infegy

10 WAYS

TO USE SOCIAL LISTENING

WHAT IS SOCIAL LISTENING?

Social listening is the process of discovering and then analyzing what is being said about companies, individuals and brands online. It usually involves "scrubbing" social media and other interactive platforms for mentions and conversations surrounding any topic, keywords, or entity that is relevant to you or your business. While different social listening platforms offer different arrays of metrics and analytics to process social media datasets, the end purpose is to draw insights that reveal and inform opportunities for action.

Social listening isn't just for brands

Its insights can be activated for planning, strategy, research and visionary leadership for all industries, and on different scales. Social listening can be used for intricate, nuanced analyses of a specific audience segment as well as examination of mass, global conversations.

In this sense, social listening involves more than monitoring social media for mentions. People express feelings when they post online, often with more honesty than they would in person. Therefore, the ability to analyze not just the quantitative aspects, but also the qualitative sentiments and intents in the posts is what sets social listening apart from merely monitoring social media.

Why integrate social listening into your business endeavors

Simply put, social listening equips you with information – often surprising truths – that are based on what people are actually saying. This will empower you to act with confidence and timeliness. Social listening is one of the best ways to understand what people are saying about you, your brand, competitors or other topics relevant to your business – unprompted and from their own environment.

With social listening, you can...

• Acquire a fuller perspective of your audiences and consumers.

• Discover surprising truths based on what people are actually saying.

• Understand customers, and thereby, address their concerns and retain their loyalty.

• Uncover hidden trends in the data.

• Refine predictions about your market.

And so much more!

In this eBook...

- We introduce 10 use cases for social listening.
- Highlight the benefits and value of each.
- Suggest personas that would benefit the most from the use case.
- Offer an example of social listening in action based on real-world use cases.

10 Ways to Use Social Listening

1. Personas & Audiences
2. Trend Analysis
3. Audience Insights
4. Product R&D
5. Customer Experience
6. Campaign Strategy & Performance
7. Brand Analysis
8. New Business Pitches
9. Competitive Intelligence
10. Strategic Relationships

1 Personas & Audiences

While the internet has its share of anonymous trolls, a fair number of users conversing on social media actually offer multi-faceted images of who they are in the real world. They pack their bios with important details about their age, gender-identity, relationship status, whether they are parents, which languages they speak, and so much more.

Their posts also reveal further details about their interests, hobbies, passions and service areas, dietary preferences, health journeys, and political inclinations. And, of course, they talk about you – your business, brand, service, your competitors, causes that matter to you, or aligned interests. With social listening tools, you can gather all these scattered data points, filter through them to discover audience segments, and build the personas that attract the most valuable customers to your business.

Social listening can lead you to:

• Discover who your audience actually is! This is more than demographics - while diving into social data on who's talking about you, you're likely to discover surprising participants who are engaged in your space.

• Discover who your audience could be. There are people who have shared interests and conversation topics with your usual clients. Social listening and analysis point the way, and you'll soon be devising bridges to the new markets.

• Seek out audiences that are not heard, and meet them where they are.

• Hear what your customers are saying about you and why they buy from you. Use that to identify your ideal customer and to create relevant personas.

• Parse out audience segments and personas for strategic planning and target marketing.

Use case in action

A client in the beverage industry used Infegy Atlas to research and to build the perfect persona for their sparkling water line. They first found that when it came to posts about sparkling water, people who self-identified as moms were the third-largest category **(Image 1)**. Diving into this, they discovered all kinds of information specific to moms who posted the most about sparkling water: their age-range **(Image 2)**, the contexts and associated categories in which they discussed sparkling water, as well as the topics that interest these moms **(Image 3)**. Processing the biodata, the client discovered primary identities and passions of the "sparkling water moms," all of which they used for target marketing.

Image 1:
Word cloud of author-bio keywords within a search for sparkling and seltzer water; mom-related keywords appear with high frequency and high relevance.
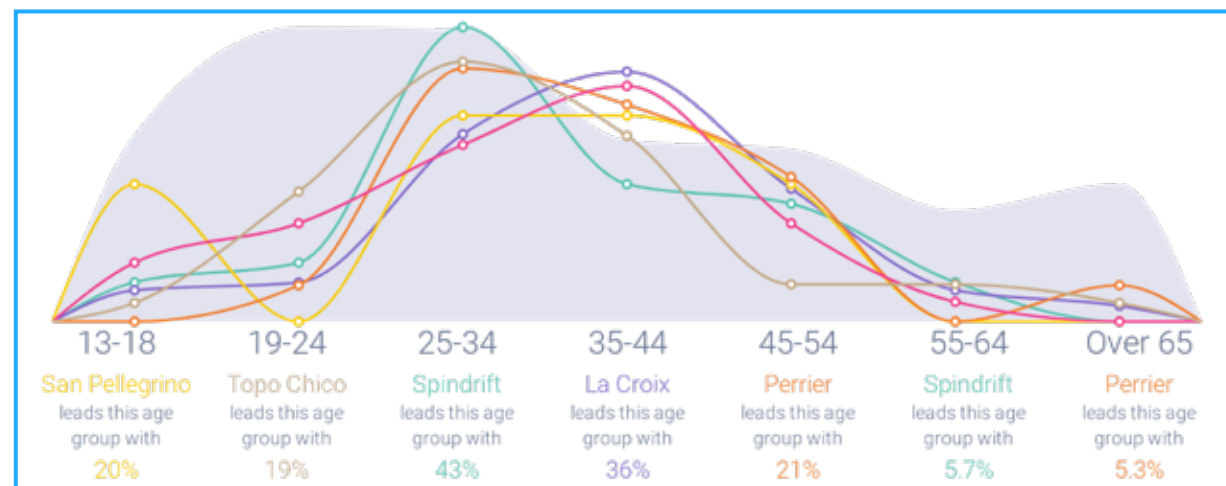
Image 2:
Age demographics of authors identifying as moms within conversations on sparkling water.

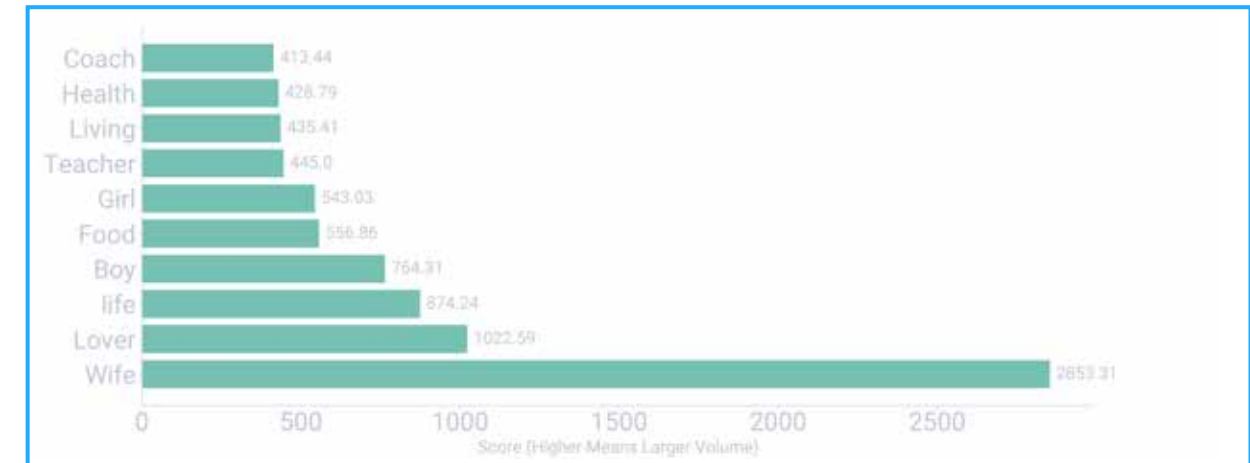The topic is most popular with moms in the 25-34 year age group.

Image 3:
Associated source bio phrases discussed by the "sparkling water moms." These authors also post frequently about desserts, baking, and cooking.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Strategist

Researcher

Product Development Manager

**Resource Development and Fundraising Professional**

2 Trend Analysis

Social conversations are lively indicators of the volume of interest in a topic, associated interests, causality, concerns and desires. Identified early, trends can present tremendous advantages in heavily competitive markets. Also, depending on the historical dataset captured by your social listening platform, you could dive back as far as 10-15 years to examine historical trends on your brand health. The correlation between seasons and sales, or even the ebbs and flows in nostalgia items and retro styles.

Analyze social conversations for trends so that you can:

• Compare and contextualize current and historical data.

• Predict whether and where to invest your resources.

• Track trends prior to and after campaigns.

• Plan tactics, logistics, and production volume for seasonal and holiday items.

