
2019 Guide to Publishing on Facebook

*Everything You Need to Know
About the publishers and Pages
succeeding on Facebook*

Publishing on Facebook in 2019

It's been just over a year since Facebook announced their algorithm change, shaking up the world of social publishing.

We looked into how content is being shared and interacted with on Facebook since the start of the year, and compared it with previous years.

In 2018, engagements to web content fell off fairly significantly compared to the previous year, though that trend appears to be reversing so far this year.

We explore web and native content on Facebook, to see which publishers are thriving and what content is successful so far this year.

In this report, we will cover:

- Insights into the types of web content that are performing well on Facebook
- Which publishers are driving the conversation through comments
- What formats are driving the most engagement natively on Facebook
- How people use the reaction buttons on the most engaged posts



South China Morning Post

Like This Page · 18 January · 🌐

...

Dancing with school principal
Bust a move – with your school principal. 🕺

116,612,172 Views

👍❤️😮 1M

142K comments 1.9M shares



Web Publishers on Facebook

Engagements to Web Content over Time

Engagements dropped significantly between 2017 and 2018, but they appear to have recovered at the start of this year.

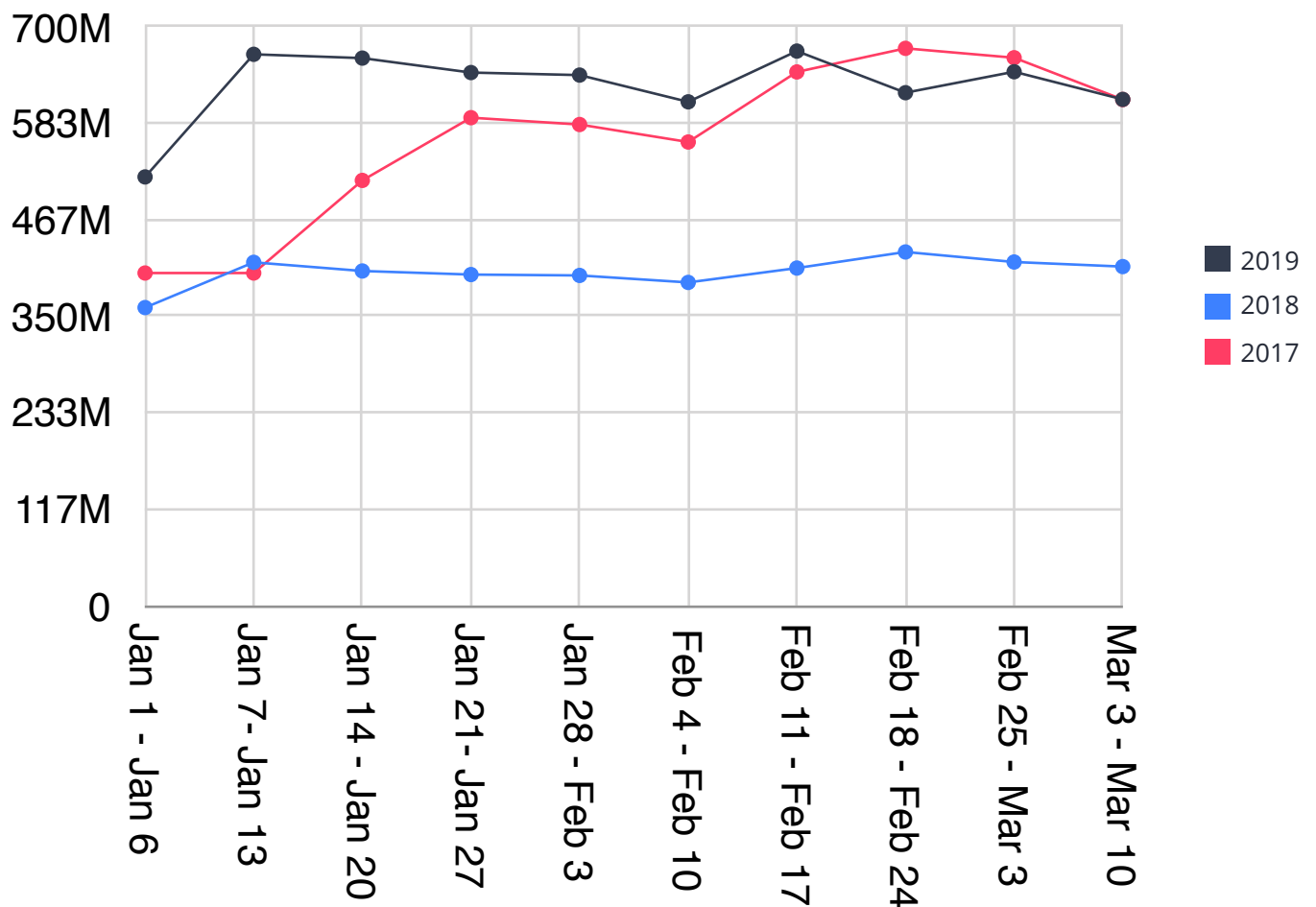
2019 has thus far had the highest weekly engagement for eight of the ten weeks in the start of this year, as compared to the same time period in the previous year.

What is most striking here is the difference between 2019 and the previous year, with

content consistently receiving at least 50 percent higher engagement for the week than the corresponding week in 2018.

This is not merely a function of an increase in the number of posts, with roughly the same number of posts for the period in each of the three years we looked at.

Engagement over time from January 1st - March 10th



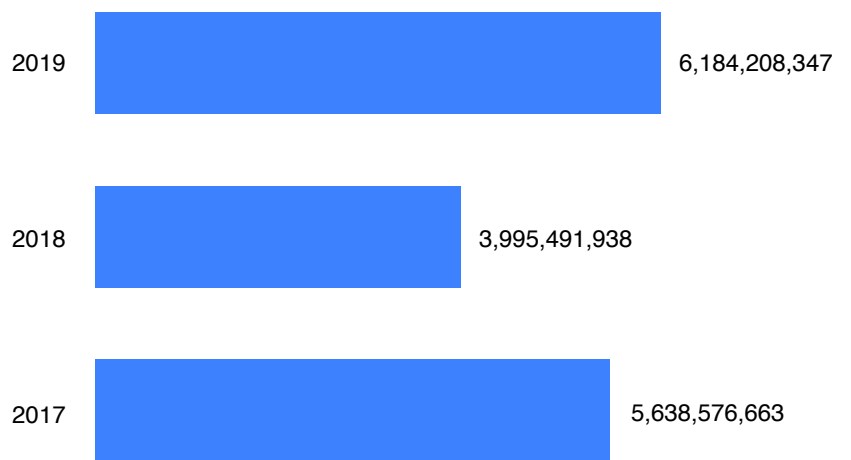
Total and Average Engagement by Year

2019 to date has seen the most engagement on its content with over 6 billion engagements to English-language web content already this year.

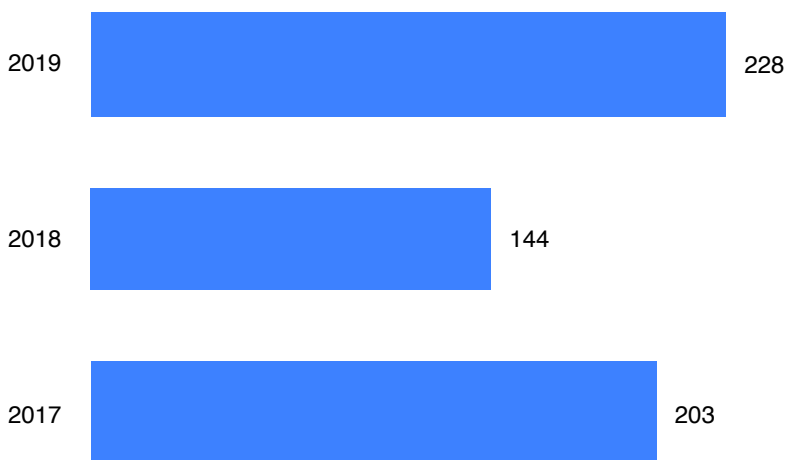
This compares to around 5.5 billion in 2017, and is more than 1.5x the engagement we saw in 2018 over the same period, which was just under 4 billion engagements.

