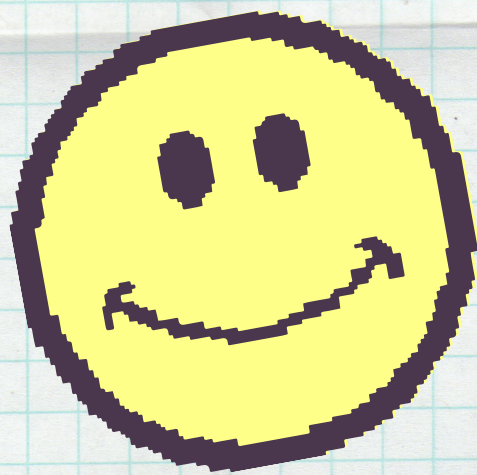


a trend report:

**social media is not just
marketing in 2025.**

- from the desk of sweb marketing





a note on

what to expect



in this report you will find social media predictions you won't see anywhere else.

we're calling out platforms, crowning superlatives, and tackling B2B like never before (yes, it's relevant for you too). most importantly, we're giving you insight on what's ahead for social in 2025 and how these platforms will pave the way for you to build something bigger than your business: a community.

logo free, but not identity free. that part is important.













because at sweb, we are chronically online.

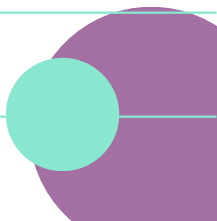
and at the end of the day, we're consumers scrolling just like you--we just happen to pay attention. we also have a big, juicy database of influencers, subscribe to endless industry newsletters, and even distribute one of our own (👁️📌 the takeaway). we aren't afraid to pull out an iPhone in a leadership meeting at a law firm to capture content. to use Instagram fonts as text overlay that enrage our Creative Director. to use a trending audio creatively for a hospitality group while calling out an entire NFL stadium rebrand gone horribly wrong. so, it's only fitting we're the ones writing the book on what 2025 looks like.



the future of social isn't just about platforms; it's about people. it's about conversations that inspire action, content that resonates, and a voice that feels unmistakably yours.

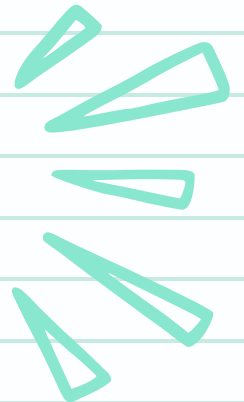
in class today we will cover predictions like ...

- 1 the rise of boutique law  firms
- 2 why you should be paying attention  to LinkedIn
- 3 YouTube x NFL  to launch screen time wellness
- 4 your comments  will leave the group chat
- 5 meeting customers where they're at 
- 6  pushing lifestyle  not products or services
- 7 Instagram to launch  social good function
- 8 TikTok search  bar = the new Google
- 9 a new  kind of business partner
- 10 you will burn  out your social team
- + observations and superlatives  from swab





social media and influencer marketing needs boutique law firms. if you are a law firm, take this as your sign to specialize.



