like to see on their next visit?

Best Platforms for Post Trip Sharing?



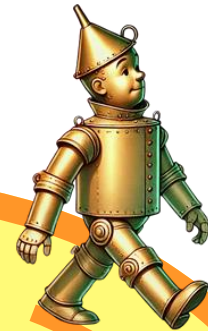
**POSTING EVRY DAY IS NOT A SOCIAL
MEDIA STRATEGY.**

CREATING CONTENT FOR THESE TOUCHPOINTS IS!

1

INSPIRATION (DREAMING PHASE) ✨

USERS BROWSE SOCIAL CHANNELS, SAVE POSTS & ENGAGE WITH INFLUENCERS & BLOGGERS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS



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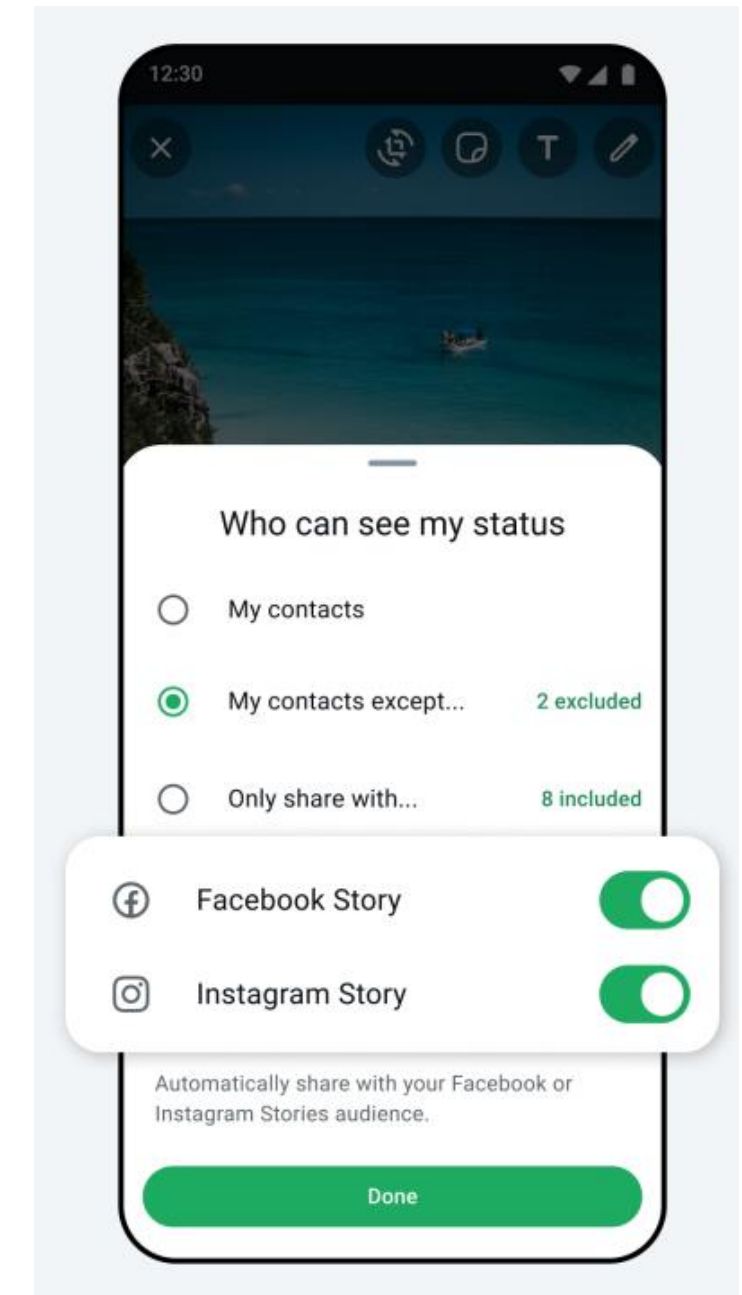
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FACEBOOK NEWS

- Facebook is testing new 'Local' and 'Explore' tabs aiming to make it easier for users to find content that matters to them, enhancing the overall user experience.
- An updated Video tab has been introduced, bringing together Reels, longer videos, and Live content into a unified fullscreen experience
- WhatsApp will let you share your status on Instagram and Facebook






FACEBOOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

How Travellers Use Facebook

- They browse travel pages & groups for recommendations
- They engage with tourism videos & destination guides
- They follow hotels, tour operators & attractions for inspiration
- They check Facebook reviews before booking
- They look for limited-time offers & promotions



FACEBOOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

-  Showcase your destination, hotel, restaurant, or tour experiences.
-  Give real-time walkthroughs, Q&A sessions, or behind-the-scenes content.
-  Highlight real guest experiences & UGC (User-Generated Content).
-  Promote seasonal events, dining specials, & limited-time deals.

LINKEDIN RANKING UPDATE

- Non-professional content will no longer be rewarded in the same way
- Prioritisation of content from first-degree connections
- Personalisation & SEO
- Engagement
- Sharing of your own insight

LINKEDIN & THE CORPORATE JOURNEY

 LinkedIn is not just for corporate networking—it's a powerful platform for B2B tourism marketing, industry partnerships, and professional engagement. Here's how hotels, tour operators, attractions, and restaurants can make the most of LinkedIn.

- Reaches decision-makers – Travel agents, corporate event planners, and high-value travelers use LinkedIn.
- Builds credibility – Thought leadership and company updates enhance brand trust.
- Drives B2B bookings – LinkedIn is ideal for group bookings, corporate events, and business travel marketing.
- Connects with industry professionals – Useful for partnerships with influencers, travel agents, and tourism boards.



LINKEDIN & THE CORPORATE JOURNEY

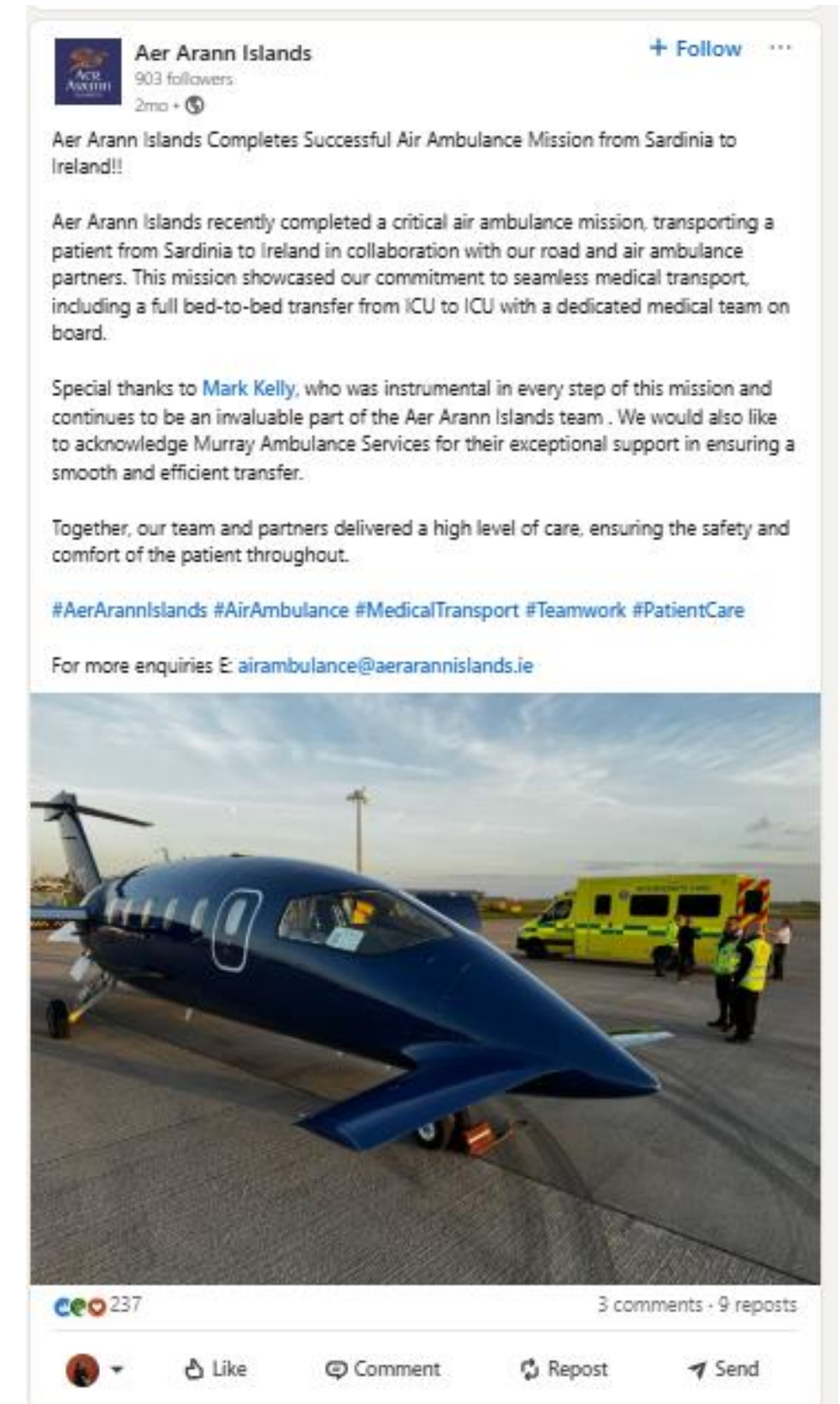
-  Share Expert Insights & Industry Trends
-  Engage in discussions about tourism recovery, hospitality technology, and customer experience
-  Write LinkedIn Articles & Long-Form Posts
-  Run industry talks with tourism experts, local business owners, or travel influencers