This level of engagements came from roughly 27 million web articles over the course of the time period we looked at.

Total Engagement Jan 1. - Mar. 10 by Year



Average Engagement Jan 1. - Mar. 10 by Year



This remained true for average engagement as well, with 2019's content garnering around ten percent more engagements on average than we saw in 2017, and more than 50 percent more than we saw from 2018.

A lot of the shares on web content come from non-public Facebook Pages.

As such, there is a possibility that Facebook's friends and family focus, getting people to read what their networks are sharing rather than what pages are promoting, may have contributed to this increase as people shared articles they enjoyed on the network.

Most Engaged Publishers in 2019

Moving on to 2019 more specifically, Fox News has been the top English-language publisher of the year so far, followed by NBC and the BBC.

Our numbers here do include local affiliates for the outlets that have them, which includes most of the traditional broadcast publishers.

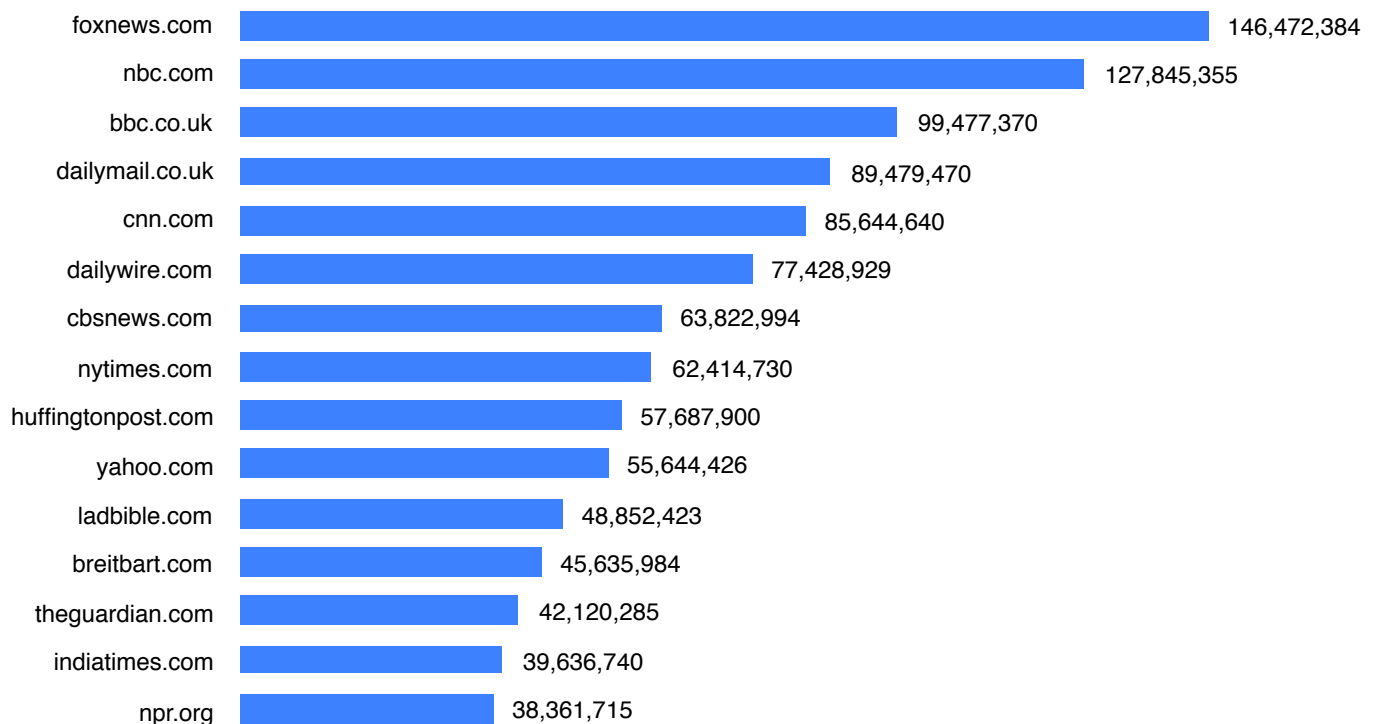
Most of the top publishers in this list fell into the hard news ranking, and they were mostly

America-based publishers, but there were a few exceptions to that.

The BBC, The Guardian, the Daily Mail and the Lad Bible represented the UK, while India Times was 14th in the ranking.

The Lad Bible was the only viral publisher to feature among the top fifteen publishers in 2019 so far.

Top Web Publishers by Facebook Engagement



Publishers with Highest Proportion of Comments

There is more to the story, however, than just engagement alone as a metric.

We also looked at the publishers that had the highest proportion of comments and shares. Below is a table detailing the proportion of comments.

One thing Facebook noted when the algorithm changed last year was a focus on driving conversations between users, so it is worthwhile to analyze which publishers drive those in the highest proportion.

Interestingly, not many of the most engaged publishers overall were included in the list of publishers with the highest proportion of compliments.

Indeed, the only publishers out of the top fifteen from the last pages to appear in this list too were Lad Bible and Yahoo.

Lad Bible had the highest percentage of comments of any of the top 1,000 publishers, with their 13.6 million comments making up some 28 percent of the publisher's total engagements.

The food publisher Delish also had a high proportion of comments. There is a possibility for these two publishers that there is a good amount of share tagging, that is people tagging their friends in the comments to bring it to their attention.

Web Publishers with Highest Proportion of Comments

PUBLISHER	TOTAL COMMENTS	TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS	PERCENTAGE
LADBIBLE.COM	13,597,171	48,852,423	27.8
DELISH.COM	5,565,027	20,907,546	26.6
THESUN.CO.UK	6,805,683	25,944,617	26.2
SKY.COM	3,227,505	12,652,711	25.5
NYPOST.COM	6,490,072	25,538,026	25.4
MSN.COM	7,350,323	29,785,077	24.7
EURONEWS.COM	3,899,185	15,993,548	24.4
LIFEZETTE.COM	2,850,582	11,819,590	24.1
YAHOO.COM	13,205,956	55,644,426	23.7
WASHINGTONTIMES.COM	2,629,968	11,168,626	23.5

Publishers with Highest Proportion of Shares

Looking at the data for shares was a very different picture to either total engagement or comments.

Reuters had the highest proportion of shares on their content, with the 5.6 million in the year so far representing more than half of their website's total engagements. Bloomberg also had particularly high proportions of shares, with a third of their engagements coming from shares.

Two other themes were salient in the analysis of shares versus other metrics.

The first is that there were a surprising number of Canadian publishers in the analysis, with three of the top ten with the highest proportion

of shares hailing from north of the American border.

The second, and perhaps more pertinent, is the fact that local content has a particular tendency to be shared, as we can see from the appearance of Patch, Only In Your State, and Chicago's local ABC station all appearing in the ranking.

Unlike with the comments data, there is quite a big variance in the numbers even within the top ten, varying from 51 percent of engagements for Reuters to 17.4 percent for Simple Most, the publisher in tenth place for this metric in 2019 so far.

Web Publishers with Highest Proportion of Shares

PUBLISHER	TOTAL SHARES	TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS	PERCENTAGE
REUTERS.COM	5,680,802	11,160,431	50.9
PATCH.COM	9,692,674	20,525,092	47.2
BLOOMBERG.COM	3,716,566	10,982,665	33.8
CTVNEWS.CA	2,551,446	13,653,185	18.7
ONLYINYOURSTATE.COM	1,773,430	9,681,567	18.3
ABC7CHICAGO.COM	1,662,133	9,277,464	17.9
THEFEDERALISTPAPERS.ORG	1,932,841	10,833,180	17.8
GLOBALNEWS.CA	3,254,997	18,349,242	17.7
CBC.CA	3,900,395	22,183,396	17.6
SIMPLEMOST.COM	1,568,397	9,007,316	17.4

Number of Stories in the Top 10,000 in 2019

As well as looking at the top publishers, we also looked at the data for who had the most articles in the top 10,000 stories.

This acts as something of an equalizer as it looks at the most engaged stories only and takes away the advantage publishers who produce orders of magnitude more content have.

Fox News still came out on top, with 438 of the top stories coming from them or their local affiliates.