• Determine causality for the ebbs and flow of social conversation.
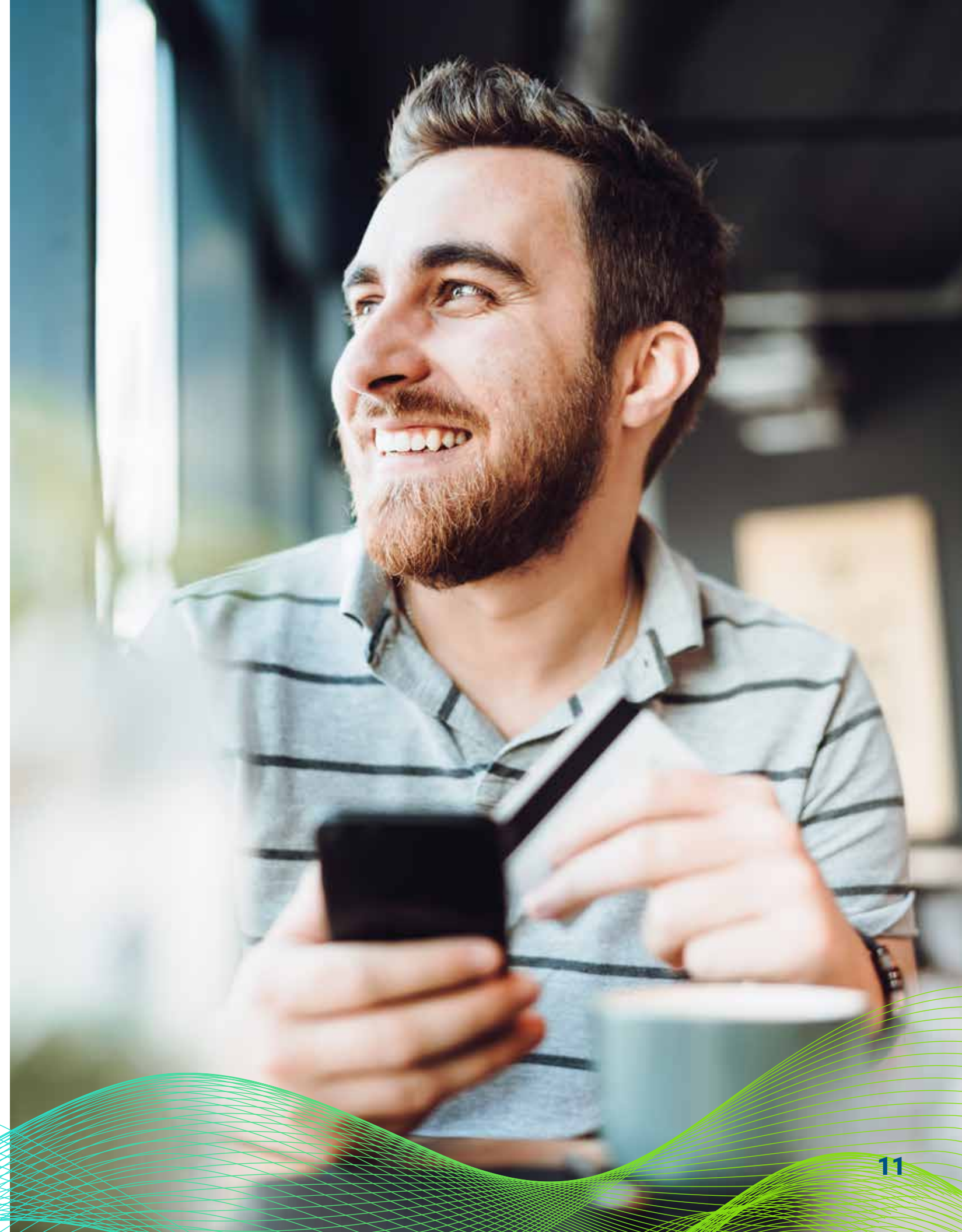
Use case in action

Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) programs trended upwards sharply between 2020-2021. Social listening reveals that it is especially popular with people aged 25-34, a group that typically hasn't yet developed large lines of available credit **(Image 1)**. Examining this trend further, strategists from a regional airline company found that the program has been discussed extensively in conversations related to fashion, electronics and grocery companies as far back as 2016, but not extensively in relation to air travel **(Image 2)**. While this offers a possible competitive advantage to the airline – to be one of the first to have a BNPL ticketing program – diving further via social listening showed that the high positive sentiment around these programs are currently on a downtrend **(Image 3)**. Combined with emergent associated topical concerns and traditional market research, the downtrend is more of a warning sign of risk that BNPL programs may not be sustainable in the near future – especially for a smaller regional airline.
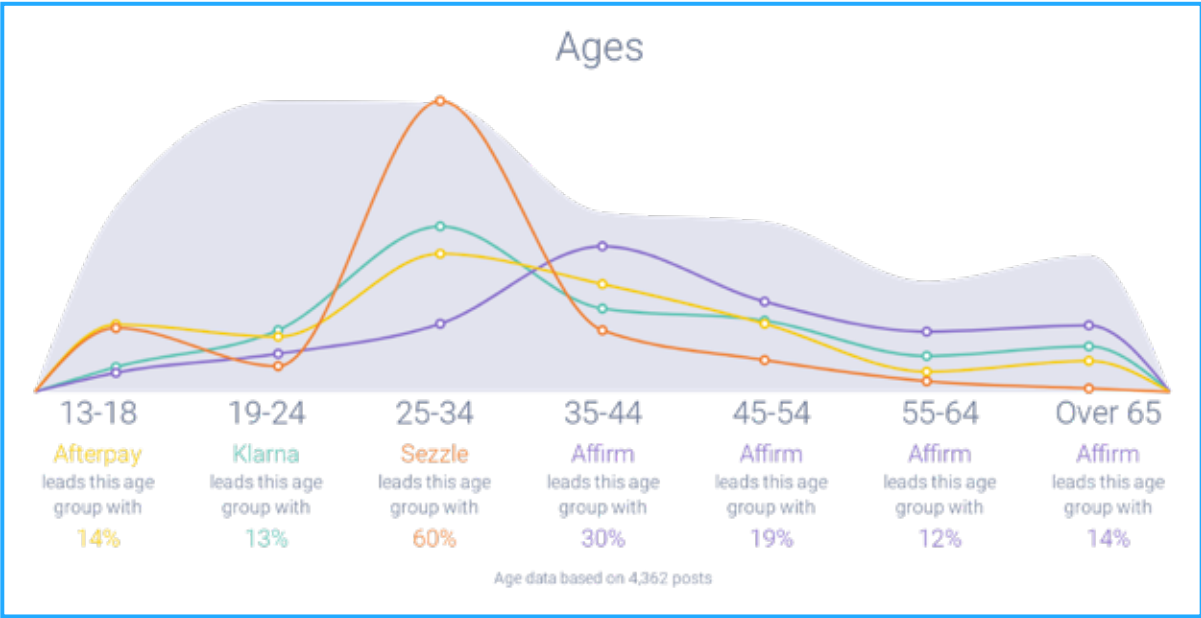

Image 1:
Age demographics of BNPL conversants by leading BNPL programs; highest volume of conversation by the 25-34 year age group.

Image 2:
BNPL conversation by industry or sector; airline BNPL conversation in purple.
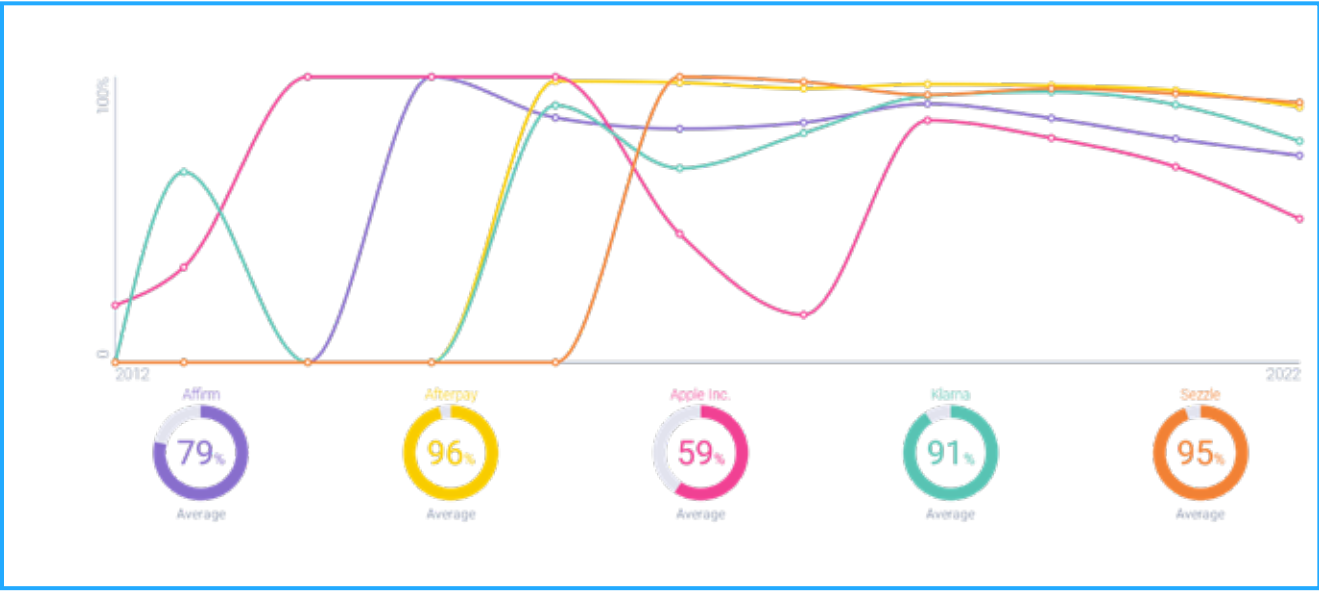

Image 3:
Trends showing the sentiment across BNPL programs over the last ten years. Sentiment on the downtrend after several years of explosive popularity.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Product Research Manager

Brand Manager

Financial or Business Analyst

Strategist

3

Audience Insights

You don't have to rely on assumptions, or be blind-sided by unknowns. What are audiences actually saying, feeling, wanting or critiquing? When people openly pour their thoughts and opinions into the online arena, social listening is the best way to gather intel and also to engage the dialogue.

Social listening leads you to:

• Uncover what is important to your audience and why.

