

The Evolution of Instagram – Brand Adoption Study May, 2013

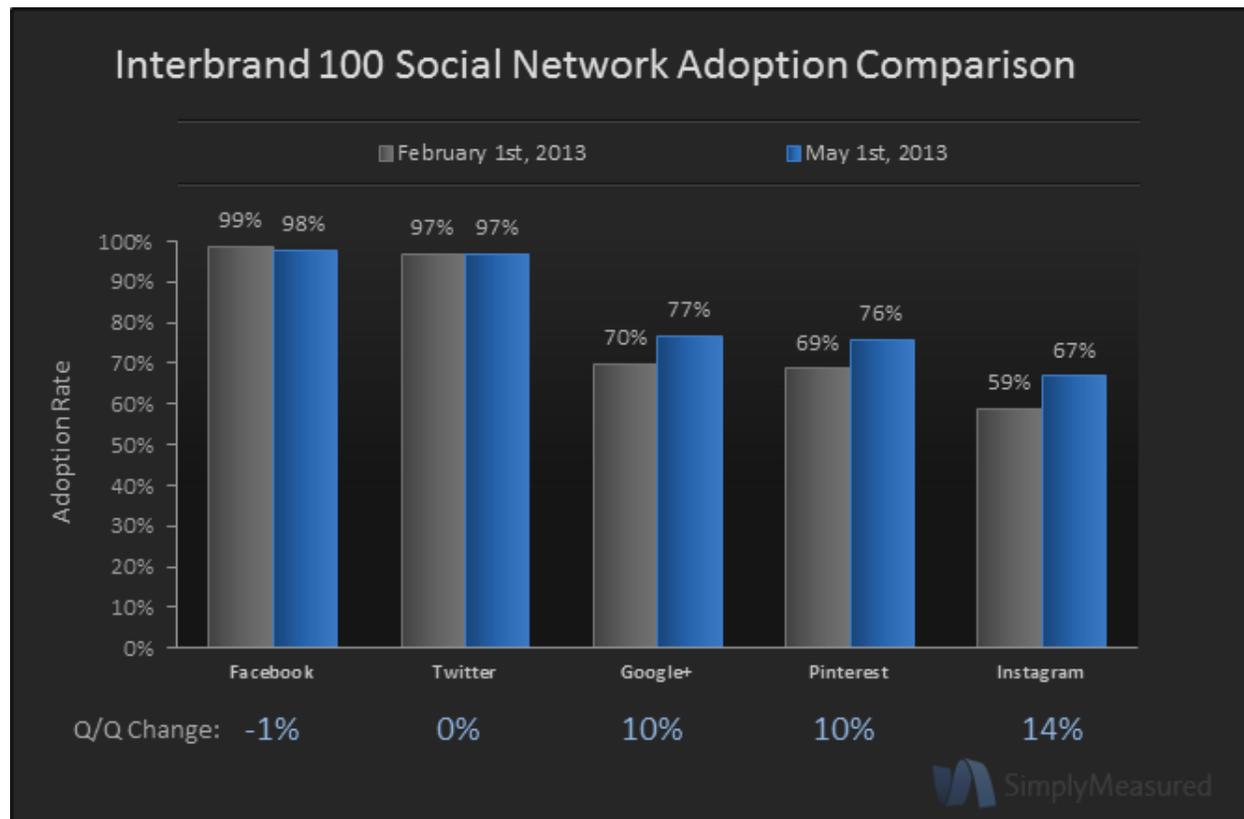
An Analysis of the Interbrand Top 100 Brands on Instagram

When Instagram was acquired by Facebook for \$1 billion, the network boasted 22 million active monthly users. A year later that total has grown by 500%. In an effort to keep over 100 million users engaged, Instagram has made some significant changes along the way.

After adding richer Facebook integration and web profiles, the photo sharing network ruffled feathers by dropping Twitter card support and updating their privacy policy; a move designed to position the inevitable ad integration. In February, Instagram added web timelines for viewing and engaging with posts.

This quarterly study looks at the growth of Instagram and adoption of the social network by the Interbrand Top 100 Brands* in the world. The data and analysis come from Simply Measured's [industry-leading social media analytics & reporting platform](#) that helps large brands and digital agencies measure Instagram engagement in context with competitors and broader social channels.