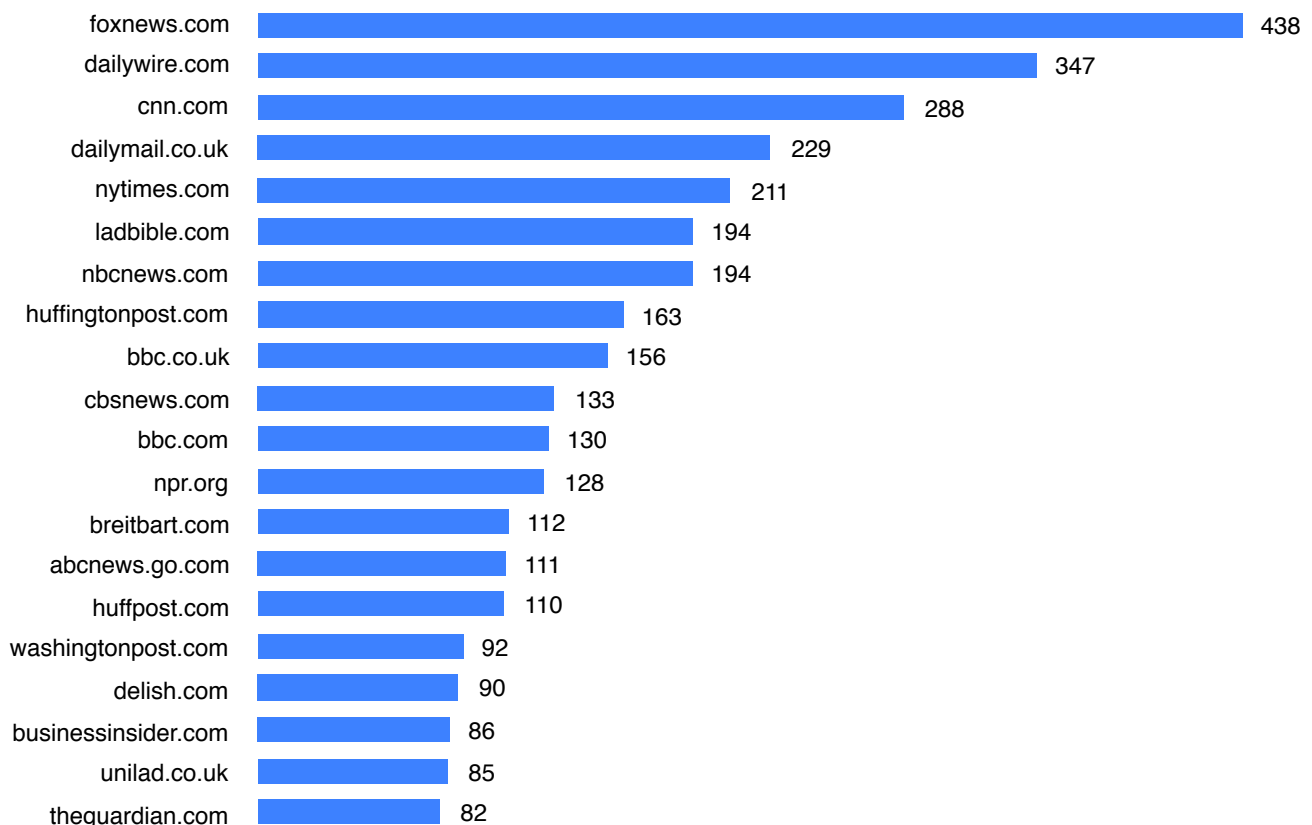
The Daily Wire punched well above its weight, with 347 of the top stories coming from the conservative publisher.

Nearly all of the publishers that featured in this top twenty were legacy news publishers who have succeeded in going digital, with the broadcast networks and institutions like the New York Times the obvious examples.

The Daily Wire did buck this trend, however, as did Lad Bible, UNILAD, and Delish, all of whom contributed a significant number of articles to the top 10,000.

In the next pages we will examine the most engaged, shared, and commented stories of the year so far.

Number of stories in top 10,000 by publisher



Most Engaged Stories in 2019

Celebrity deaths made up a significant number of the top stories so far this year.

Abortion was also a significant talking point in terms of web content, with six of the top fifteen

articles this year focusing on one of the two topics.

All of the top fifteen articles received over one million engagements, and the top article, on Luke Perry's death, received some 3.5 million.

Most Engaged Web Content in 2019

PUBLISHER	HEADLINE	FB ENGAGEMENTS
TMZ.COM	Beverly Hills, 90210' Star Luke Perry Dead at 52 After 'Massive' Stroke	3,527,433
WWW1.CBN.COM	A Sad and Evil Day': New York Legalizes Abortion Up to Baby's Birth Day on Anniversary of Roe v. Wade	3,030,045
LIFENEWS.COM	You Can't Give a Lethal Injection to Murderers in New York, But You Can Give One to an Unborn Baby LifeNews.com	2,421,700
CBSNEWS.COM	Trump backs push for Bible classes in schools	2,393,079
NPR.ORG	Justice Ginsburg Has No Remaining Signs Of Cancer, Will Return To Supreme Court	2,186,293
SCARYMOMMY.COM	Gillette's New Ad On Toxic Masculinity Is Breathtaking — And Necessary	1,855,130
DAILYMAIL.CO.UK	Luke Perry dies aged 52 just days after stroke	1,562,697
DAILYWIRE.COM	HORROR: New York Set To Legalize Abortion Up To Birth	1,503,073
PULSE.NG	The US just sent 10 new scientists to Congress, including an ocean expert, a nurse, and a biochemist. Here's the full list.	1,469,547
FOXNEWS.COM	Dems to strike 'so help me God' from oath taken in front of key House committee, draft shows	1,425,007
WARRIORSWIRE.US ATODAY.COM	Warriors skip White House visit, meet with Barack Obama instead	1,403,750
PEOPLE.COM	Luke Perry Dead: Beverly Hills, 90210 and Riverdale Actor Dies at 52 After 'Massive Stroke'	1,328,689
HUFFINGTONPOST.COM.AU	Viral Video Shows MAGA Hat-Wearing Teens Harassing Native American Vietnam Veteran	1,265,964
FOXNEWS.COM	Trump denies Pelosi aircraft for foreign trip in response to call for State of the Union delay	1,261,711
US105FM.COM	Suspected Human Trafficker, Child Predator May Be In Our Area	1,231,051

Most Shared Stories in 2019

As we saw in the analysis of publishers with a high proportion of shares, local stories tend to do well in garnering shares.

The article with most shares came from US 105 FM, warning of a suspected human trafficker in the

area, and Amber Alerts also featured a number of times.

Beyond that, we saw some of the same articles in the most engaged list, but viral hoaxes such as the Momo Challenge also made an appearance.

Most Shared Web Content in 2019

PUBLISHER	HEADLINE	FB SHARES
US105FM.COM	Suspected Human Trafficker, Child Predator May Be In Our Area	806,051
LIFENEWS.COM	You Can't Give a Lethal Injection to Murderers in New York, But You Can Give One to an Unborn Baby LifeNews.com	484,138
TMZ.COM	Beverly Hills, 90210' Star Luke Perry Dead at 52 After 'Massive' Stroke	445,398
CNBC.COM	House passes bill to end US government shutdown without border wall money	306,660
ABC3340.COM	AMBER Alert canceled; 2-year-old girl found safe	283,271
MIRROR.CO.UK	Momo challenge is 'hacking Peppa Pig, Fortnite and YouTube Kids' warns school	254,657
CBSNEWS.COM	Trump backs push for Bible classes in schools	254,393
WWW1.CBN.COM	A Sad and Evil Day': New York Legalizes Abortion Up to Baby's Birth Day on Anniversary of Roe v. Wade	245,847
SCARYMOMMY.COM	Gillette's New Ad On Toxic Masculinity Is Breathtaking — And Necessary	236,294
FOXNEWS.COM	Dems to strike 'so help me God' from oath taken in front of key House committee, draft shows	229,845
BREAKING911.COM	ALERT: Ohio police search for missing 6-year-old girl who is believed to be in danger - Breaking911	225,075
CANNADISH.NET	Bathing in Cannabis with CBD Bath Bombs! Great for Fibromyalgia & Improve Sleep.	208,921
BLACKAMERICAWEB.COM	Missing 9-Year-Old Boy Michael Campbell Didn't Return Home From School	205,027
DAILYMAIL.CO.UK	Luke Perry dies aged 52 just days after stroke	204,142
DAILYMAIL.CO.UK	Schools warn parents over sick Momo 'suicide game'	203,305

Most Commented Stories in 2019

The most commented articles were often the most divisive ones.