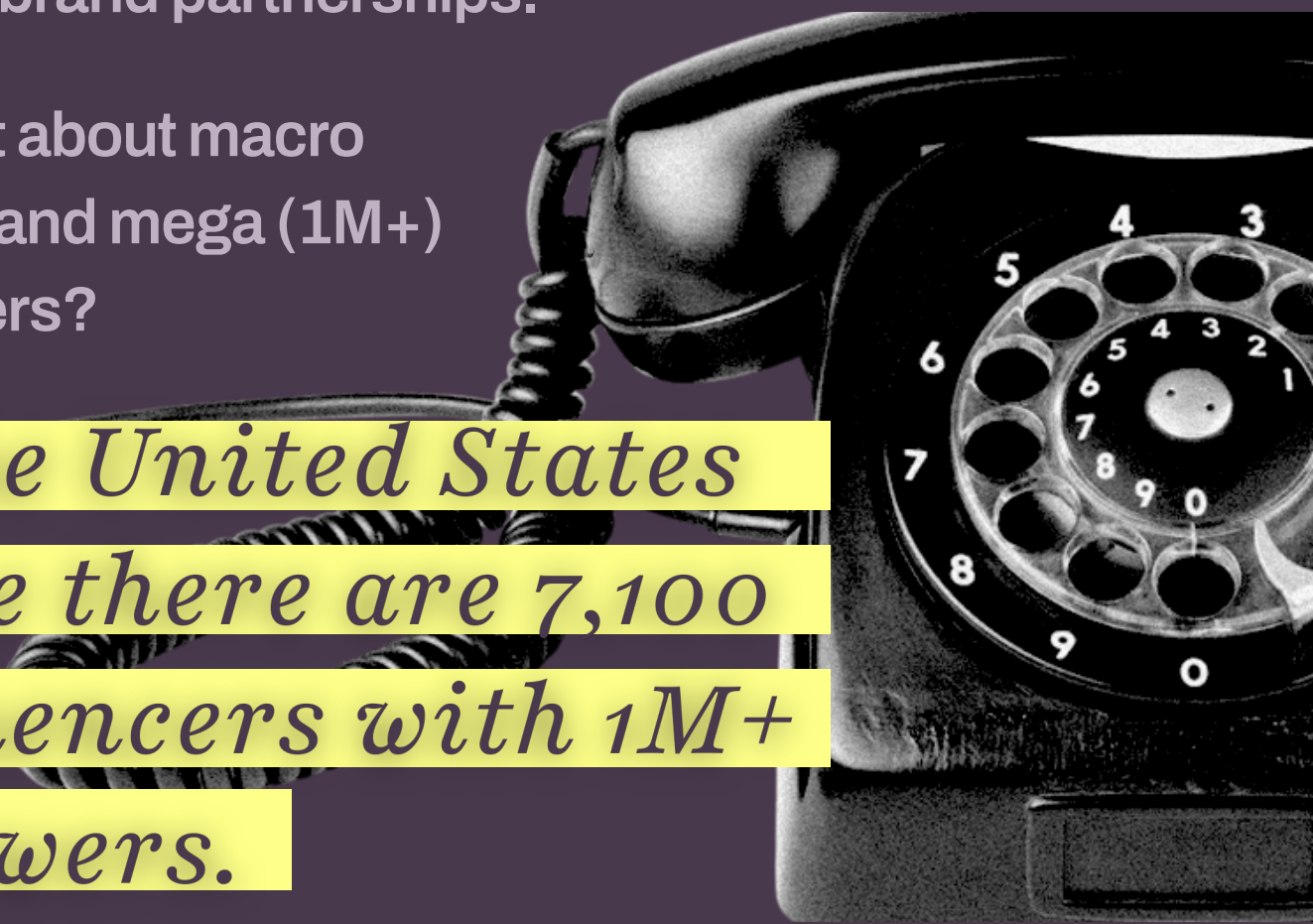
but why? and can that actually make money?

the short answer is yes.

NIL deals alone are blowing up for
athlete x brand partnerships.

but, what about macro
(100K+) and mega (1M+)
influencers?

*in the United States
alone there are 7,100
influencers with 1M+
followers.*



making headlines

POP CULTURE

'Very demure, very mindful' trademark issue is 'handled,' TikTok influencer says

AUGUST 28, 2024 · 5:31 PM ET

Can You Copyright a Vibe?

One influencer is suing another, accusing her of copying her minimalist aesthetic on social media. It turns out there is a lot of gray area in shades of beige.

Supreme Court reaffirms press precedent in social media cases

July 2, 2024 / [CAITLIN VOGUS](#)

Oct. 9, 2024, 5:05 AM EDT

Social Media Stars Lock Down IP Rights to Cash in on Virality

CREATORS

Bad influence

One Amazon influencer makes a living posting content from her beige home. But after she noticed another account hawking the same minimal aesthetic, a rivalry spiraled into a first-of-its-kind lawsuit. Can the legal system protect the vibe of a creator? And what if that vibe is basic?



boutique law firms x influencers **why it matters**



this isn't just about creators—

it's about everyone who scrolls on their phone.

when influencers fail to follow FTC guidelines or disclose partnerships, it's misleading to their audience and chips away at trust. worse, it makes social media feel less authentic and more like a never-ending string of ads, draining the experience for everyone.

influencers are in fact reshaping how we do business, and law firms need to catch up.