• Measure their purchase intent.

• Ascertain which aspects of the conversation are important to your industry.

• Discover how your competitors influence how consumers feel about you.

Use case in action

Marketers for health industry products used social listening to reshape their messaging to cancer patients. Using social listening, they discovered that, contrary to assumption and messaging, hair loss was not the primary pain point of patients undergoing chemotherapy. Across the board, trends show that the conversational volume about fatigue and nausea is greater than that of hair loss **(Image 1)**. Furthermore, linguistic analysis of the hair loss conversation revealed a high percentage of positivity within this conversation **(Image 2)**. In fact, with social trends leaning towards body-positivity and inclusive beauty, and with a growing community of awareness and support around breast cancer, it is no wonder that the top positive keywords in the conversation are "beautiful," "loved," and "happy." **(Image 3)**
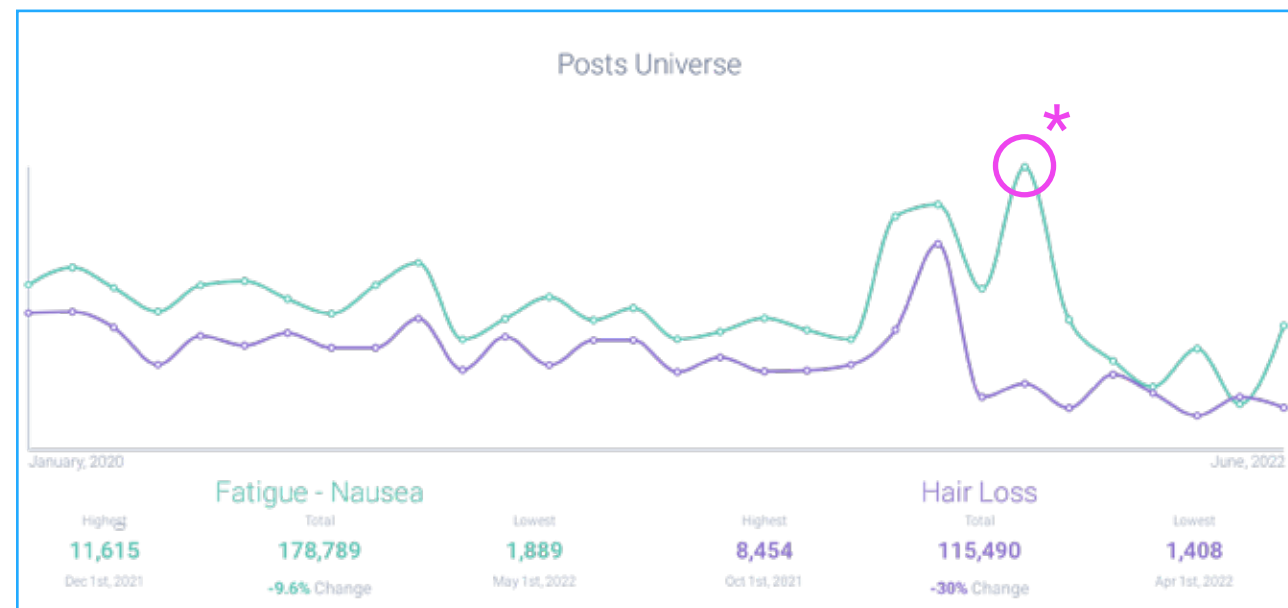
Image 1:
Trend line comparing sentiment around hair-loss related conversation vs. fatigue/nausea. Post volume is higher and more negative around fatigue/nausea versus hair-loss.
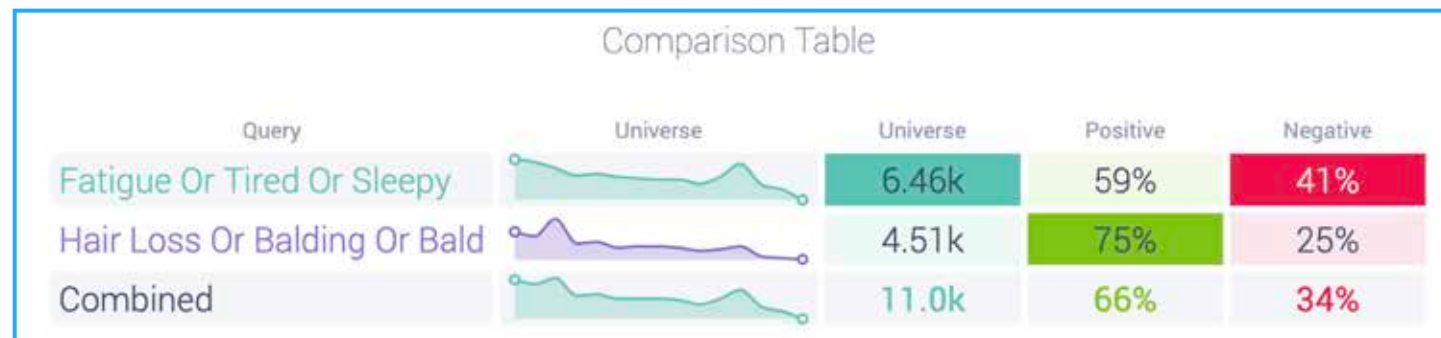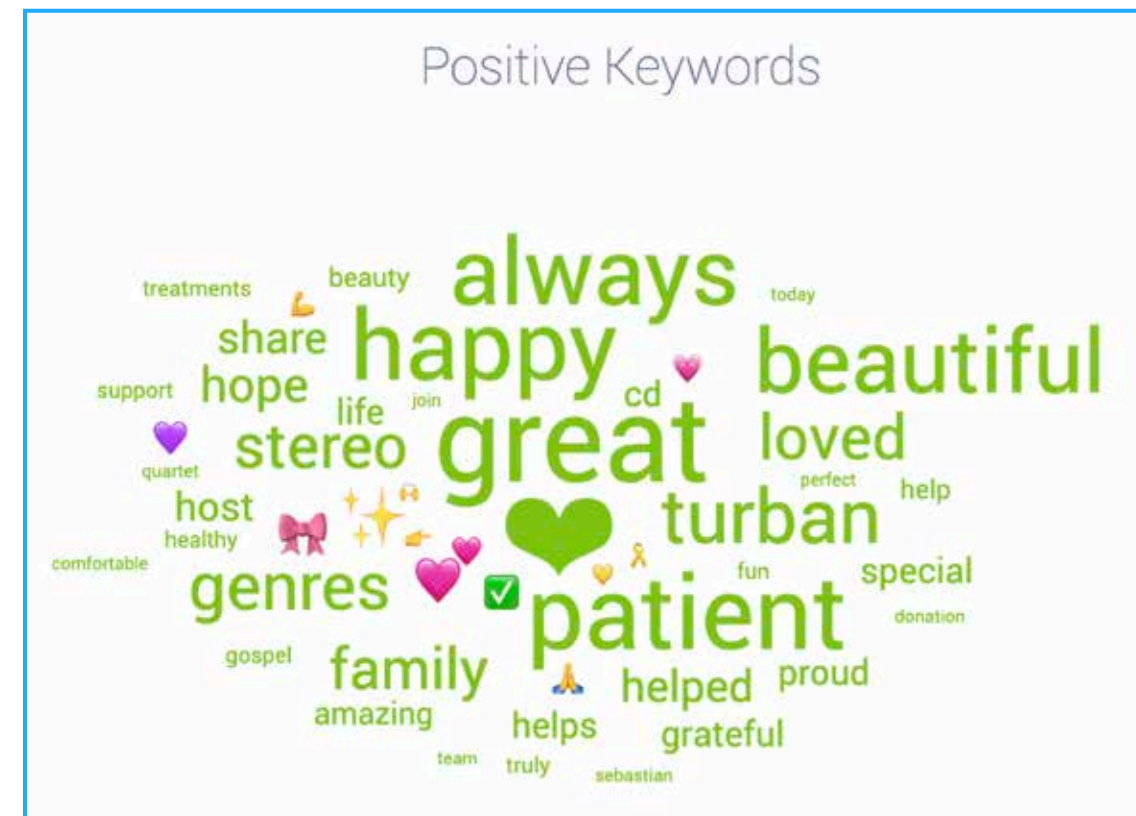*Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Image 2:
Table comparing sentiment around hair-loss related conversation vs. fatigue/nausea. Post volume is higher and more negative around fatigue/nausea versus hair-loss.

Image 3:
Word Cloud showing positive keywords relating to hair loss. Note the higher positive keywords like "beautiful" or "helped" around empowering hair-loss patients.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Campaign Strategist

Data Analyst

Strategist

Brand Manager

Product Research Manager

4 Product R&D

Social media users are quite open with what they enjoy, dislike, dread or eagerly anticipate. While these conversations might be profuse, once they are analyzed, structured and filtered through a social listening and analytics platform, you'll find yourself with real, high-quality data. You can then use this for insights to inform product innovation, improvements, and net-new development. In this way, social listening is a tremendously educational experience.

You can quickly learn:

• What consumers want and what they respond to.

• What gaps exist in your market that offer you an opportunity for action.

• Consumer suggestions for product and service improvements or variations.

• Which styles or trends could be incorporated into your product road map.

• Ways to inform market survey development and supplement market survey data.

Use case in action

A client in the footwear industry used social listening to examine their own shoe brand. They discovered a surprising shared interest amongst a significant percentage of their target audience – a beloved toy and cartoon franchise from the 1980s. The company developed a limited edition pair of shoes featuring the retro brand, and the product sold out within 48 hours of hitting the market!