Topics included religion, abortion once again, religion, and politics, In short, everything we

are taught from a young age not to bring up at a dinner party is ripe for conversation on social media, and is often the most talked about topics.

Most Commented Web Content in 2019

PUBLISHER	HEADLINE	FB COMMENTS
WWW1.CBN.COM	A Sad and Evil Day': New York Legalizes Abortion Up to Baby's Birth Day on Anniversary of Roe v. Wade	1,129,222
TMZ.COM	Beverly Hills, 90210' Star Luke Perry Dead at 52 After 'Massive' Stroke	640,815
CBSNEWS.COM	Trump backs push for Bible classes in schools	621,254
HUFFINGTONPOST.COM	Viral Video Shows MAGA Hat-Wearing Teens Harassing Native American Vietnam Veteran	585,939
DAILYWIRE.COM	HORROR: New York Set To Legalize Abortion Up To Birth	469,924
CONSERVATIVETEARS.COM	Henry Winkler Dead at 77 – A Huge Trump Supporter and Lifelong Gun Lover	457,825
LIFENEWS.COM	New York Senate Passes Bill Legalizing Abortions Up to Birth LifeNews.com	396,146
INFORMATIONLIBERATION.COM	HATE HOAX: Native American Activist Approached Chanting Covington Catholic Teens, Got In Their Face	384,296
NEONNETTLE.COM	Democrats Pass Bill to Fund College for Illegal Immigrants with Taxpayer Money	370,311
LIFENEWS.COM	You Can't Give a Lethal Injection to Murderers in New York, But You Can Give One to an Unborn Baby LifeNews.com	368,444
FOXNEWS.COM	Dems to strike 'so help me God' from oath taken in front of key House committee, draft shows	368,031
USATODAY.COM	New Jersey to require schools to teach LGBT history	353,499
UNILAD.CO.UK	Woman Smears Menstrual Blood On Face To Show Periods Are 'Beautiful and Powerful'	344,752
SCARYMOMMY.COM	Gillette's New Ad On Toxic Masculinity Is Breathtaking — And Necessary	341,080
MIRROR.CO.UK	Momo challenge is 'hacking Peppa Pig, Fortnite and YouTube Kids' warns school	328,686

Types of Article in the Top 100 Stories

We also did an analysis of the types of content that made up the very top stories, dividing the top hundred stories into various subgroups.

Unsurprisingly, politics dominated, and comprised 36 of the top hundred stories.

The second most frequently appearing group was what might be termed soft or viral news, normally something quirky involving parenting or animals. These stories were responsible for 17 percent of the top hundred stories.

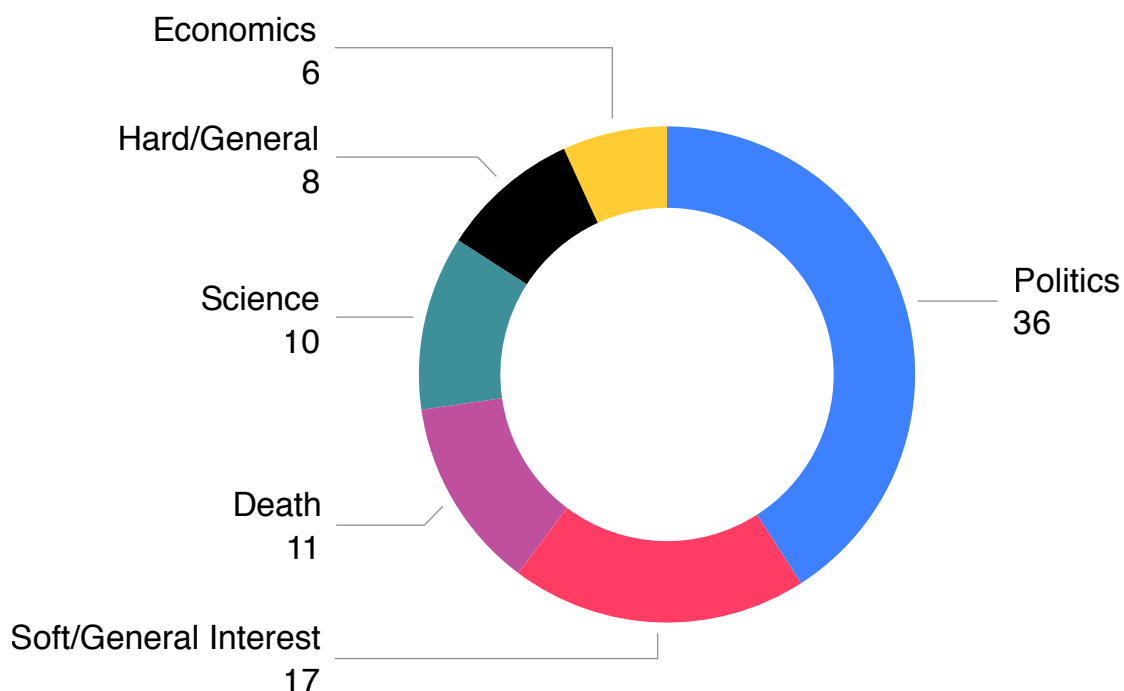
Death announcements and obituaries were the third, with eleven of the top hundred stories.

Luke Perry's death was a particular contributor to this number, as the majority in the top hundred concerned his death.

For science, most of the stories focused either on environmental news or the curing of diseases, with climate change and HIV being cured in a second patient two themes that drove a lot of attention in this category.

Almost all of the six economic stories that featured were about taxation, either on a personal or corporate level.

Percentage of Top 100 Stories of 2019 by Genre





Facebook Native Publishing

Top Facebook Pages in 2019

Natively on Facebook we saw quite different Pages have success than we saw on the web.

The top Facebook Page was Lad Bible, with some 90 million engagements to their native Facebook content, with UNILAD not far behind at just over 80 million engagements for the year so far.