The rise of ‘workcations’, personalization of guest experiences, sustainability in the industry, CSR efforts.

LINKEDIN & THE CORPORATE JOURNEY

- ✓ Target Business Travellers & Event Planners
- ✓ Join & Engage in LinkedIn Groups
- ✓ Attract Top Talent in Hospitality & Tourism

Do you offer corporate packages?
Does your hotel have work retreat options?



**ALMOST 40% OF YOUNG PEOPLE NOW
PREFER TO USE TIKTOK AND
INSTAGRAM FOR SEARCH RATHER
THAN GOOGLE**

INSTAGRAM NEWS

In January Instagram took advantage of the impending doom of TikTok and made some changes;

- The introduction of 3 minute reels
- The new rectangular grid - previously 1080x1080 (1x1), now 1013x1350 (3x4)
- Highlights moving to grid? 🤔 (new tab apparently)
- New editing app 'IG Reels' to launch March
- Ability to re-order your profile grid, customising how your grid looks

If you don't already, follow [@mosseri](#) for the latest news.



We are simplifying the profile.

INSTAGRAM & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

How Travellers Use Instagram

- They browse Instagram Reels & Stories for travel inspiration
- They save posts & reels for future trip ideas
- They follow influencers & travel bloggers to discover recommendations
- They compare hotels, restaurants & tours via Instagram profiles
- They check Stories & Highlights for details on facilities, food, and amenities