Instagram & Pinterest Earning More Brand Attention



While Facebook and Twitter continue their reign as the dominant social networks, the appeal of visual marketing is drawing more brands to Instagram and Pinterest.

Only 40% of the Interbrand 100 list was active on Instagram in August of last year. The network has seen a steady increase in activity each quarter since August, and despite being a mobile-only network, Instagram has kept pace with Pinterest's brand adoption growth.

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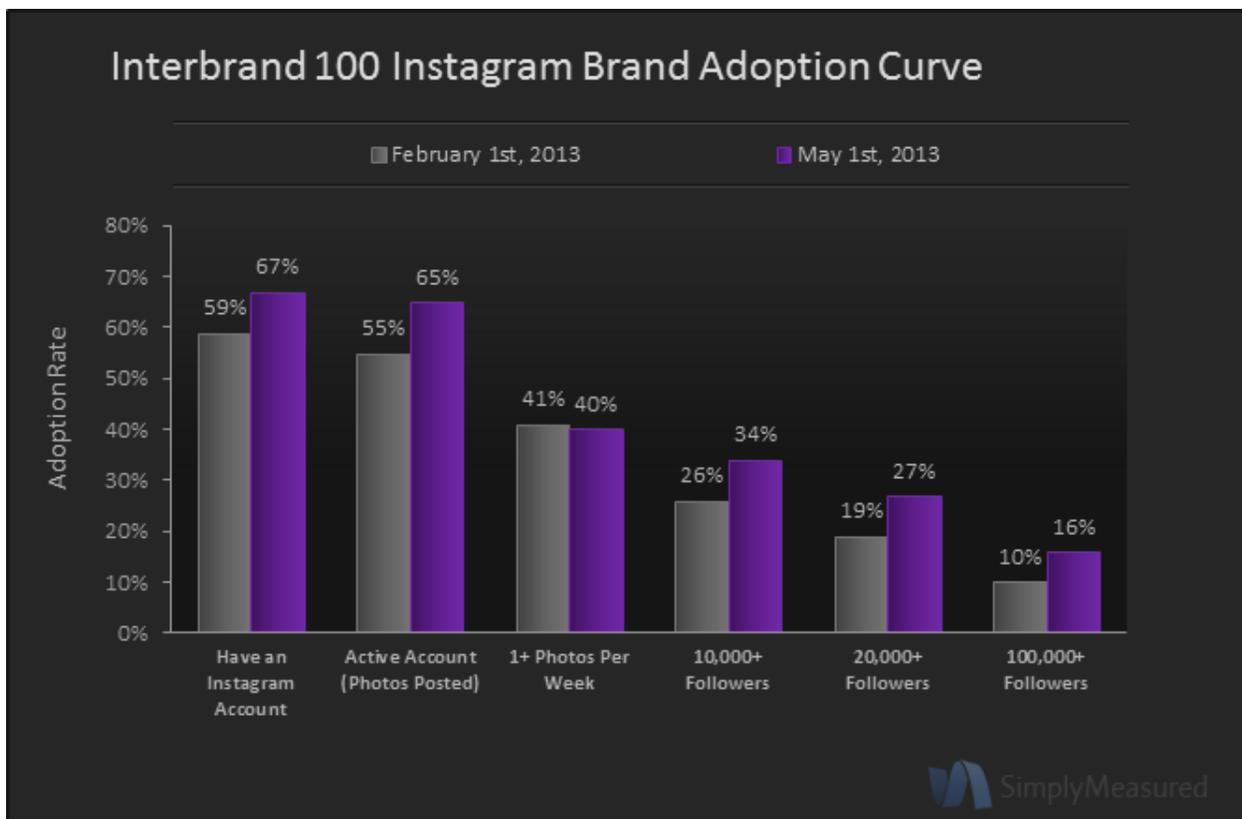
What may surprise you when comparing the two is that although Pinterest has attracted a higher percentage of brands, the audience of the Interbrand companies using Instagram is significantly bigger.

As of May 1st, the collective audience of the 76 brands on Pinterest was under 500,000, while Instagram's 67 companies weighed in with over 7 million followers.

Why the disparity? Although 76% of top brands maintain a presence on Pinterest, only 55 of them actively post to the network each month.

While this number has stayed relatively stagnant on Pinterest, adoption and use of Instagram is on the rise.