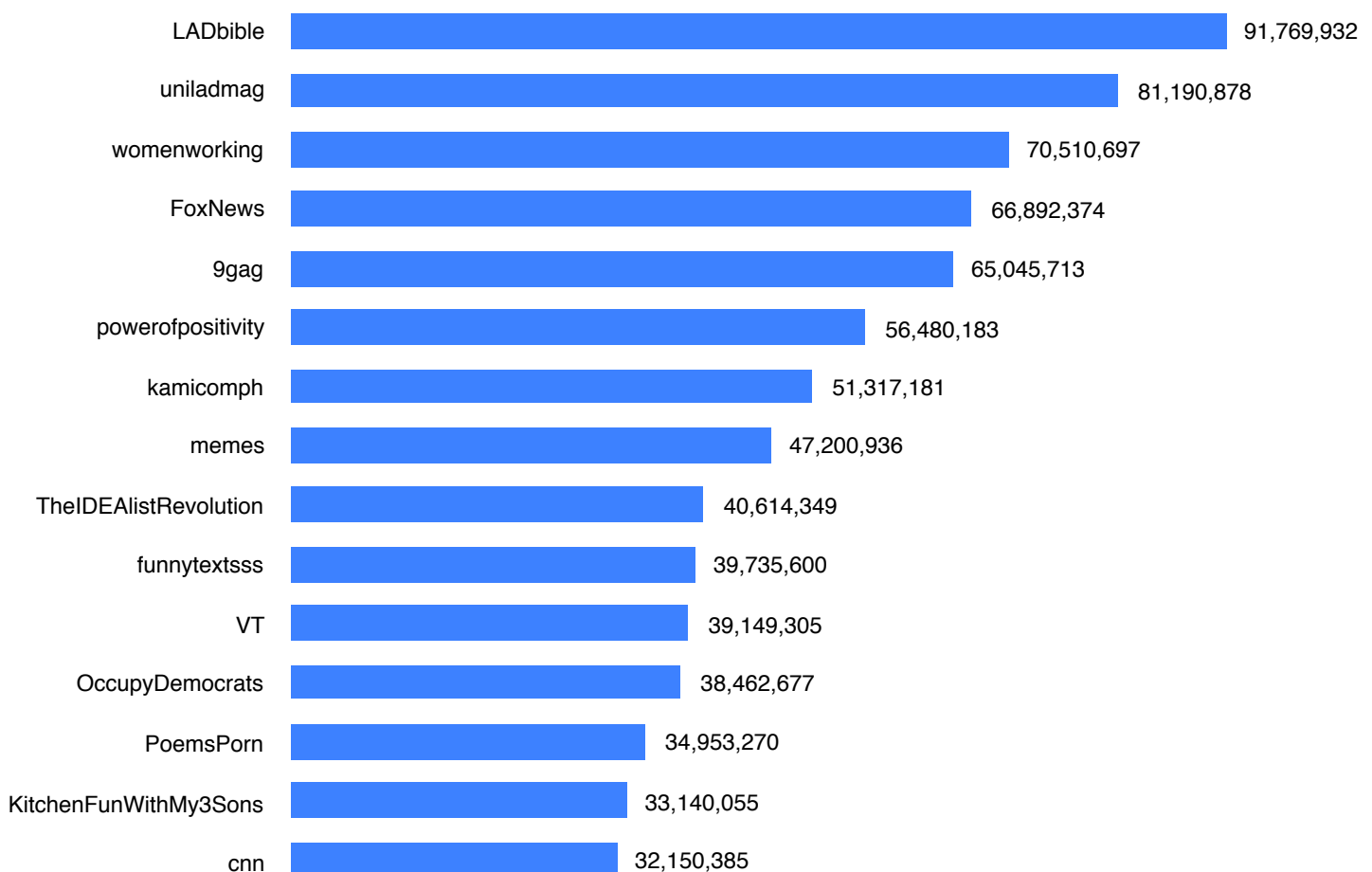
Generally, we saw meme pages do well on Facebook, along with Pages built for specific

communities such as Kitchen Fun with My 3 Sons.

This represents quite a stark difference from what we saw on the web, where hard news dominated.

Fox News was the only traditional publisher in the top ten on Facebook, and CNN was the only other one in the top fifteen, though both had significantly fewer engagements than on web.

Top Pages by Total Engagement



Top Publishers' Facebook Pages in 2019

When we narrowed it down to just publishers, we saw more that we saw on our original list.

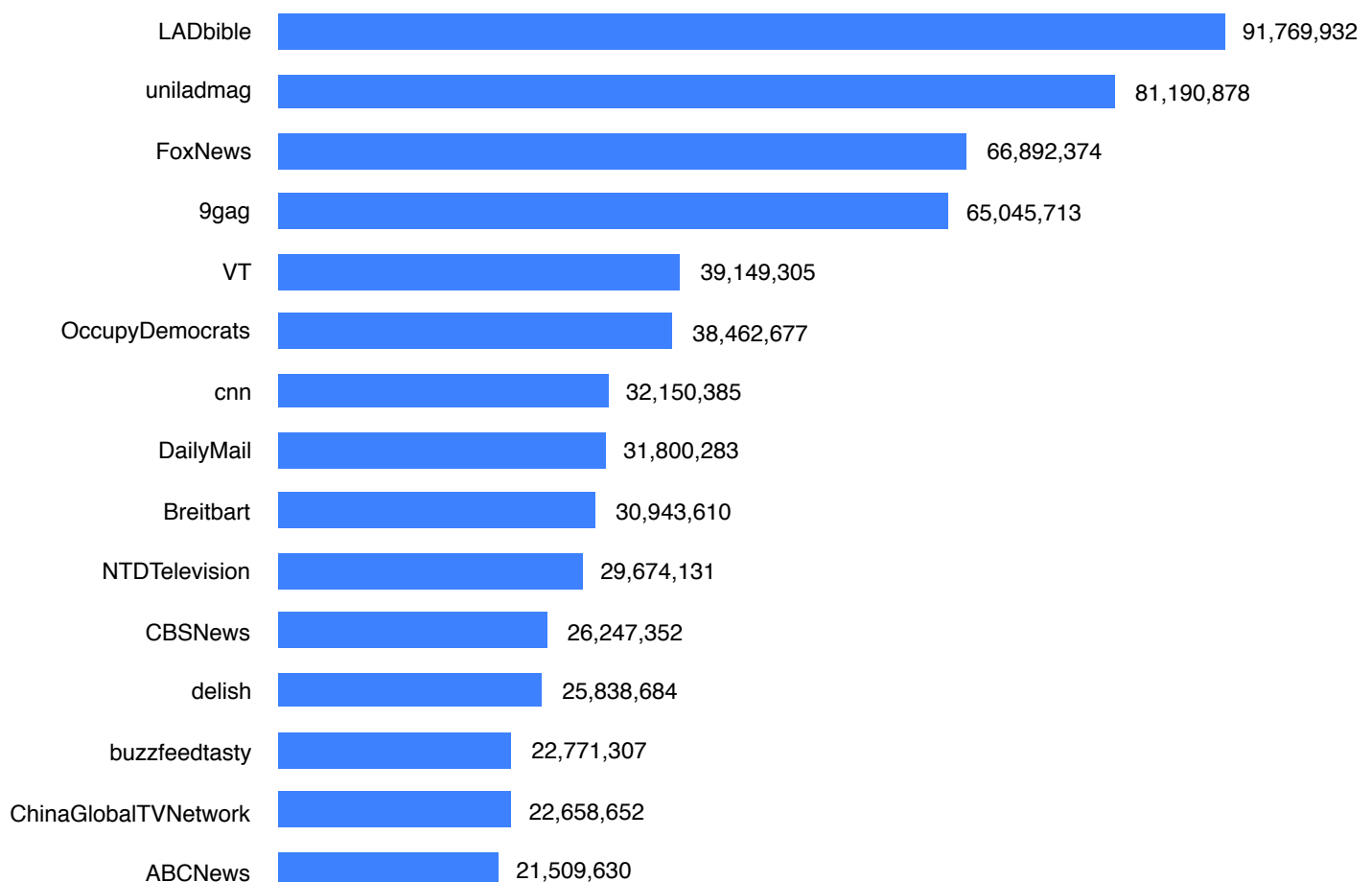
CBS News, Daily Mail, ABC News and Breitbart all appeared among the top publishers on the platform, with all of them driving more than 20 million engagements for the year so far.

There were also a couple of China-focused publishers in the mix, with NTD Television and

China Global TV Network both featuring in the top fifteen.

Food publishers such as BuzzFeed Tasty and Delish also featured in the list, with Delish having the slight edge in the food wars, with roughly ten percent more engagements for the year so far.

Publishers with the most engaged Pages



Facebook Pages Driving the Most Angry Reactions

One metric that is somewhat difficult to quantify are the reaction buttons.

These were introduced in 2017 by Facebook to give people more ways to react to content, but some of them can be hard to distinguish from a more traditional like.