📍 INSTAGRAM & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS



Interrupting the scroll
with attention
grabbing, human and
authentic content

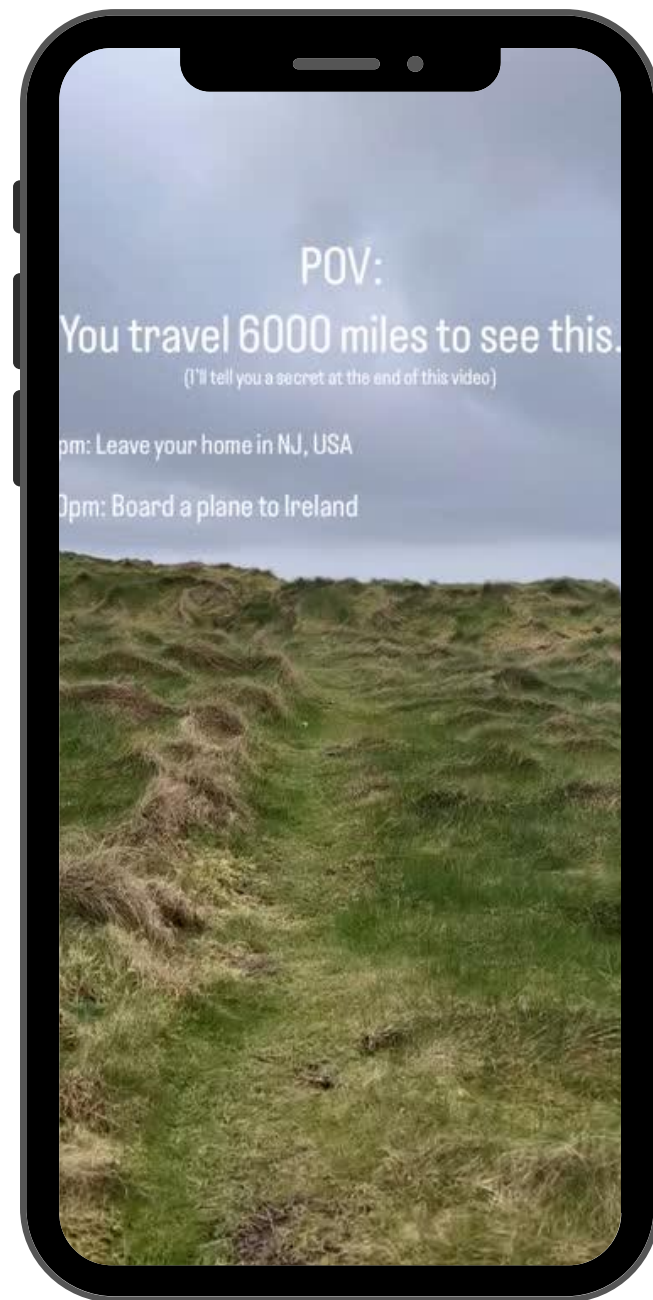
@CASSIESTOKES

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

@DISCOVER NI



📍 INSTAGRAM & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS



@OLLIESTOURS

Interrupting the scroll
with attention
grabbing, human and
authentic content ..

...and trending sound







INSTAGRAM & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

- Post high-quality visuals showcasing unique experiences, not just properties
- Use Instagram Reels to highlight destinations, experiences & seasonal events
- Leverage influencer partnerships & UGC (User-Generated Content)
- Make your location discoverable using hashtags, geotags & trending sounds

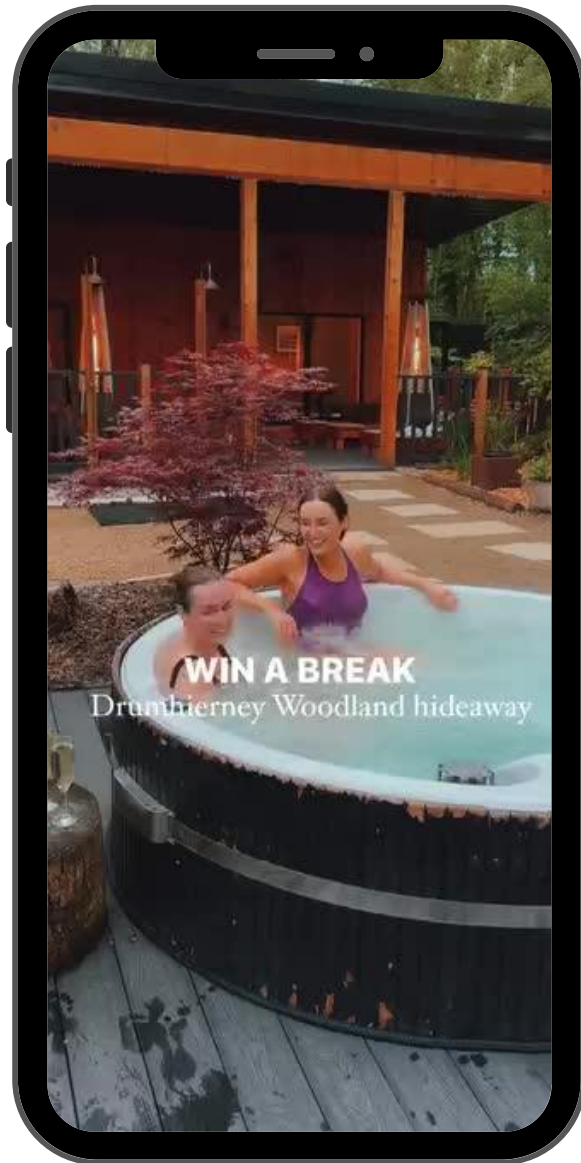


INSTAGRAM & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

-  Keep your profile updated—use Story Highlights for key info (room tours, menus, FAQ, policies).
-  Make booking easy—use a direct booking link in bio or Story swipe-up links.
-  Run in-destination challenges
-  Repost UGC & thank guests for sharing