the Supreme Court has reaffirmed precedent in major social cases, but when it comes to influencer marketing, **precedent is almost nonexistent.** this creates a gray area that law firms can help define. questions like whether a “vibe” can be intellectual property or how far content ownership extends across platforms remain unanswered. the creators shaping this space need legal guidance to avoid disputes and stay on the right side of evolving laws.

plus, with the rise of potential lawsuits from parents claiming influencers or platforms negatively impact their kids, the demand for legal expertise in this space is only going to skyrocket. law firms that specialize now can lock in loyalty with this growing, profitable client base because **the creator economy isn't going anywhere.**



why you should be paying attention to LinkedIn

meet Paul

- 22k+ followers
- laser scanning & knowledge on software solutions across industries
- video, demos, webinars & consistent thought leadership

The screenshot shows Paul Burrows' LinkedIn profile. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation icons for Home, My Network, Jobs, Messaging, and Notifications. The profile banner features a world map background with the text 'PAUL BURROWS Reality Capture Guy' and the Hexagon logo. A circular profile picture of Paul is on the left. Below the banner, his name 'Paul Burrows' is followed by a verified badge, a microphone icon, and '(He/Him) · 3rd'. His bio reads 'The #RealityCapture guy' and 'Stourbridge, England, United Kingdom · Contact info'. He has '22,210 followers · 500+ connections'. Action buttons for '+ Follow', 'Message', 'Book an appointment', and 'More' are visible. A 'Profile enhanced with Premium' badge is also present. The 'Highlights' section shows a post titled 'Supercharge your CAD & BIM Workflow: Reality Cloud Studio + Leica CloudWorx' with the subtext 'Paul spoke at this event'. The 'About' section provides a detailed bio: 'With close to two decades of experience in terrestrial laser scanning, Paul Burrows serves as Hexagon's Geosystems Reality Capture division Principal Software Solutions Manager. He champions the company's reality capture hardware and software solutions, with strong knowledge around software workflows for a variety of industries.'

picture this

sales teams and c-suites will
take over as LinkedIn influencers

brands will reach consumers
on LinkedIn via affinity groups

and they will work even more with
thought leaders vs. influencers



**YouTube x NFL will
tackle the screen
time epidemic**

delivered by sw



YouTube x NFL to tackle the screen time epidemic

did you know? the average person spends

2 hours and 24 minutes on social media every day. 🕒

our prediction?

YouTube will partner with the NFL or a similar professional sports organization to push people off their phones and social platforms to get outside and be more active. you've already seen the NFL + individual teams partner with athletes and WAGS more than ever before to build team reputation. plus, think NFL PLAY 60 for kids to promote health and wellness. expanding this style initiative to mitigate screen time - think serialized content about ways to get active - only makes sense. they can even push it further by working with Hers and Hims from a mental health standpoint as the program sponsor, promoting positive wellbeing across the board.





you will

meet your

**customers where
they are at**

**instead of getting them
to come to you 🤯**



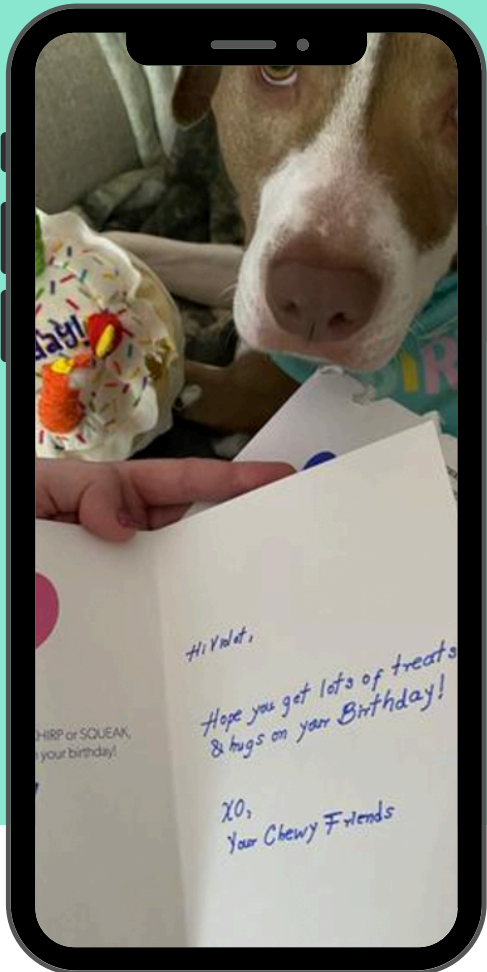
bringing your brand offline for IRL experiences *and create real relationships with your audience*

brands that find ways to connect offline bring a whole new dimension to their relationship with customers.