Brands Actively Using Instagram



Although Pinterest has seen an influx in inactive “placeholder accounts”, a higher percentage of top brands have photos posted on Instagram than they did last quarter.

55% of accounts had posted photos between November 1st and February 1st, but over 65% have since that time.

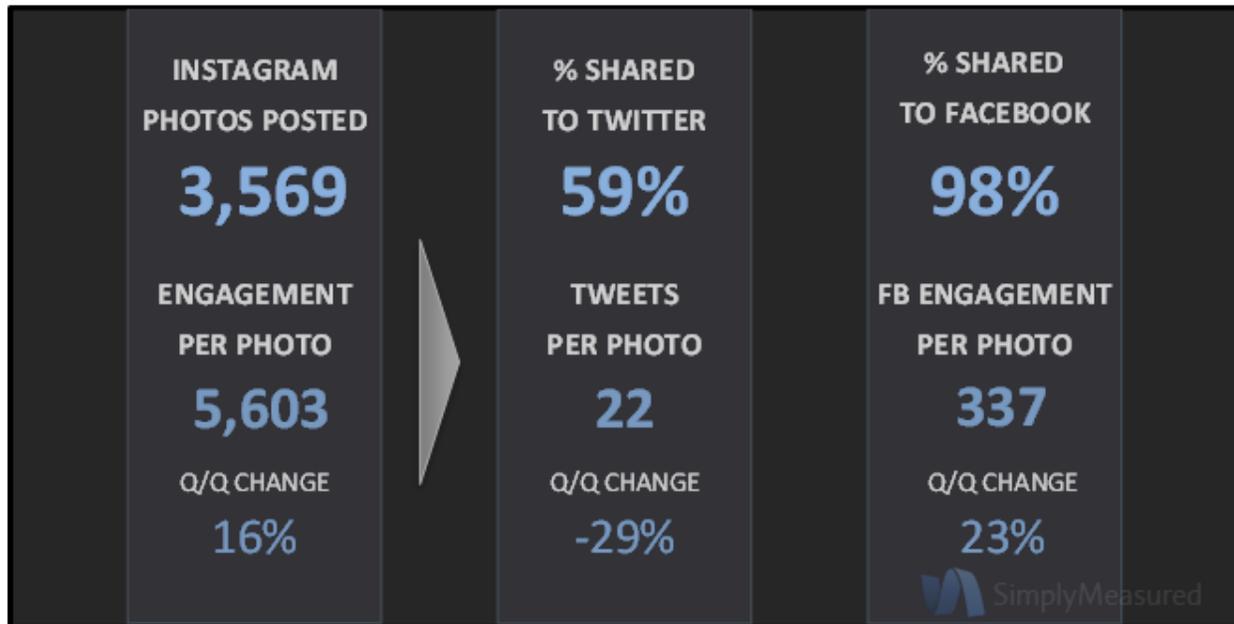
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The percentage of brands who've averaged a photo per week has dipped slightly, but it should be noted that brands posting more than 20 photos per month has increased to 37%, and brands posting 50 or more photos a month has increased to 23%, demonstrating dedication by top brands on the network.

The audience size for top brands has continued to climb as well. There are now 12 brands with over 100,000 followers, and Nike has joined Starbucks and MTV with over 1 million.

Facebook's Growing Involvement



Almost 1,000 more photos were posted by brands this quarter than last, and those photos saw 16% higher engagement than they did during the same time period, averaging 5,600 likes and comments per photo.

Similar to our findings last quarter, Twitter engagement on Instagram photos has continued to drop. A symptom of Instagram dropping support for embedded images on Twitter, fewer brands are sharing their content on the micro-blogging site, and engagement has continued plummeting.