📍 INSTAGRAM & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS



Influencers & Content Creators

- ✓ Work with relevant creators
- ✓ Check their engagement is real
- ✓ Ensure their content is quality
- ✓ Agree fair usage of content



TIKTOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

TikTok Matters For Tourism!

- TikTok has revolutionized travel discovery—users now turn to short-form video for trip ideas, recommendations & itineraries
- High engagement with travel content: Hashtags like #TravelTok & #Visit[YourCity] attract millions of views daily
- Younger demographics (18-34) rely on TikTok more than Google for travel inspiration.



TIKTOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

How Travellers Use TikTok

- They scroll through For You Page for travel inspiration
- They save TikToks of destinations, hotels, restaurants, & experiences for later
- They engage with influencers, travel bloggers & brand content to discover new places
- They search for itineraries, restaurant recommendations & travel tips via hashtags.
- They look at first-hand experiences shared by creators & other travellers.



TIKTOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

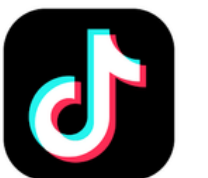
How Travellers Use TikTok

- They comment on videos & ask questions to get real-time feedback.
- They use TikTok search instead of Google
- They follow TikTok recommendations for hidden gems & off-the-beaten-path locations.
- They post recap videos of their trip (highlights, day-by-day breakdowns).
- They engage in discussions about their experiences in comments & duets.



TIKTOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS

- ✓ Short-Form Videos – Under 30 seconds, punchy, engaging, & visually immersive.
- ✓ "POV" Style Content – Bring travelers into the experience (e.g., "POV: You're Waking Up in the Best Hotel in Belfast").
- ✓ TikTok Challenges & Trends – Participate in popular sound trends & travel challenges.



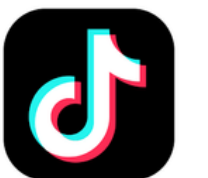
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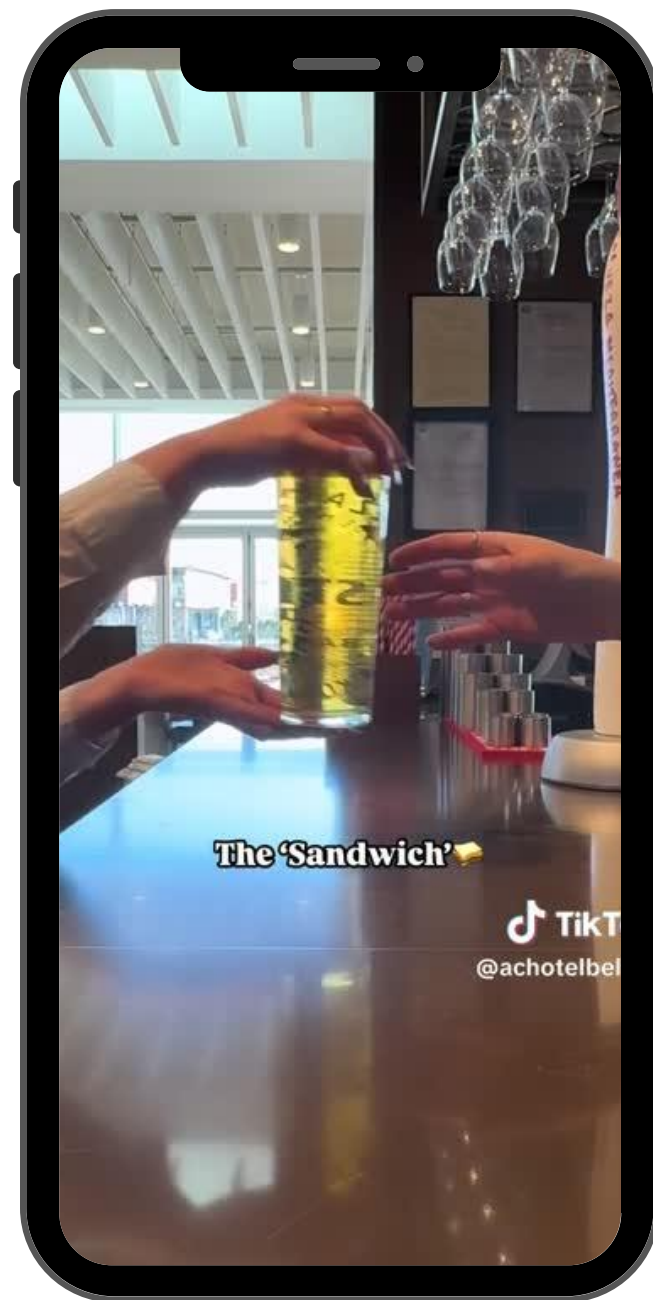
LETS GO HYDRO