Employ this use case if you are a...

Product Manager

Researcher

Product Marketer

Brand Manager

5 Customer Experience

Brand Manager

Customer Experience Manager

Client Success Manager

Researcher

Since audiences are very vocal on social media, social listening is the quickest, most cost-effective way to check in with how your business is (or is not) meeting customer expectations. Social listening allows you to lean into the conversation and pick up on the consumer voice and perspective, while also providing you with context about their pain points. Ultimately, using social listening to gain an overview and understanding of customers' experiences will preserve brand reputation, while fostering customer loyalty.

Social listening will facilitate how you:

• Capture unsolicited responses, feedback and sentiment from your customers.

• Understand customer experience with your products and services.

• Remain poised to address pain points and customer grievances quickly.

• Gain feedback on the quality of your business partners in shipping, packaging and manufacturing.

Use case in action

As new, mid-sized businesses flourish in the e-commerce space, they also grow in their reliance on third party vendors for packaging, shipping, and even manufacturing. A beauty industry client used social listening to monitor their own brand mentions, and picked up on poor customer satisfaction related to their shipping vendor. In the process, however, they made another interesting discovery: a seemingly insignificant change they made to marginally improve revenue – cutting back on free samples and promotional stickers – actually resulted in a big negative hit in customer sentiment **(Image 1)**. Customers were vocal about how much they looked forward to the free items that typically came with their orders, and expressed sentiments like disappointment and sadness.

Image 1:
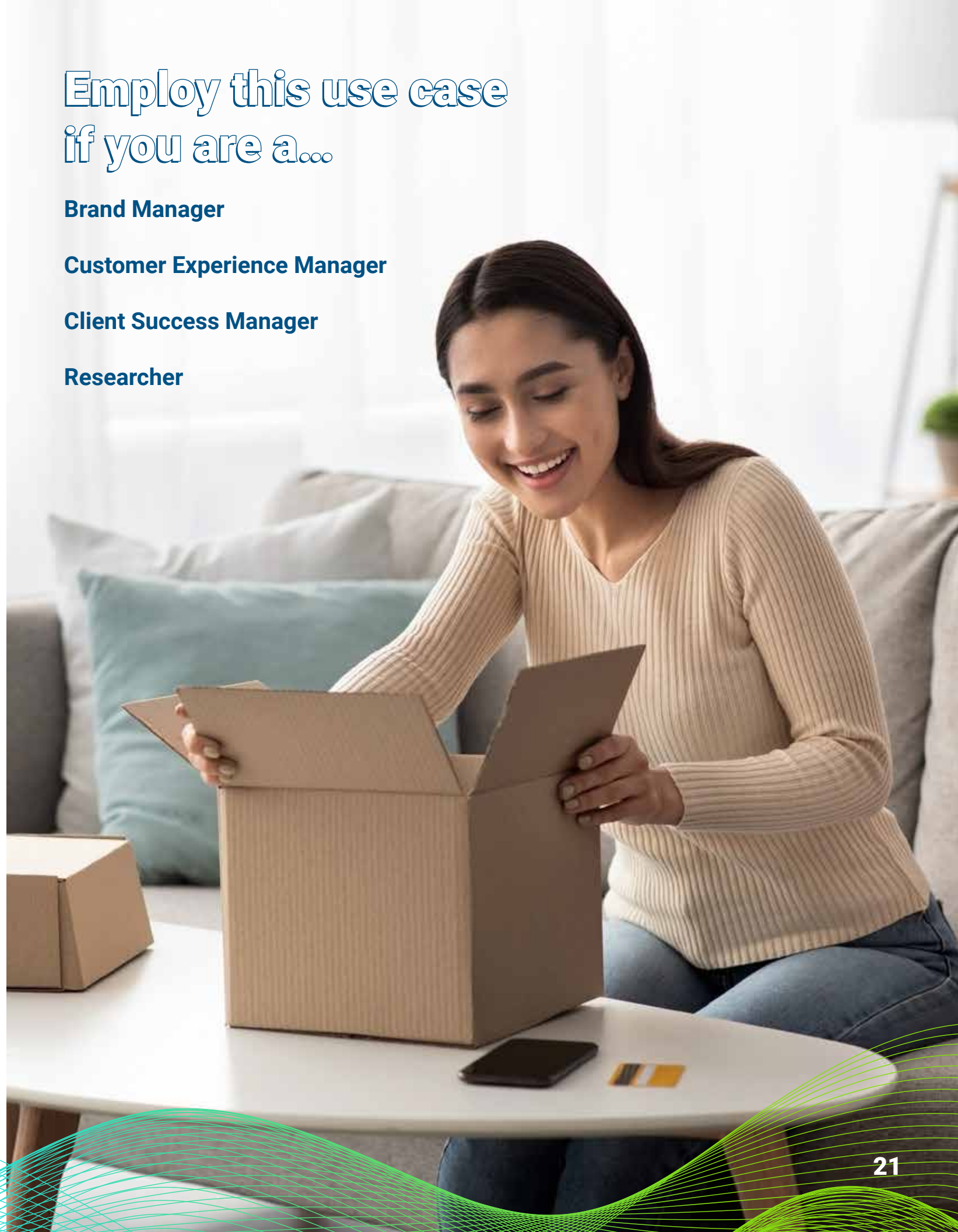Linguistics analysis - word cloud depicting sentiment within the conversation.

6 Campaign Strategy & Performance

Social listening is invaluable for every step of the campaign process. Whether you are devising unique branding and strategy, monitoring progress of live campaigns, or measuring the impact of all the various decisions you made along the campaign journey – the world of consumer conversations, insights and responses has an abundance of vital data for you.

Using social listening, you can:

• Refine market survey development and supplement collected data.

• Uncover valuable insights and trends to strengthen marketing efforts and measure their effectiveness.

• Learn how consumers react to competitors' brands and craft messages to set yourself apart.

• Build targeted persona and audience segments to make tailored campaigns that speak directly to the relevant audience.

• Discover where and on which channels to engage your target audience.
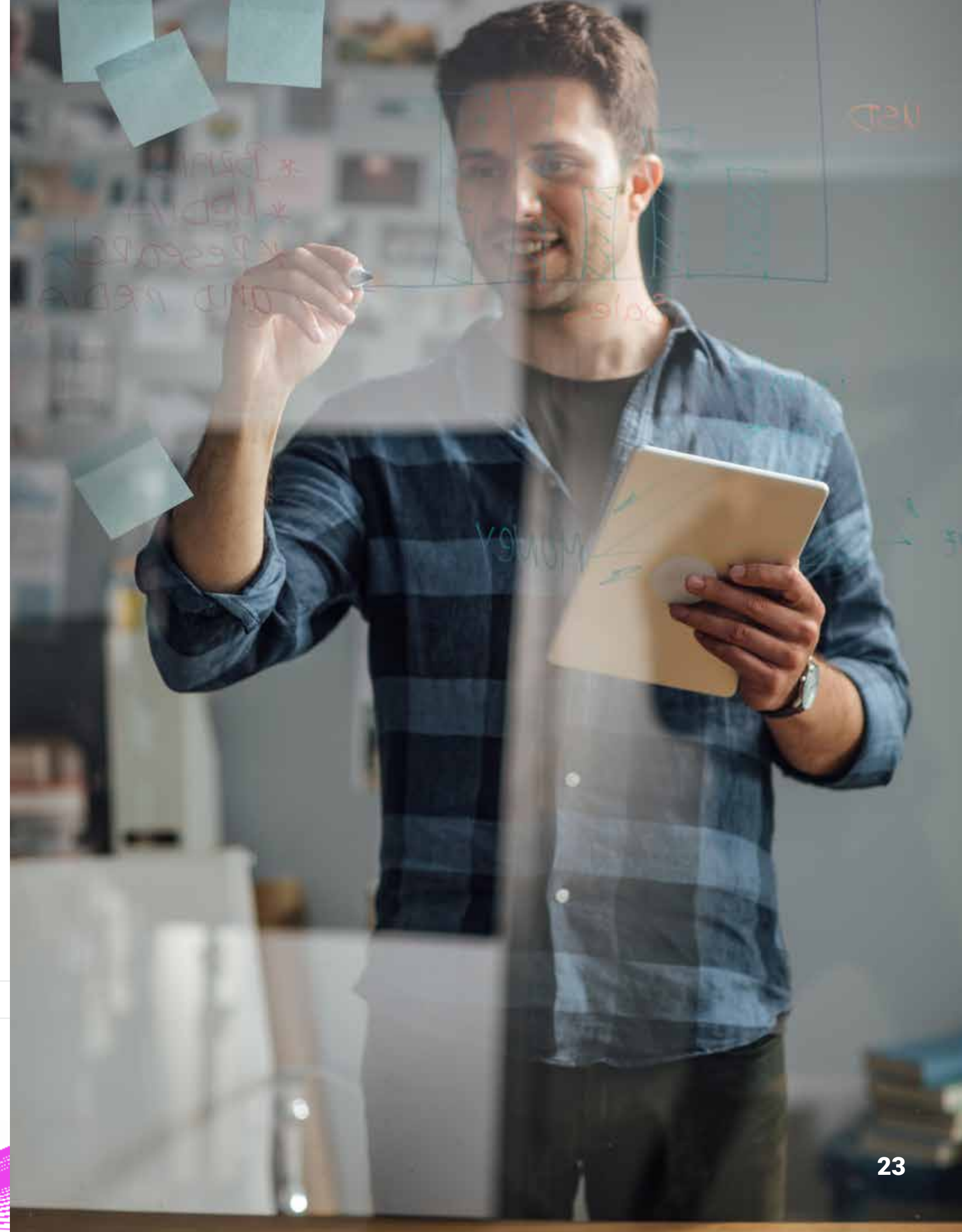
Use case in action

While developing campaigns for Canadian audiences, a client in the alcoholic beverage industry used social listening to identify where and at which events they could get in front of each of their target audiences. The beverage line's US persona preferred sporting events and comedy venues like clubs and theaters. Social listening for their target audiences in Toronto still pointed to sporting events, but rather than comedy venues, data led them to develop campaigns that would reach at-home gamers and streamers.