think back-to-school pop-ups, sorority rush events, music festivals, PRIDE parades, or even The Eras Tour. by showing up where your customers are already gathering, you're creating real-time memories and building rapport that can't be replicated in a purely digital setting. it's about more than just selling product; it's about forging emotional connections and showing that your brand gets it.

this is especially powerful for subscription-based or service businesses where repeat loyal customers are the backbone of growth. when Chewy sends out a birthday card for your pet, a hospital demos technology at a health fair, Duolingo's owl mascot shows up at a Charli XCX show, or Poppi soda hits the sorority circuit, they're meeting their communities on their own turf.

that kind of outreach humanizes the brand, making customers feel seen and appreciated. with every offline encounter, you're planting the seeds of loyalty, turning casual fans into brand ambassadors who will vouch for you in their social circles—and that's marketing gold.





your **comments** will leave the group chat

and you will remember to embrace sentiment

comments = sentiment

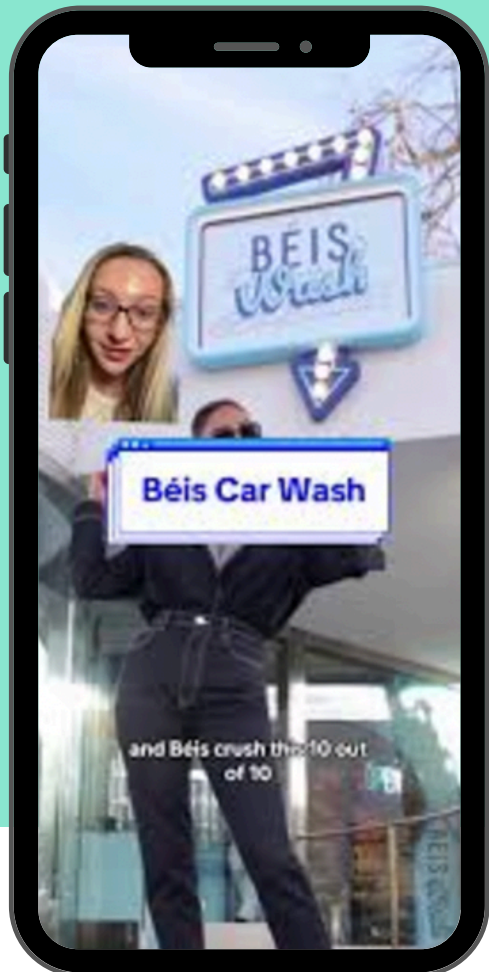
think top luggage brand BÉIS and their pop up car wash. ICYMI, their reputation was suffering based on reviews and comments about how easily their luggage gets scuffed up and dirty. a PR nightmare. instead of not acknowledging those comments or playing defense, they did something about it. a car wash. hey customers, we have your back.

as a result, media and influencers were talking about the shift in narrative. the brand was all over feeds and it was all because **they listened and then engaged**. it's taking 'surprise and delight' tactics to another level.

social media = the world's largest focus group.

something that so many people forget is that social media is for two-way conversation. you work hard to build your community, and it's filled with people who care about you and your brand.

guess what that means? you can ask them questions. what do they like? what do they want to see more of from you? platforms like Instagram even offer features like their question box. in 2025, it can't always be sell, sell, sell. **let's make social media ... social.**





“brands will be better
at pushing a lifestyle
and not just their
products or services.”



[let's unpack that]

with sarah weber

this is an epidemic in marketing, and I'll keep this one short. if you are using a platform that emphasizes two-way communication, like social media, you should be encouraging dialogue with your community. do not push out one-way sales messages unless that is the goal of the platform that you are using, period.





**Instagram will
launch a social
good content tag**

delivered by sw

social good

Instagram will continue to prioritize **social good** in new ways, celebrating those who are publishing content around making positive change.

right now Meta has what is called their “**social good for business**” portal, highlighting resources and cases about brands that are using Facebook and Instagram to change the world.

but what about every other normal account, for people like you and me? what about the person who is hosting a bake sale for their local non-profit? organizing a walk? speaking about the **mission** of a cause that is important to them?