Interrupting the scroll
with attention
grabbing, human and
authentic content ..

...that provides
information &
showcases your best
bits.



📌 TIKTOK & THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY: ALIGNING CONTENT WITH TRAVELLER NEEDS



AC HOTEL

Interrupting the scroll
with attention
grabbing, human and
authentic content ..

...that shows
personality



HOW TO RANK ON TIKTOK

Highest priority goes to **what you say out loud on TikTok and then adding captions.**

Say your keyword in the hook. Eg. *“The 5 cocktails you **NEED** to try in Belfast”.*

2nd priority is the **text overlay you add to your video**

(which is why it is so important this is added within the app!) Your main keyword should be on the screen for the first 3 seconds of the video.

3rd priority is the **text you use in your caption.**

This should use your main keyword but hashtags are a great way to add in other related search terms



TIKTOK THOUGHTS



Part Three Digital



Hannah Bryans • 1st
Director & Co-Founder at Part Three Digital
1w • Edited •

I watched 100 TikToks and categorised them and here's what I found...

Micro influencers/'Regular' People are dominating TikTok feeds and being prioritised by the algorithm

Brands weren't getting a look in but maybe because so many are still hoping Instagram content works here?

Ads not purpose built for TikTok felt jarring, UGC made me watch longer every time

The amount of publications shows the opportunities for PR and TikTok to work together

Of course this is very much an insight into a 30 something female based in NI BUT its also social media 101 - what content is actually being prioritised by the algorithm rather than what content you are assuming will work/that you are just posting from another channel.

21:34



< All iCloud



Ads

3 High End Luxury Fashion Ads - all for the same brand

11 Mid Luxe - High Street Fashion Ads - a few repeats

2 Big Brand FMCG Ads

2 Large Make Up Brands - both using UGC

Influencers

1 celebrity

5 macro creators

17 mid level creators

28 micro creators

8 micro-mid selling on TikTok shop

Businesses

3 small local business in NI

2 small business outside of Ireland

1 Founder of medium sized local business

2 medium sized business in NI

Publications

5 publications like Vogue or LuxeGen

4 dedicated meme/niche pages

3 TV stations

Everything else...

2 dog owned pages

1 agency though the content was a meme

3 lives - all very chaotic



WHO'S COMING ON THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD?

- 🦁 Stand out with bold, engaging content on TikTok & Instagram to capture attention and inspire travel.
- 🧠 Use Facebook & LinkedIn strategically to plan, analyse, and engage with the right audiences.
- ♥️ Leverage UGC & emotional storytelling to build trust and foster long-term connections with travellers.
- ✨ Guide Travelers Like Dorothy – Lead your audience through the customer journey, from inspiration to booking and beyond, ensuring a seamless experience.

NO JARGON,
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DIGITAL.

DIGITAL
CULTURE

THANK YOU!

THE SOCIAL MEDIA JOURNEY:
Follow the Yellow Brick Road to Success

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