Image 1:
Key topics within conversations of Canadian authors matching the client's persona. "Streamer" and "Gamer" appeared most relevant.
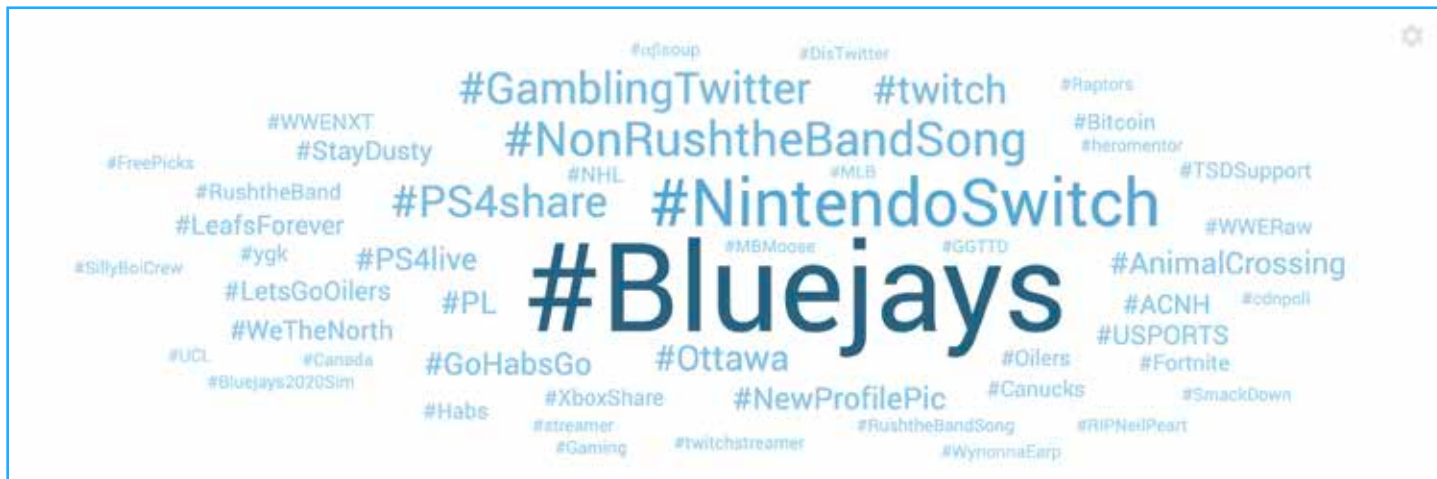
Image 2:
Larger hashtags represent frequency of mentions, darker represents greater relevance to the original query.
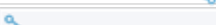
Entity	Trend	Change	Sentiment	Posts	Appearances
Nintendo Switch		-58%	79%	144	148
PlayStation 4		-51%	80%	84	87
Fortnite		-34%	46%	84	87
Animal Crossing		-76%	82%	78	80
Minecraft		23%	78%	67	74
Apex Legends		0%	79%	66	69
PlayStation 5		-34%	56%	59	60
iPhone		-25%	38%	41	44

Image 3:
Other entities, or brands, referred to in posts by the Canadian persona, along with associated sentiment. Frequency of posts about these entities are lower, but are presented with higher sentiment.
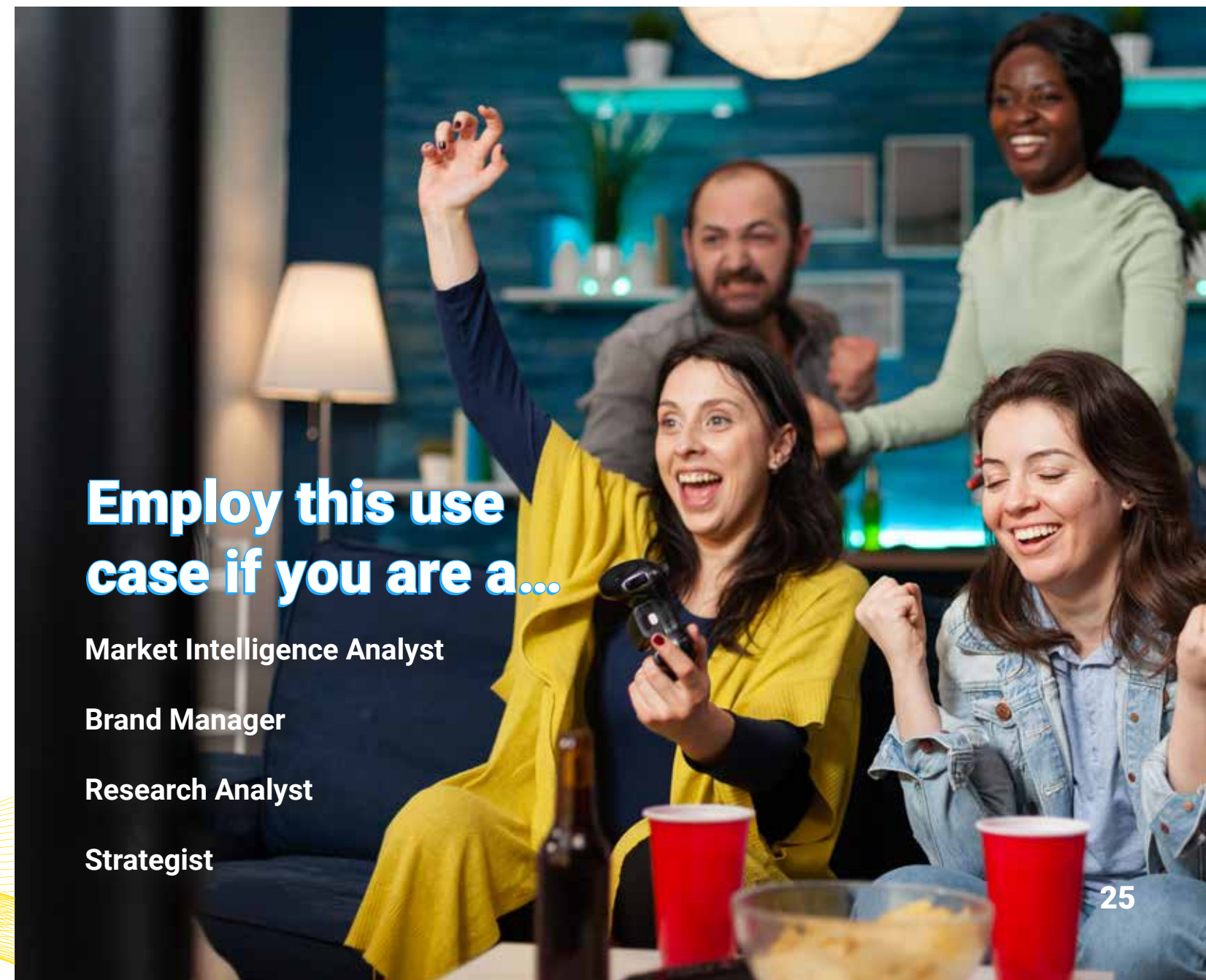
Employ this use case if you are a...

Market Intelligence Analyst

Brand Manager

Research Analyst

Strategist

7 Brand Analysis

Social listening makes the task of understanding your brand health easy. It's quickly becoming a one-stop-shop to learn who's talking about your brand, and what they're saying. Furthermore, digging into conversations and trend analysis informs you how perceptions of your brand's reputation might be changing – sometimes for the better, and sometimes pointing you to areas that need adjustments to retain loyalty and stay competitive.

Social listening for brand analysis allows you to:

• Understand how your brand is perceived in your market and take action to strengthen it.

• Acquire intelligence on your competitive landscape.

• Understand customer sentiment, passion and pain points.

• Adapt to market changes before your brand takes a hit.

• Arrange logistics to meet trending needs.

Use case in action

An entertainment industry client learned (the hard way) of a gap in their online ticketing system. After a brand-impacting website crash, they began to use social listening for a variety of brand management reasons – one of which was to predict sales demand. They did this by tracking the growing hype around bands and artists who have upcoming concerts: growing anticipation for ticket release dates indicated by uptrend of conversational volume **(Image 1)**. By tracking rising trends, they now reallocate resources to scale their systems on days when highly anticipated tickets go on sale! Preventing their website from crashing when fans are excited about purchasing concert tickets has been an effective way to maintain their brand health and customer loyalty – especially given the rising number of competitors in their arena.