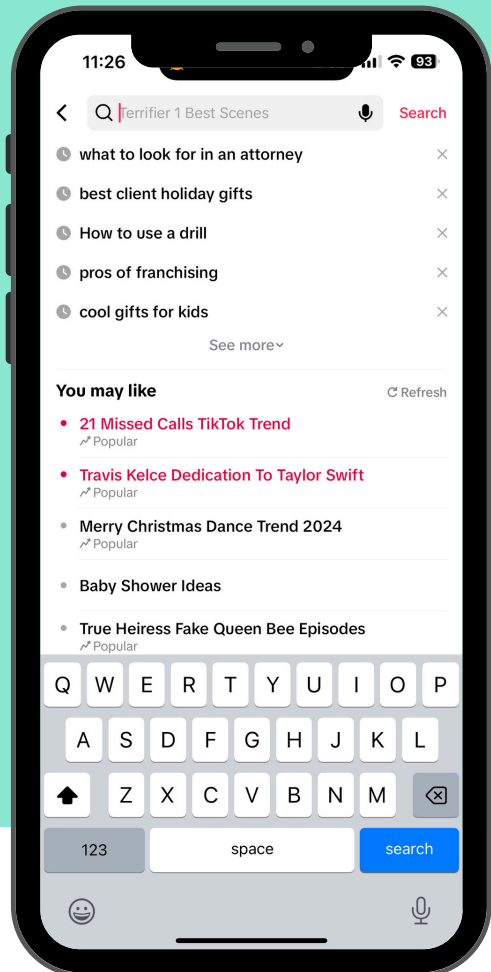
let's at the very least have a gold star ★ toggle that allows any in-feed content in that regard to stand out. and at the most, let's have a feed dedicated to ways that people can get involved in making change. this is less a 2025 trend and more something we're manifesting for the future.





we as people are searching differently

what does that mean for Google, YouTube, and TikTok



blog content, SEO, and email marketing aren't dying, but ...

they are evolving as we shift how we search, learn, and engage online. the new wave of digital discovery is all about speed, personalization, and convenience. the TikTok search bar is giving Google a run for its money in the quick-hit answer department, while Substack and other gated platforms deliver the deep dives we crave when we find an influencer or brand we truly trust. when you need a bite-sized answer, you turn to TikTok or YouTube. when you want long-form, in-depth content, you might even sign up for a substack newsletter and settle in with your morning coffee.

our phones are at the center of this shift. over half of web traffic now comes from mobile devices. that means people aren't just searching at their desks—they're scrolling from the couch, in bed, or standing in line at the store. Google does have YouTube in its corner, which is good news since video content rules on-the-go searches. but this has impact on SEO strategies outside of your website. what we're seeing is a blurring of old and new tactics, where platforms and formats blend, and people bounce between bite-sized and long-form content as needed. it's all about serving the right content, on the right platform, at the right moment.



social media

a new kind

of business partner

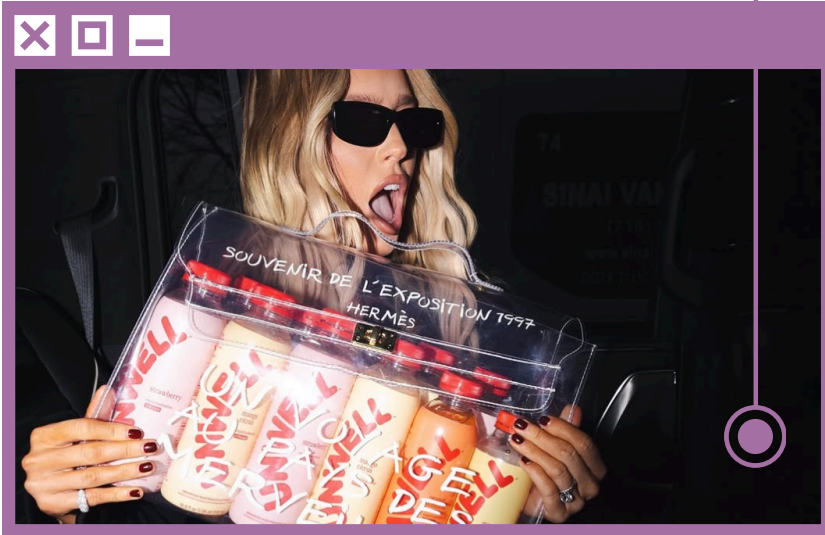
from creator to investor



in the news...