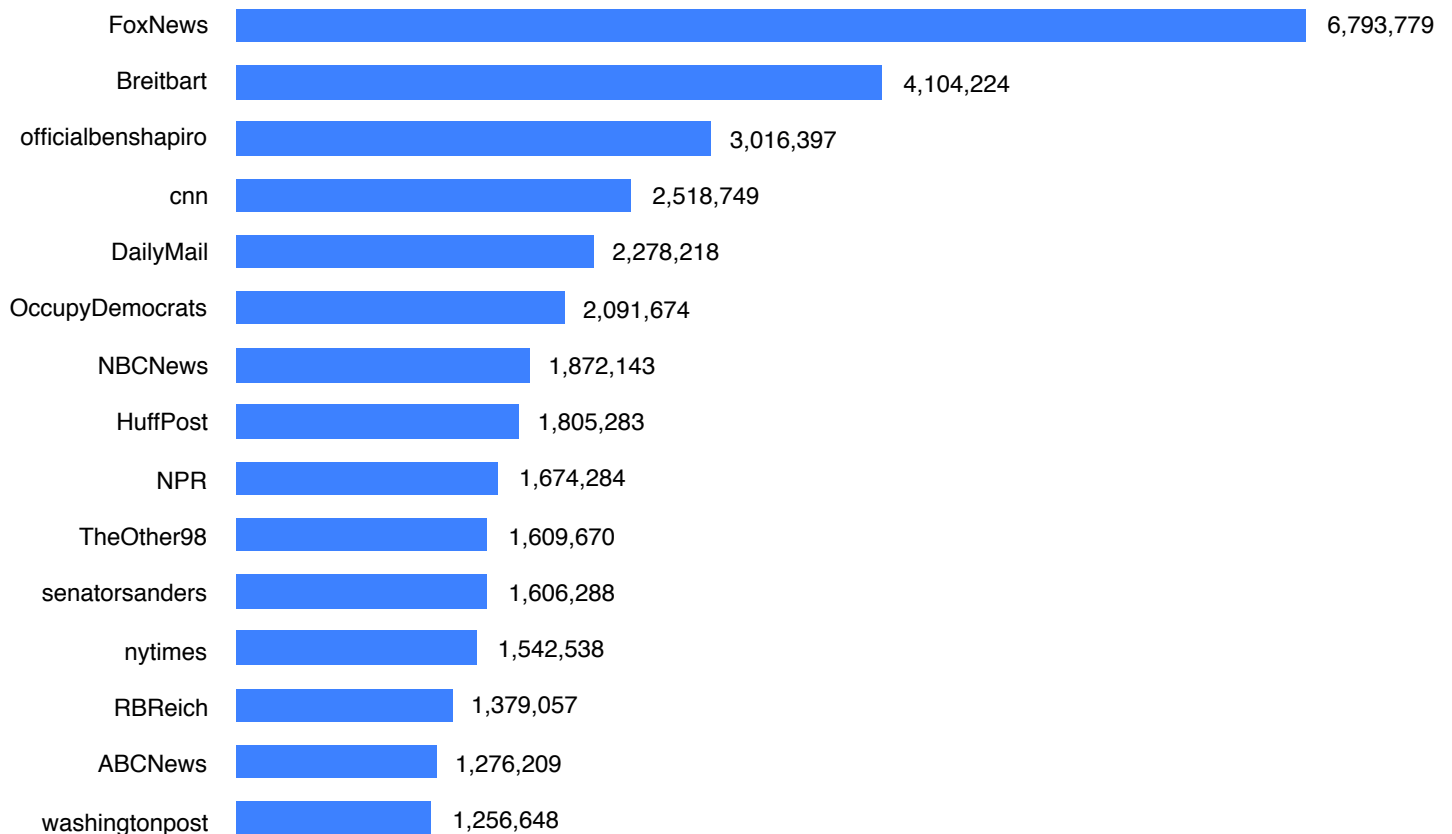
One reaction that is not true for is the 'angry' reaction, which normally has one of two very clear uses. Either people don't like the content, or they're angry about what they're seeing, with

the former being much less common than the latter.

Politics was the main driver of Angry reactions in terms of pure numbers, with Fox News driving the most angry reactions of anyone, with nearly double that of anyone else.

Nearly everyone in this list is a big publisher that writes regularly about politics, a politician, or some form of political group. Senator Sanders is the politician that drives the most angry reactions.

Pages with the most Angries



Pages by Percentage of Angry Reactions

It's not always about the raw numbers, however, it's also interesting to see which publishers were regularly seeing a high proportion of angry reactions.

These were often slightly smaller publishers, and it tended to be the more partisan ones that drove a high amount of angry reactions.

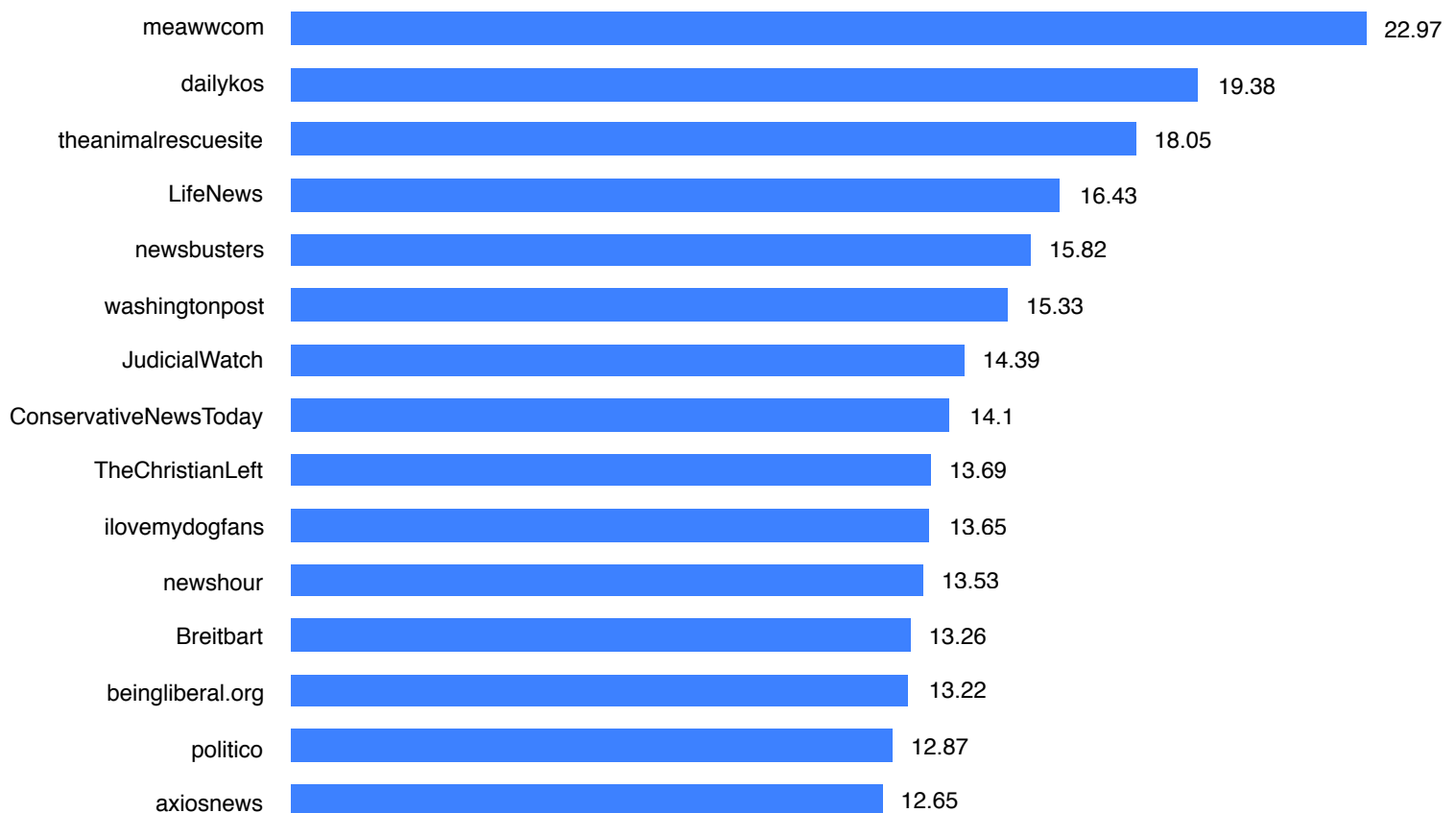
We limited the search to only those who had posted more than a thousand times in 2019 so far, and saw that the likes of Daily Kos, Conservative News Today, Being Liberal and

Judicial Watch, all of which have a partisan leaning, drove a particularly high number of angry reactions.

In terms of the more mainstream publishers, Washington Post drove the highest proportion of this type of reaction, with 15 percent of the engagements to their content being the Angry reaction.

The one exception to this political rule was when animals were involved, particularly animals rescued from owners that mistreated them.

Pages with the highest percentage of Angries (min.1000 Posts)



Reactions to Top 10,000 Facebook Posts by Percentage

How did these numbers compare to the overall level of reactions across the top posts?