Posts Universe

Total	Lowest	Average	Highest	Change
1,425,858	22,241	101,847	261,963	170%
	Apr 9th, 2021		Apr 15th, 2021	

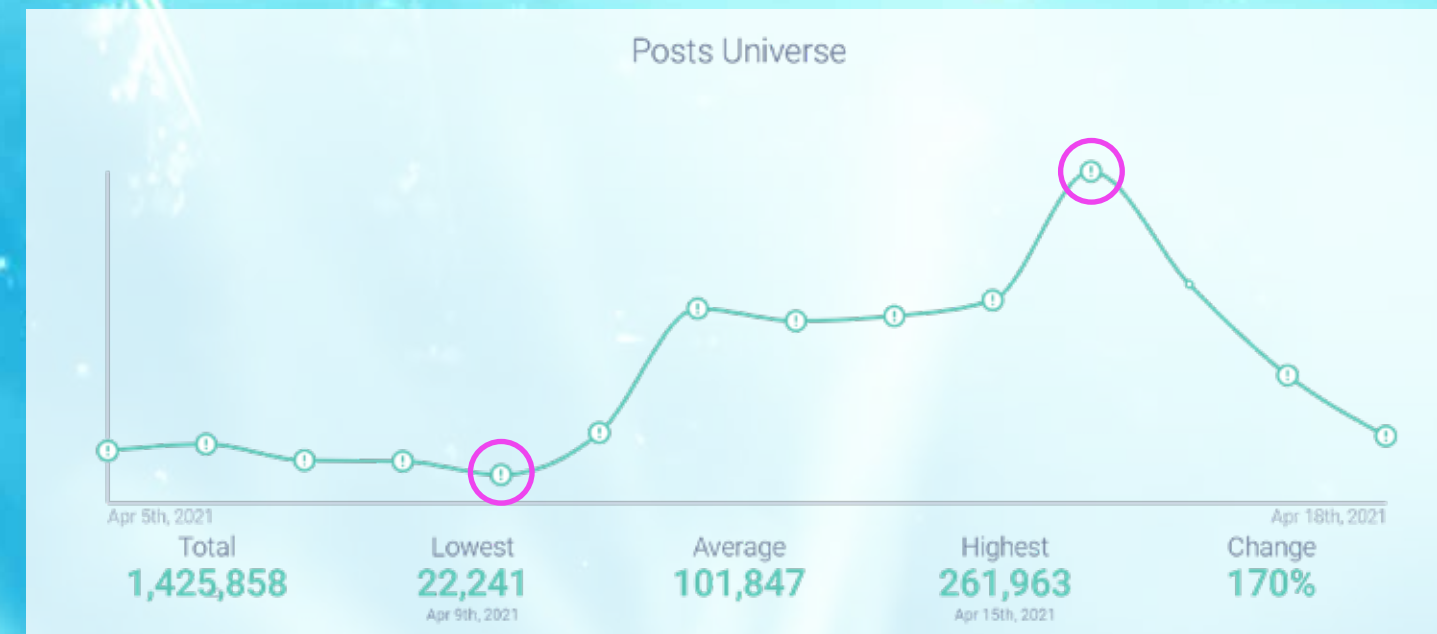Apr 5th, 2021 — Apr 18th, 2021

Image 1:
Conversational volume increases by 170%. Circles indicate beginning and end of the week leading up to concert tickets going on sale.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Brand Manager

Strategist

8 New Business Pitches

Uncovering new and nuanced market trends is an effective way to establish credibility with stakeholders and potential clients. Social listening will equip you with the nuanced, contextualized, and competitive intelligence you need to make your pitches credible and memorable.

With social listening, you will...

• Identify and describe focused audience segments.

• Discover which primary channels your target audiences use to inform potential marketing.

• Inform market survey development and supplement market survey data.

• Clarify and quantify your value proposition by discovering what consumers are actually saying about their needs and concerns.

• Demonstrate your understanding of the competition by acquiring a wealth of competitive intelligence.

Use case in action

Health industry researchers used social listening while building a pitch for mobile health units in rural areas. Social conversations around health services, filtered to residents of the rural US, frequently mention a need for accessible and free health care **(Image 1)**. Geographic distribution of the conversation around mobile health revealed a noticeable absence of any significant volume in the states with the greatest rural populations **(Image 2)**. Even when examined at a granular level, there is a marked absence in district marketing areas. This provided evidence of gaps in availability and advertising of health services **(Image 3)**.

Image 1:
Topics most likely to be relevant to authors posting about mobile health solutions and technology.
Greener topics have a higher sentiment (i.e. more positive), while orange topics have a lower sentiment.
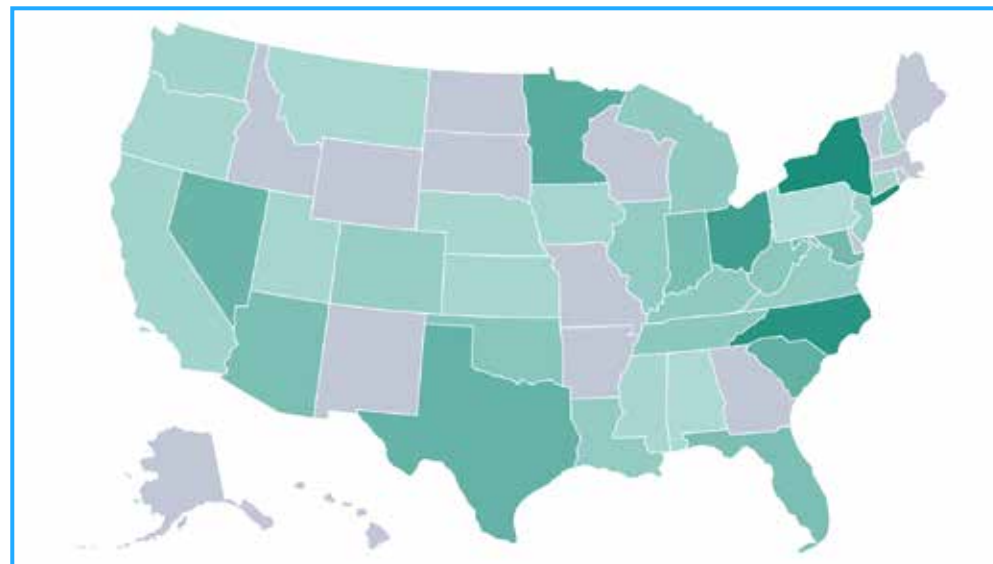

Image 2:
Map of the United States showing which states have a higher score (i.e. post volume adjusted for population) around rural or mobile medical services. Rural states like Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota depict an absence of that conversation.
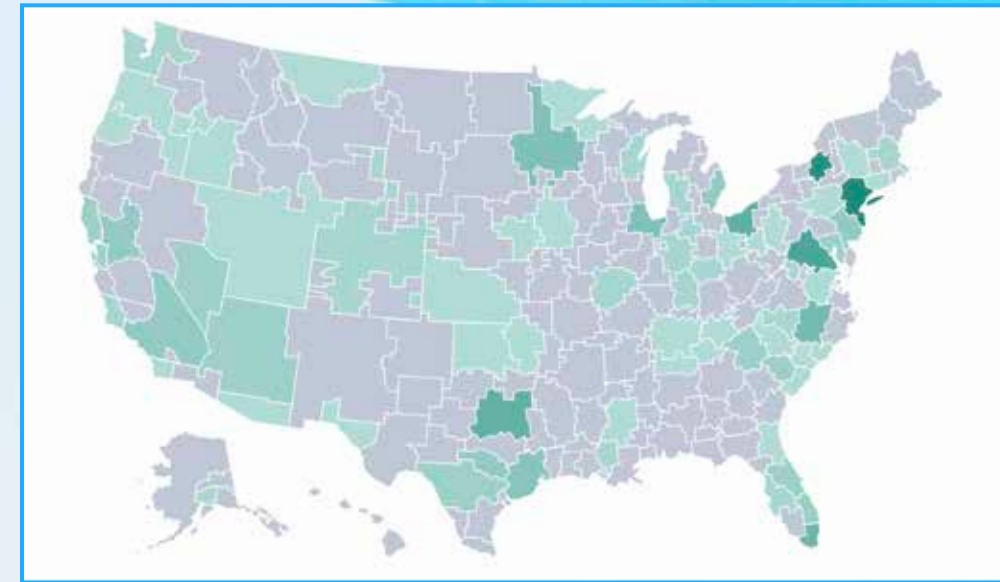

Image 3:
Map of United States Digital Marketing Areas showing the concentration of conversation around rural medical services.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Strategist

Researcher

Product Marketer

Grant Writer

Resource Developer

9

Competitive Intelligence

Take bold, competitive strides in your market landscape: social listening equips you with real-time intelligence into competitors and opportunities, which you can then use to boost your sales, revenue and brand reputation. Keep ahead of your competition by anticipating market changes and discovering unmet needs. Most importantly, you can increase your marketing effectiveness by developing messaging that is meaningful to your personas, and inspire loyalty by gaining a deeper understanding of your clients.

Step up to the competition with social listening:
• Understand what your competitors are doing.

• Discover which channels to use to get in front of your competitors' consumers.

• Learn what the market thinks about your competitors, and use it to your advantage.

• Inform your pricing and product availability to meet gaps left by other players in your industry.

• Discover audiences that are not heard, and address their needs before the competition does.

Use case in action

A regional beauty brand looking to expand into a larger market needed to craft a brand identity distinct from other leading national and global brands. Using social listening to conduct a deep dive into two major brands, Ulta Beauty and Sephora, they would tap consumers' voice, perspective, sentiment, and public bios to gain a wealth of insights. For example, social listening into the two brands would show that Sephora inspires a greater degree of Love, Joy and Trust than Ulta **(Image 1)** but when it comes to channel distribution, the conversational volume around Ulta is greater than Sephora on both Twitter and Tiktok **(Image 2)**. Age demographics from author bios also reveal that the 19-24 year old group of consumers would be a prime target audience for an emerging competitor, since both Ulta and Sephora have larger conversational volumes from the 25-34 year age group **(Image 3)**.