a glimpse at creators turned **business partners + investors**

icon Alex Cooper partnered with Nestlé to create her new drink: Unwell



creator Alix Earle became an investor for poppi



Nara Smith partnered with Marc Jacobs to launch her "handmade" tote bag line



Mr. Beast partnered with Amazon Prime to create a game show that broke 40 world records



have you considered partnering with a person of influence?

that's right, we didn't use the word influencer. think back to 'sphere of influence' and referral sources. word of mouth. a person who knows a lot of people. a lot of organizations are still scared of influencer marketing. "we're not a beauty brand this isn't relevant to us at all."

let's talk about it.

have you ever hired a copywriter?

how about talent for a video? someone to edit the video?

what if that script, the production, the editing ... could come from a single resource?

and heck, what if that person also shared the content with their sphere of influence? then, was so convinced that your product or service added value to their life, they wanted to invest in you.

it's happening. and it's happening more than you realize. from healthcare to financial institutions, influencers are wearing new hats. they aren't just selling a post on their feed. they're solving problems and serving up digital word of mouth.





**you will burn out your
social team**

don't be that company.





expectations are high and morale is low.

the harsh reality of marketing today.

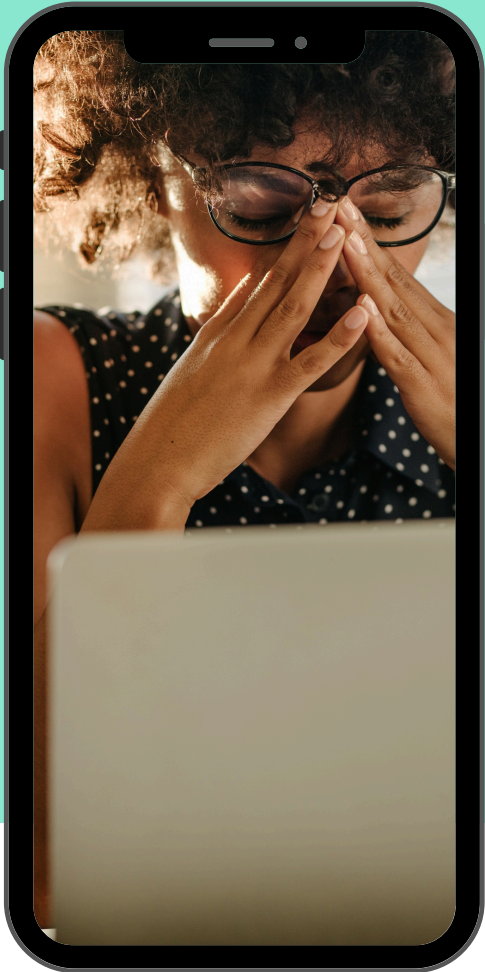
top-of-funnel, awareness strategies aren't getting gold stars anymore.

CEOs want bottom-funnel results, period, every dollar accounted for. “just post something” might check a box, but what about content that sparks real conversation, builds visibility, and hits the right audience at the right time? it's not just social—it's email, website maintenance, community outreach, video production, and strategic thinking. all these moving parts need intention, planning, and the freedom to innovate. spoiler alert: that takes time.

before you hire or assign tasks, get clear on how you'll measure success and how much time and effort each channel deserves. if your marketing person is juggling multiple hats, do they know which hats matter most and why? define metrics, discuss priorities, and set realistic expectations. you'll get better results—and a healthier team—when everyone knows where they stand and what they're aiming for.

