

2026 Social Media Trends

What should you take into account?

For you

Long-form

Reach

Video

AI vs authenticity

Search

willow

Recap of our 2025 trends

1. Vertical video gains importance.
2. More focus on personal brand.
3. Carousels lose their importance as a format.
4. Social search is growing.
5. No hashtags on LI, more on IG
6. Reach goes down
7. Rise of agentic AI

1. LinkedIn promotes lots of videos.
2. Ghostwriters & agencies everywhere.
3. Still carousels but also more other formats such as infographics.
4. For a while, then AI took over.
5. Even IG has reduced hashtags now.
6. Have you seen the complaints?
7. Still limited to technical users

1. Audience and followers matter less

The feeds are based more and more on what type of content people engage with rather than who they follow.

How to deal with this trend?

- Post around clear topics. Make it obvious what you're about.
- Tie content to current conversations in your industry.
- Assume every post is shown to strangers.

2. Volume increases; reach decreases

Access to content creation got 10x easier with AI. Anyone can create content, but fewer accounts actually have good reach.

How to deal with this trend?

- Don't measure success by impressions but by signals.
- Stick to your topics to stay relevant (see trend 1).
- More quantity may help but quality still wins.

3. The AI vs authenticity battle

AI content keeps improving. It will get hard to tell the difference. Authenticity is the true differentiator.

How to deal with this trend?

- Not everything has to be perfect. Dare to share a look behind the scenes.
- Don't just share summaries. Add your thoughts and opinions.
- Talk about real experiences, failures, wins, decisions...

4. Long-form makes a comeback

An explosion of short-form (AI-generated) content leads to more people looking for real, in-depth content.

How to deal with this trend?

- Publish structured long posts (as LinkedIn articles/newsletters).
- Create and share original research (if you have the means).
- Get your audience involved with webinars and interviews.

5. More video (same impact)

Platforms like videos because they are addictive and AI made video creation easy. So we'll see more video, but are people waiting for it?

How to deal with this trend?

- Don't hop on the trend if you don't have the time/budget.
- Focus on creating authentic videos, not cheap AI videos.
- Only create video if it's real added value compared to other formats.

6. Social media feeds AI

Social media posts increasingly feed search engines and AI answers. (Reddit posts, YouTube videos, LinkedIn articles...)

How to deal with this trend?

- Make sure your brand stays consistent across different platforms.
- Don't exaggerate with links. Naming your brand is enough.
- Getting mentioned by others may be the biggest growth lever of 2026.

Some (wild) predictions

- Engagement is going to become a more important KPI. If we are switching to more human content, the engagement metric will also be used to check if it is resonating with the audience enough.
(Henrieke)
- we might see a crossover between cybersecurity and social media platforms: security of social media accounts will become a thing.
(Ludwig)
- Video isn't going to work on LinkedIn, despite the massive investments in sponsored content. (Kjell)

We also asked some other marketers

- The "foryoufication" of feeds will continue to the point that many people will be discouraged and stop posting. X is the perfect example of this. It's basically a lottery now. (see trend 1)
- The downfall of the influencers: people are tired of seeing product promotions all over the place.
- Ads are getting creepily personalized and AI-comments are now an embedded feature. Either they turn it around, or it starts a downward momentum. Not an exodus, but slow enshittification, a painfully slow death march.

What we wish for social media in 2026

- More detailed analytics for LinkedIn, such as dwell time. (Kjell)
- Less broadcasting you own opinion and more interacting with others. (Koen)
- A new social media channel or format, but we can't go to holograms yet. (Ali)
- I hope that the reputation of social media will become better and that the people thinking and writing about social media will be more focused on shining a light on the positive and transformative power that social media has instead of the doom and gloom story. (Ludwig)