Image 1:
Percentage of posts demonstrating emotions when discussing Sephora and Ulta.
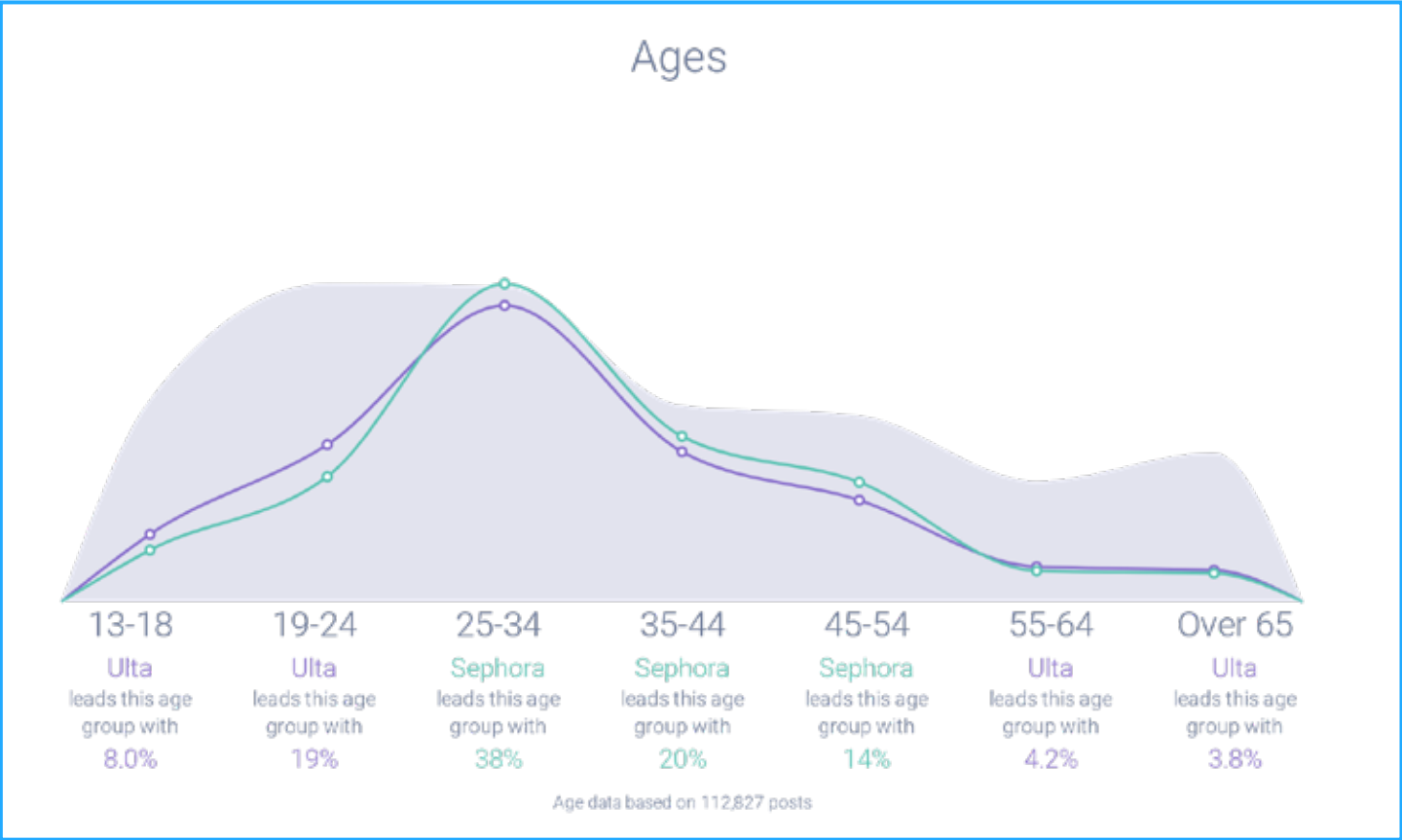

Image 3:
Age demographics of authors.

Image 2:
Channel distribution for the conversation around Ulta and Sephora.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Strategist

Researcher

Product Marketer

Brand Manager

10 Strategic Relationships

It's easy to operate on assumptions when it comes to identifying partners and influencers. However, social listening data will uncover surprising interests and intersections among your consumers that could actually expand your customer base to a previously unreached demographic. Finding partners within those intersections can facilitate your expansion into new and adjacent markets. It can also shape messaging, thus, increasing the effectiveness of your campaigns. Social listening while scoping out potential partnerships will also provide you with intricate insider information regarding reputational red-flags and mission-fits.

With social listening, you can:

• Identify which interests, people, and businesses captivate your audiences.

• Find influencers and partners that reflect and align with your brand.

• Look for reputational warning signs when considering strategic partnerships.

Use case in action

An agency client who creates campaigns for one of the largest grocery brandhouses in the UK was in search of a gaming crossover brand partnership. Game 1 was the prime contender but, when their data analysts employed social listening, they discovered that another brand (Game 2) outranked Game 1. Comparing the two along with three other hugely popular game entities, they found that Game 2 consistently was ahead in terms of potential customer reach **(Image 1)**, potential to reach an expanded demographic **(Image 2)**, and a positive reputational match **(Image 3)**. Backed by the data, the agency constructed a campaign with Game 2 as the crossover partner, with tremendous positive results.
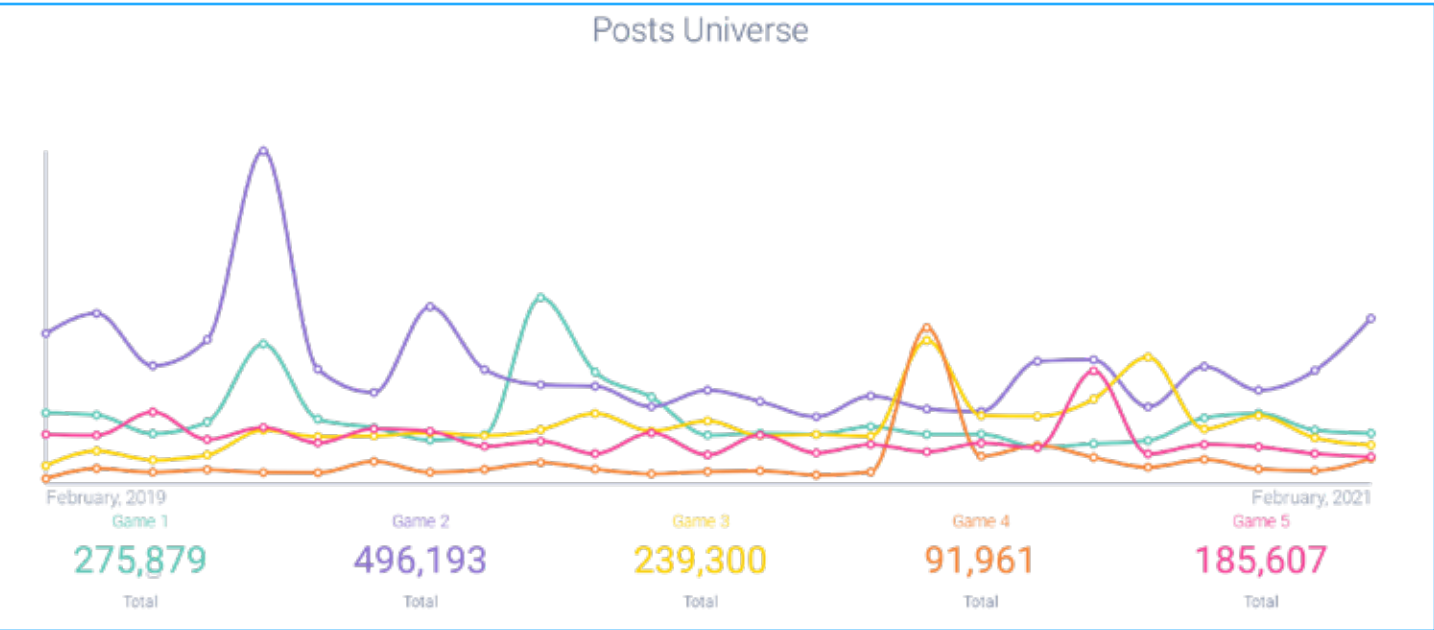

Image 1:
Conversation trends for the top five game brands considered for partnership. Game 2 inspired the largest conversation, pointing to greater reach as a partner.
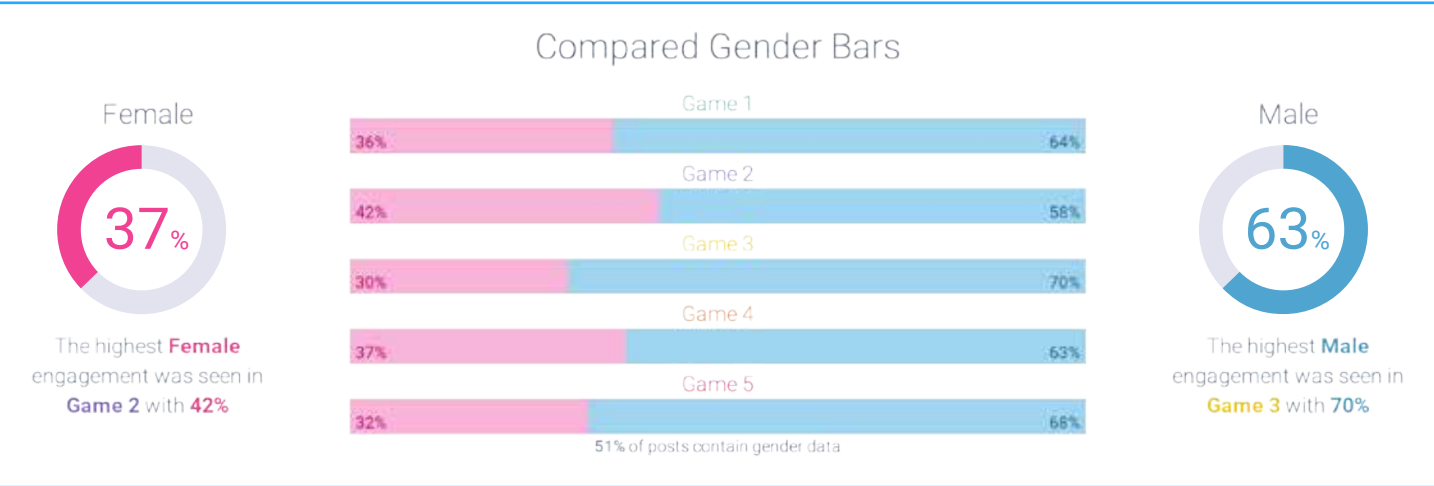