***there are very few professionals that exist in the space and can do social well.**

let alone everything else that comes with great marketing. roper inputs will yield a positive output for both sides. need help hiring and training? we've got you.





observations from team swab

*a look at what we think *should* be ahead for you*

food 🍷 marketing.

meeting people where they're at has always been a pillar of swab strategy. what better way to do this than meeting people somewhere they're at everyday without fail-- in front of a plate.

brands like Rhode, Jacquemus, Burberry, Salt & Stone, and Prada have been placing their boldest campaigns alongside or directly a part of food. think croissants with logo stamped butter, branded coffee cups, or pancakes paired with a maple lip gloss shade.

something they all have in common? they're luxury goods. but by embedding their products into everyday experiences, like enjoying a margarita or indulging in a fresh stack of pancakes, they're **bridging the gap between exclusivity and relatability.**

why does it work so well? because these moments already go hand-in-hand with the products they're promoting. my bag is almost always perched on the chair next to me at the coffee shop, and my lip gloss is a post-meal ritual at any restaurant. it then becomes a curated moment that is repeatable, rather than a one-time campaign.

this is a carefully curated strategy that is blurring lines and pushing the envelope. people commonly ask why these brands are so successful, the answer here is clear.

they're selling consumers a moment, not a product.





BG

human content → 📱.

the biggest wins i've seen this year on social all had one thing in common—authenticity. whether it's employee-generated content (EGC) or a simple behind-the-scenes moment, showing the faces behind the brand drives real connection.

it doesn't have to be unhinged or over-produced; it just has to feel honest. brands that prioritize relatable, human elements in their content will stand out in 2024. connection isn't optional anymore—it's the expectation.

books 📖 are back.

it's ironic in a digital age dominated by screen time, social media has sparked a resurgence in paperback books. #booktok, online book clubs, and digital communities are turning reading into a cultural phenomenon.

books aren't just for reading anymore... they're a way to connect, share, and build authentic communities. creators, brands, and influencers are tapping into this trend, gaining massive followings by sharing their current reads and book recommendations.

books are becoming the new cultural currency for creating authentic connections; whether for personal growth, entertainment, or brand-building. social media is fueling this book renaissance, turning reading into a social experience rather than a solitary one.

and with major film adaptations of popular reads like *It Ends With Us* and *The Housemaid* continuing to drop, there's a defining relationship between books, digital and pop culture that's only going to continue to grow.



MC



MS

unexpected collabs 🐱🐱.

we already know that attention spans are microscopic and audiences have grown increasingly hard to impress. we're starting to see brands throw out the marketing playbook and it is resulting in an uptick of completely unexpected (and a little unhinged) brand collabs. the goal is to invoke shock value and generate buzz—and honestly, I'm obsessed.

think Kate Spade and Me&M. Liquid Death and Yeti. Crumbl Cookies teaming up with Dove Soap. brands are blending two beloved, but completely unrelated things that **make people stop scrolling and start talking**. in an oversaturated social economy, disruption isn't a trend anymore—it's a necessity. these collaborations grab attention, amplify reach, and blend fan bases for twice the impact. the brands who are winning are the brands who get it- they are in on the joke, and they want to surprise you.

drumroll please...

it's time for

2024 superlatives




2024 superlatives

AKA brands that killed it.

most unhinged: Nutter Butter, Liquid Death, Empire State Building, Jaguar, Ryan Air

best B2B: Slack, Shopify, Hubspot, TSA, Square

unexpected collabs that worked: Heinz x Absolut Vodka-infused ketchup, Liquid Death x e.l.f., McDonalds x Krispy Kreme, Wicked x Target 

the rise of: Dunkin' Donuts, Vera Bradley, Diet Coke, Crocs
[brands that fell to the back burner but had a resurgence]

on the verge of: (Got) Milk, Sephora, Zevia, healthcare ...
all healthcare

[brand(s) that will do something big in 2025]

broke the internet: Love Island, Brat by Charli XCX,
“luckily I have purse”, The Eras Tour

[a trend that we're still talking about]





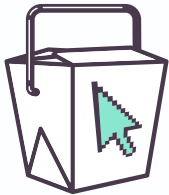
by the way...
[who are we]

we want you to stop spending good money on bad marketing.

swob is more than names in your inbox or faces on a screen. we're a team of real people with passions, stories, and years of experience. these are the faces tackling business problems, side by side, with you.

we harness the power of automation, the creator economy, and sharp strategy to unlock your brand's full potential. we solve the tough marketing challenges and build thoughtful, curated identities that reflect who you are. essentially, expect a clear point of view and solutions that don't just look good—they work.





let it out. vent to us about your dark, secret marketing problems @ www.swebmarketing.com we'll give you an absolutely free, *un-binding taste of how we can help, along with success stories from people just like you.



sweb



SW

want to chat 1:1?

[sarah weber]

president + chief strategy enthusiast



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