We looked at the top 10,000 stories across Facebook to see what percentage of engagements came from likes, comments, shares, and reactions respectively.

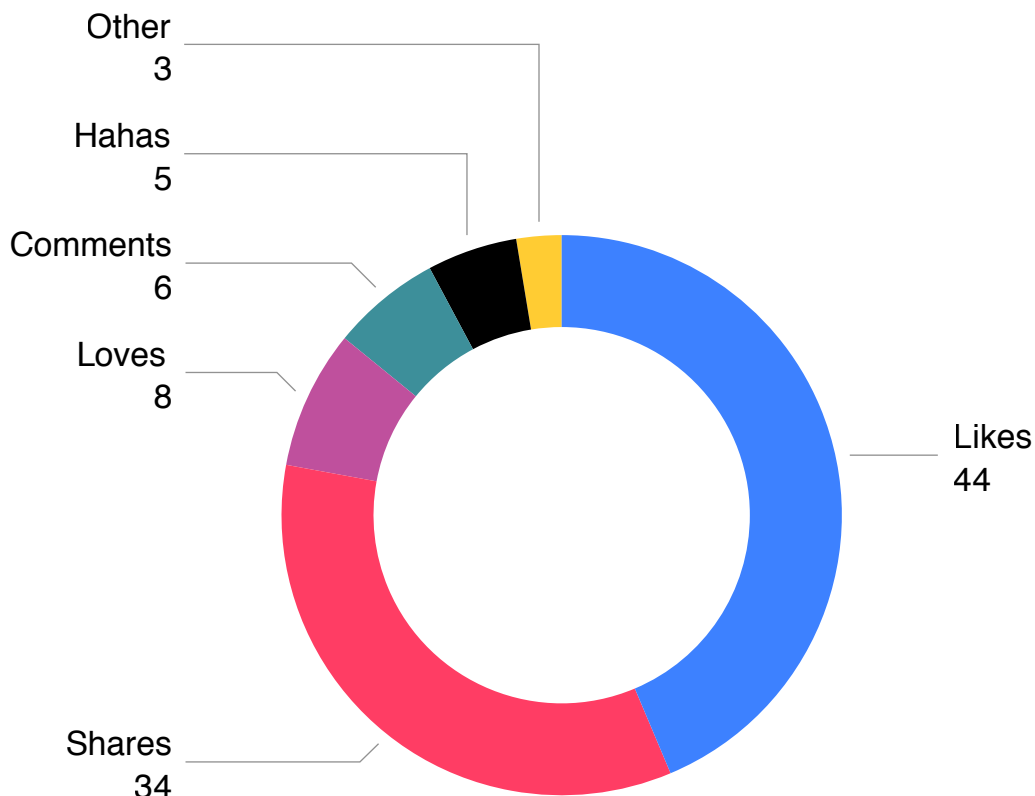
Likes were predictably the most common type of engagement on the top stories, followed by shares, with 44 percent and 34 percent of all the engagement on these stories coming from those metrics respectively.

Somewhat surprisingly, there were more 'Loves' on the top content than there were comments, with eight percent of the reactions being the former, as opposed to six percent for the latter.

Angries were relatively rare in the top stories, so although we saw some Pages thrive on generating anger, in general this was not true of the top stories.

Indeed, among the top 10,000 posts, the Angry reaction, the Wow reaction, and the Sad reaction combined made up only three percent of the total engagements to the top content.

Most Common Reactions to Top 10,000 Stories by Percentage



Number of Posts in Top 10,000 Posts by Post Type

What about the type of content that succeeded in the top posts?

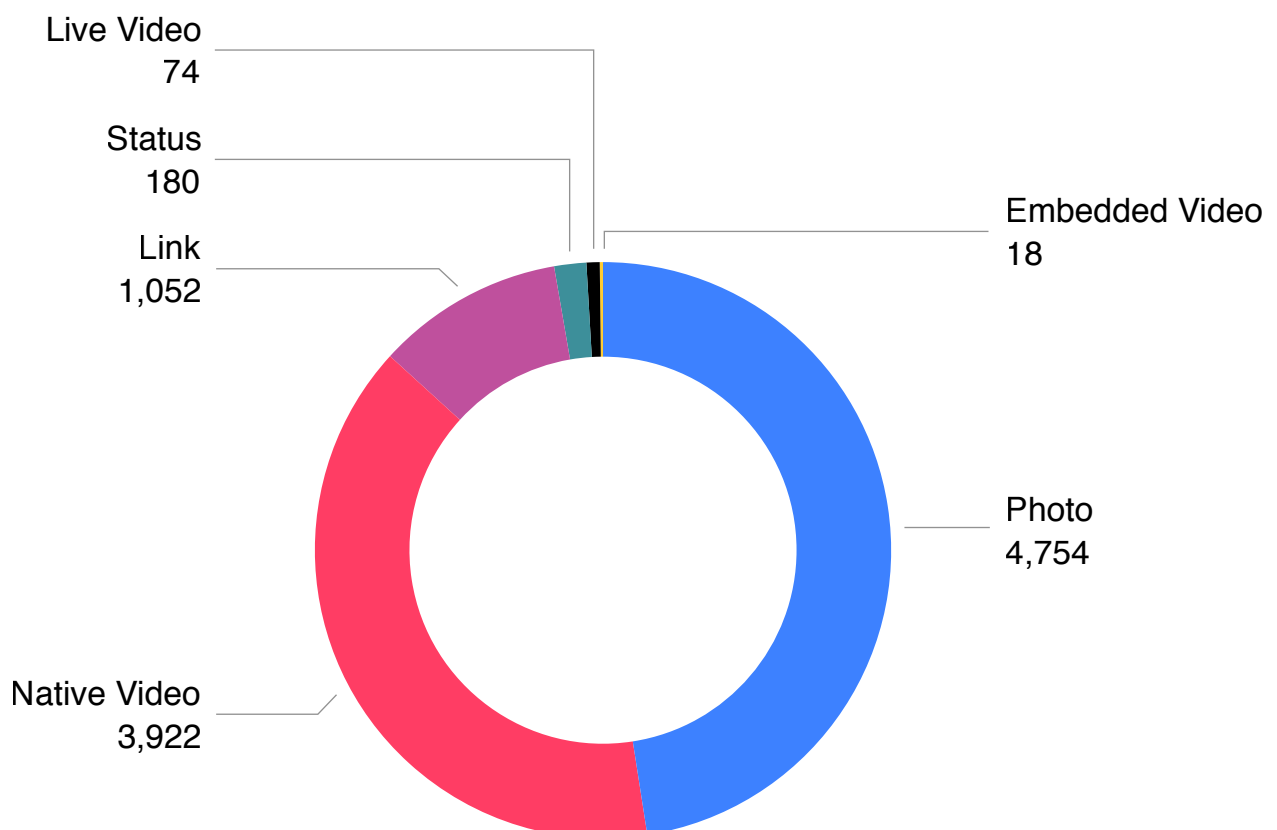
There was a very clear preference for the visual here. We've written a number of times about the over performance of native video on Facebook, and this remains true.

Just under 4,000 of the top 10,000 posts by engagement were native video, though the top performing format by pure frequency was actually image content, whether that be memes or photos. These appeared 4,754 times in the most engaged posts.

Links were the last among the big three format types, while live video barely featured at all, making up less than one percent of the top posts for 2019 so far.