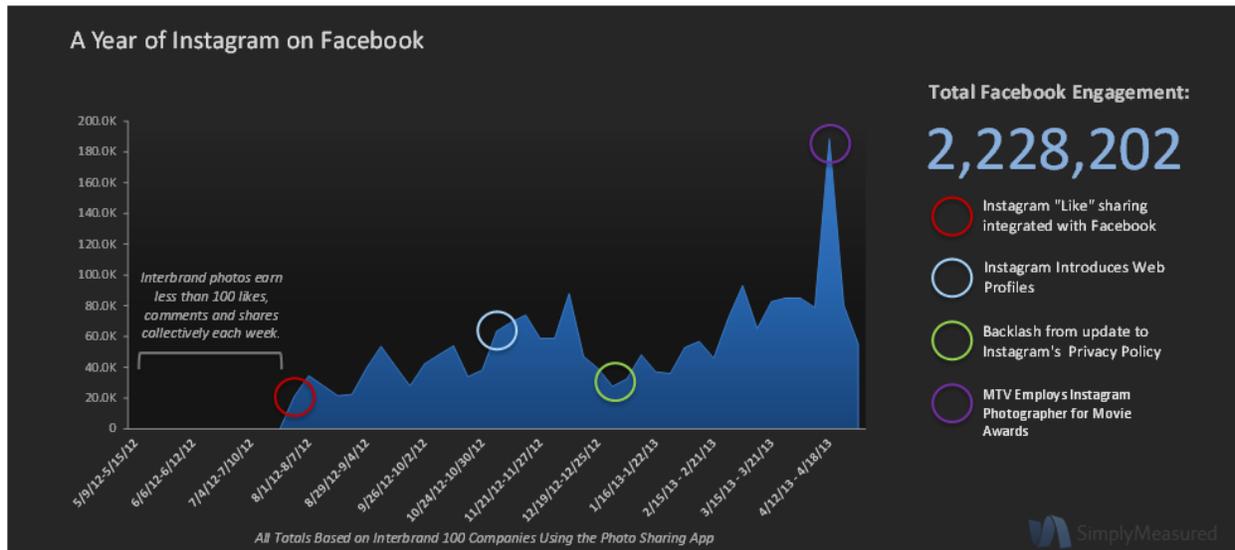
Facebook engagement, on the other hand, has continued to climb. Nearly all brand photos posted to Instagram are shared on Facebook, and of those, brands have seen an average of 337 likes, comments and shares per photo. This is up 23% from last quarter, which saw a similar growth trend over the quarter prior to that.

Facebook's increased efforts to integrate Instagram in your newsfeed has played a crucial role in this growth, but brands have become more socially savvy, and continued to integrate Instagram into their social campaigns.

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Instagram on Facebook Since the Acquisition



Over the last year, several components have played key roles in the way you interact with a brand's Instagram presence. None is as prominent as the integration of Instagram "like" sharing and Facebook.

In July of 2012, the network added this feature, allowing photos you've liked on Instagram to show up in your Facebook newsfeed. This exponentially increased the level of engagement Instagram photos see on Facebook.

As an collective entity, this made sense for Facebook. It allows Instagram to maintain a viable presence and drive traffic, but keeps that traffic within the Facebook ecosystem.

This, in addition to several other factors that shifted the way users interact with Instagram on Facebook, has led to over 2 million Facebook likes, comments, and shares on Instagram photos over the course of the last year.

The addition of web profiles led to a large spike in engagement on Facebook, but any prolonged impact was cut short by the announcement of the privacy policy update, which led to digital shouts of "boycott" across both Facebook and Twitter.