Image 2:
Comparison of authors' gender. Conversation around Game 2 was more balanced in gender distribution, indicating appeal to a larger market (more female consumers).
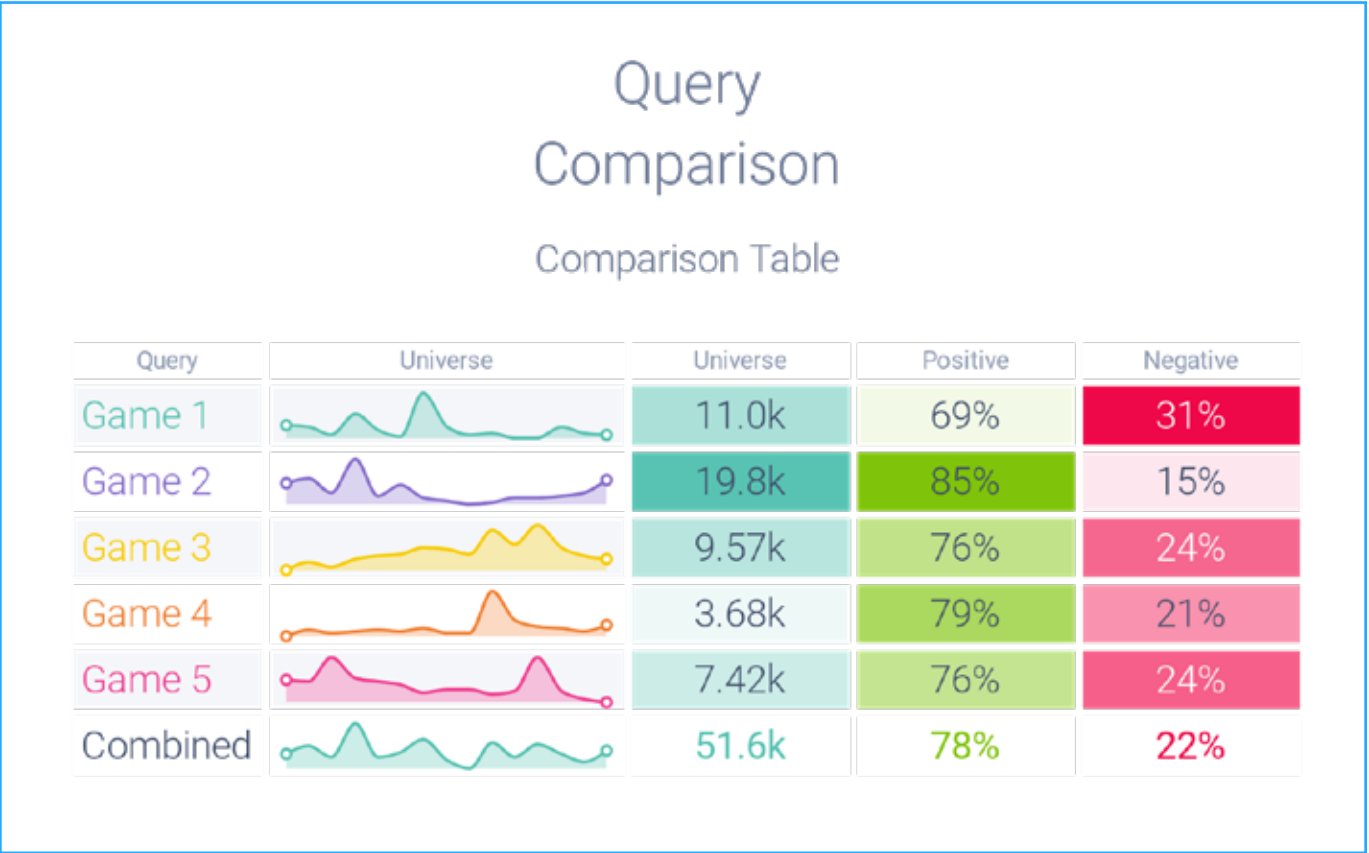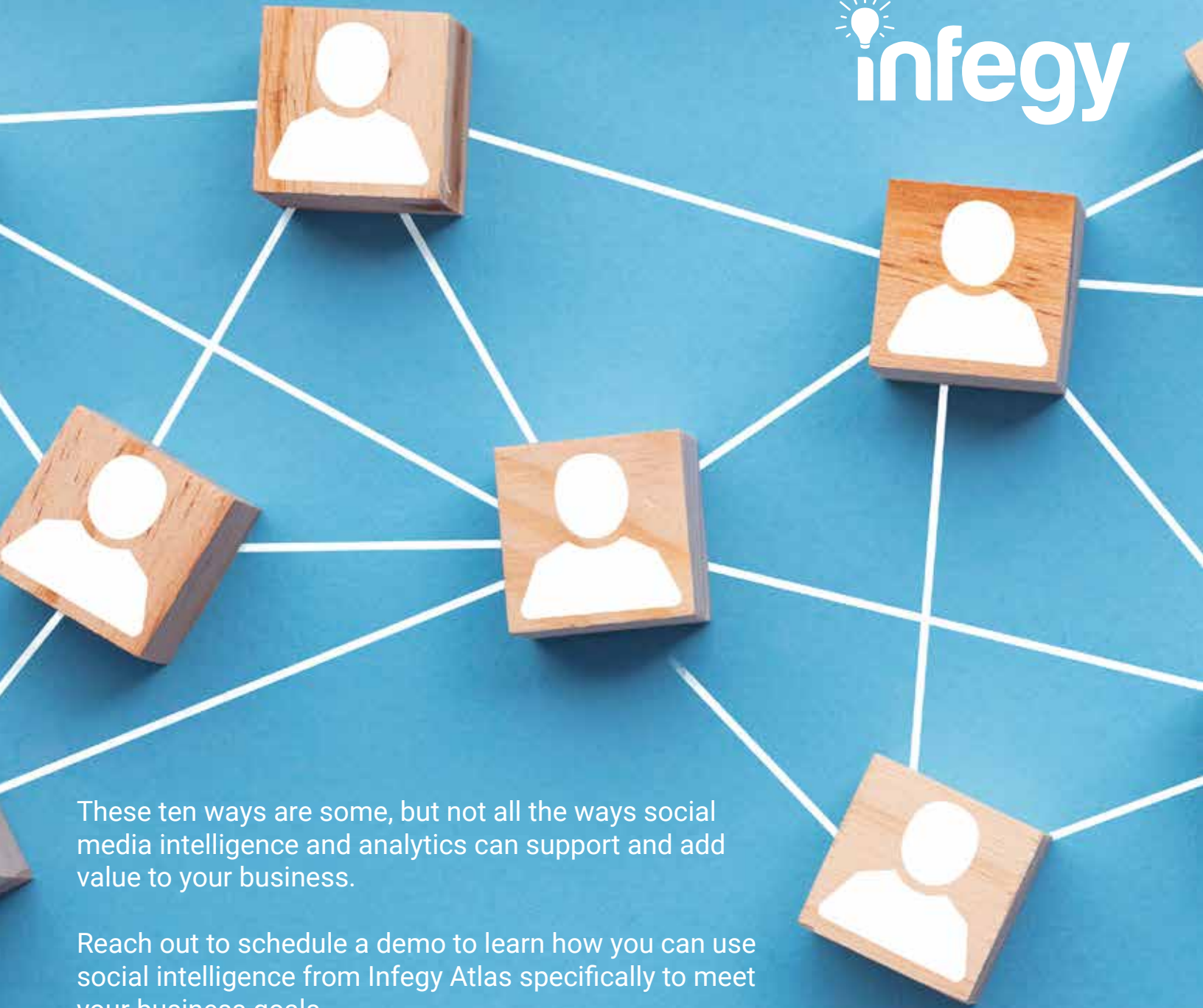

Image 3:
Sentiment comparison among the game brands. The highly positive conversation surrounding Game 2 points to fewer reputational red flags.

Employ this use case if you are a...

Strategist

Researcher

Product Management Lead

Business Development Lead

These ten ways are some, but not all the ways social media intelligence and analytics can support and add value to your business.

Reach out to schedule a demo to learn how you can use social intelligence from Infegy Atlas specifically to meet your business goals.

About Infegy...

Founded:
2007

Headquarters:
Kansas City, Missouri - USA

Industry:
**Social Listening,
Data Analytics, SaaS**

Solutions:
**Brand Management
Competitive Intelligence
Consumer Behavior & Insights
Market Research**