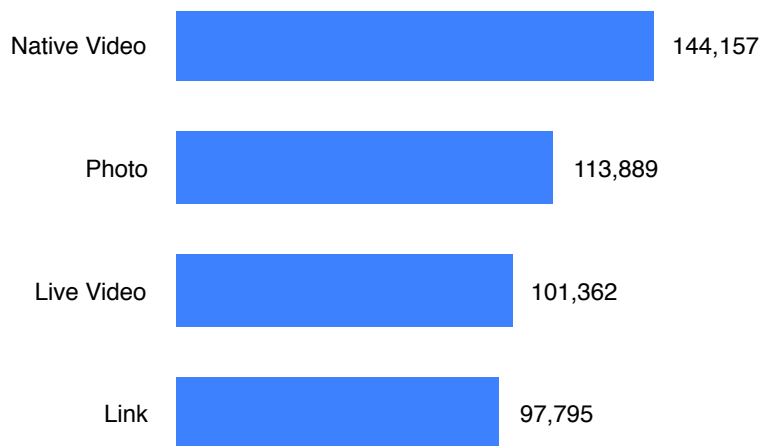
As we'll see on the next page, video still drives the most engagement on average. As such, the fact that it is not top here may simply be a function of the fact that it is more expensive to produce, and not everybody has the resources to put videos out at the rate with which they put photo and image content out

Top 10,000 Facebook Posts by Format



Average Engagements by Post Type on Top 10,000 Posts

Average Engagements by Post Type

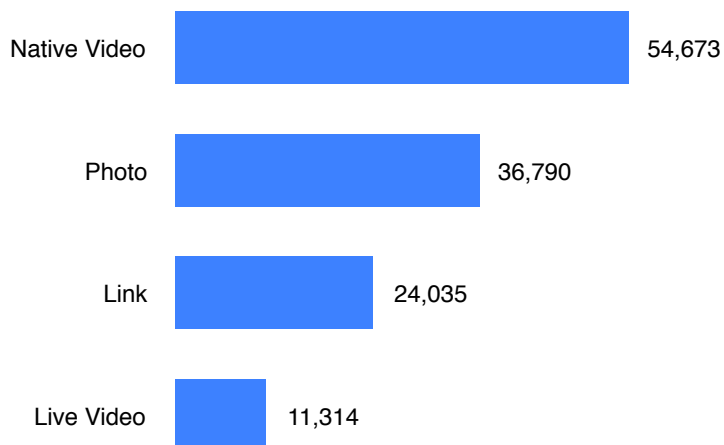


Here we have the numbers of average engagements by format type.

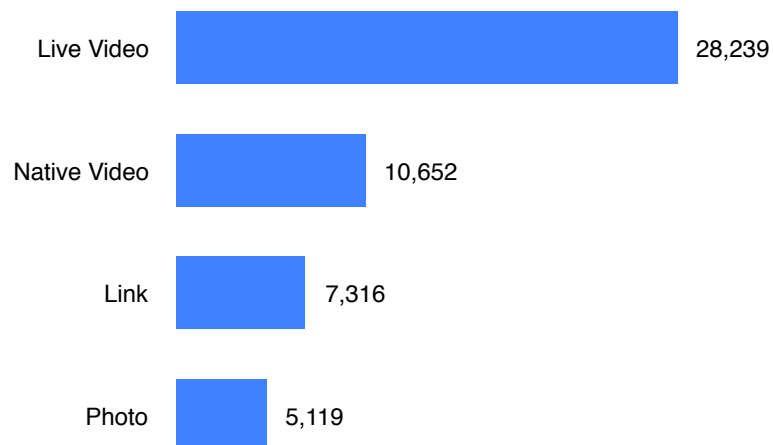
Native video drives the highest average engagement and the highest average shares among all the types of post in 2019 so far.

One interesting thing to note here is that, although it is not a very prevalent form of content, Live Video does drive a much higher number of comments than any other content type. Live videos drove an average of 28,000 comments, as compared to 10,000 for native video, which was the next highest number.

Average Shares by Post Type



Average Comments by Post Type



Top Facebook Posts of 2019

The top posts tended to be more fun and quirky than we saw on the web. Daily Mail featured heavily, as did Lad Bible and UNILAD. The top post came from So Yummy, and was a post about cookie decorating hacks, which affirmed the success of food content on the platform. The Game of Thrones trailer and teaser trailer were also highly engaged, featuring twice in the top fifteen posts.

Top Facebook Posts of 2019

FB PAGE	POST TYPE	HEADLINE	ENGAGEMENT
SO YUMMY	Native Video	Be a smart cookie with these 12 cookie decorating hacks 🍪🔪🔪	2,602,656
SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST	Native Video	Dancing with school principal	2,559,059
DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA	Native Video	This woman pushed out her baby in a CAR as they were driving down the highway.	2,371,548
SHARING IS CARING	Native Video	This man's wife just broke his heart	2,102,481
TOYOTA	Photo	TOYOTA Corolla will make you take your shades off.	2,001,983
LADBIBLE	Native Video	Baby's Eyes Light Up When It Sees Food	1,938,039
GAME OF THRONES	Native Video	Game of Thrones: Season 8 - Official Trailer (HBO)	1,908,609
RICH DEMURO	Native Video	This is the laundry folding robot dreams are made of. Works with shirts, pants, towels and more. #CES2019	1,744,570
DOG LOVERS CLUB	Native Video	Dogs are no less than kids...!!	1,526,900
GAME OF THRONES	Native Video	Game of Thrones Season 8 Official Tease: Crypts of Winterfell (HBO)	1,344,621
WWE	Photo	Timeline Photos	1,289,862
UNILAD	Native Video	Runaway Labrador Returns With New Friends	1,208,920
BEAUTY STUDIO	Native Video	Ep.179: Innovative Chocolate Designs	1,187,317
SO YUMMY	Native Video	Do you dream in chocolate? We do. ✨	1,151,565
DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA	Native Video	What...did I just watch?	1,119,543

Top Facebook Posts by Publishers in 2019

We also looked at the top posts by publishers, which had some similarities and some differences.

While some of the top posts from publishers were the type of fun, whimsical posts we saw in other places, there was also some hard news that featured.

CBS News' post on Steven Tyler's opening of his home for abused girls was one example of this, and the only one that featured in the top ten.

Lady Gaga's performance with Bradley Cooper at the Oscars also featured in the top ten, but was the only post in the list to get under a million engagements.

Top Facebook Posts from Publishers in 2019

FB PAGE	POST TYPE	HEADLINE	ENGAGEMENT
SO YUMMY	Native Video	Be a smart cookie with these 12 cookie decorating hacks 🍪🔪🍴	2,602,656
SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST	Native Video	Dancing with school principal	2,559,059
DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA	Native Video	This woman pushed out her baby in a CAR as they were driving down the highway.	2,371,548
LADBIBLE	Native Video	Baby's Eyes Light Up When It Sees Food	1,938,039
UNILAD	Native Video	Runaway Labrador Returns With New Friends	1,208,920
SO YUMMY	Native Video	Do you dream in chocolate? We do. ✨	1,151,565
DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA	Native Video	What...did I just watch?	1,119,543
CBS NEWS	Native Video	Hero bus driver rescues baby boy wandering around in the cold alone	1,107,853
CBS NEWS	Native Video	Steven Tyler opens home for abused girl inspired by Aerosmith hit	1,009,637
9 NEWS	Native Video	STUNNING: Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper with an emotional performance of 'Shallow' from 'A Star Is Born'. #Oscars	910,035

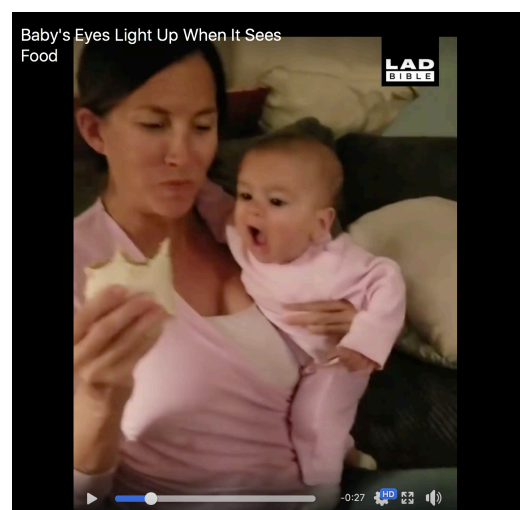


Key Takeaways

What to remember

Key takeaways

- Having been down in the beginning of 2018, engagement at the beginning of 2019 is way up, topping even the numbers from 2017
- Political content is dominant on the web, making up more than a third of the most engaged posts
- Fox News had the most stories in the top 10,000 stories for the year so far, with 438 between it and its subsidiaries
- Native video is still the most engaging native content, with average engagement on the top posts nearly 50 percent higher than any other format
- Outside of political content, there were not many angry reactions on Facebook's native content, and Angry reactions made up fewer than one percent of the reactions to the top 10,000 posts





Thank You!