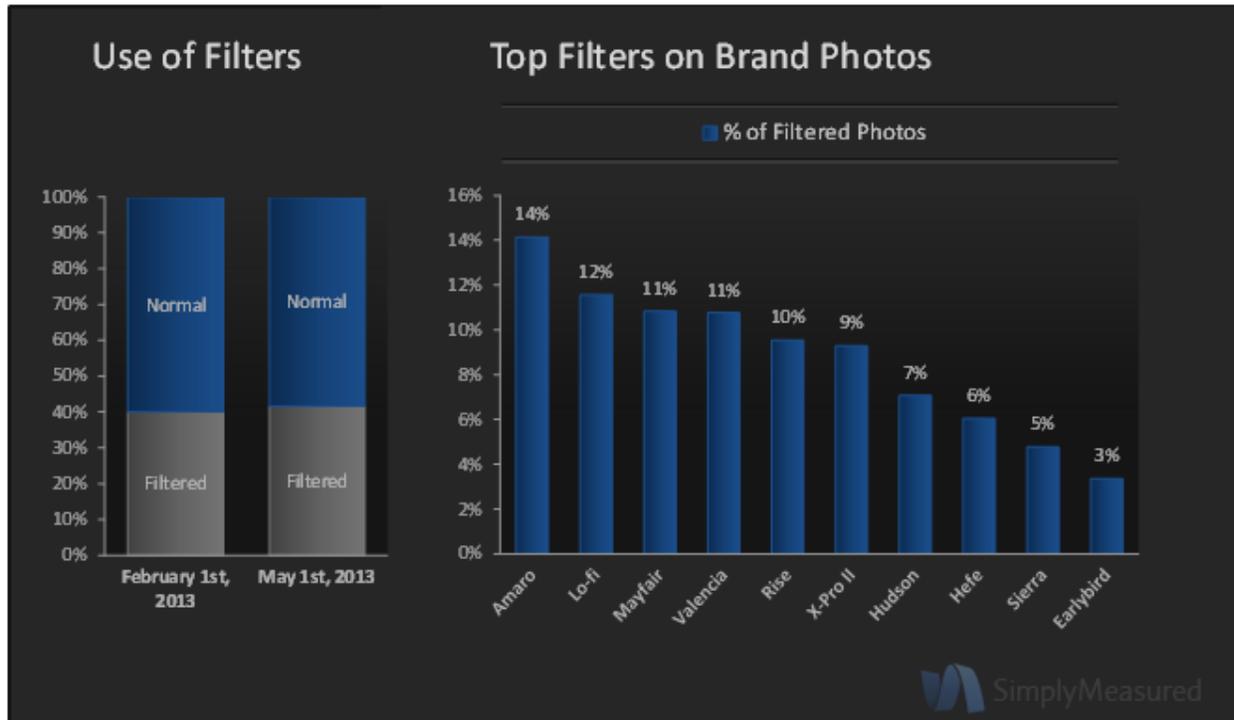
Engagement on Facebook has recovered from that announcement, but didn't reach it's alltime high until MTV promoted their MTV Movie Awards by employing an "Instarazzi" photographer to shoot red carpet Instagram photos.

MTV tallied over 100 thousand Facebook likes, shares and comments on their Instagram photos during the week of the show, which was in addition to over 1 million Instagram likes and comments. They even tacked on over ten thousand retweets and replies to Instagram photos posted on Twitter.

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The Filters Brands Favor



While 40% of photos brands post to Twitter use filters, the distribution is relatively even across the selection of filter options. Amaro led the way this quarter with 14% of filter use. Lo-fi and Mayfair were also used regularly by brands.

The Top 10 Interbrand Companies on Instagram

Instagram Account Details: 3 Month Totals

Account Name	Total Followers	Q/Q Growth	Total Posts	Q/Q New Posts	Total Engagement	Q/Q Engagement
Nike	1,315,051	50%	572	-40%	2459637	-4%
MTV	1,290,237	13%	1044	70%	4725583	138%
Starbucks Coffee	1,205,752	12%	253	21%	843343	18%
Burberry	761,072	15%	799	7%	979635	-4%
Gucci	561,217	57%	239	30%	1020438	82%
Tiffany & Co.	545,257	50%	341	78%	2057696	59%
Audi	399,139	22%	521	-31%	1442901	-23%
Adidas	230,367	93%	209	9%	419753	105%
Ralph Lauren	204,390	71%	549	25%	1118427	99%
Mercedes-Benz	195,410	212%	717	110%	3490005	572%

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The industry that has found the most success on Instagram has been Luxury and Apparel brands. Six of the top ten brands on Instagram can be found in this segment.

The disparity between the top ten brands and the remaining 57 on the list has become more and more apparent. The combined engagement seen by these ten brands is 92% of the entire Interbrand 100 engagement on Instagram. Mercedes-Benz, Adidas and MTV have all doubled their engagement over last quarter.

Conclusion

Instagram is gaining ground on other social networks, with more and more brands following the example of leaders on the network. With 67% of these top brands already engaging with a combined audience of over 7 million, and chasing down the rest of Instagram's 100 million active users, it's only a matter of time before the network integrates an ad platform. What will be interesting to see is whether or not this ad platform is as deeply integrated with Facebook as the other network components.

Simply Measured's Instagram reports help brands measure and analyze Instagram data as part of a complete suite of social media analytics and reporting. To see how Simply Measured can help you develop your Instagram account, try our [Free Instagram User Report](#), and for updates on studies and other social media analysis, follow [@simplymeasured](#) on Twitter.

**Brands included in this quarterly study are subject to change with the Interbrand 100 ranking.*