

How To Reach Educators

Our top marketing trends
and predictions for 2024

A

look back at the marketing landscape in 2023 makes it clear that predicting what's to come in the year ahead is uncertain business. Who saw the meteoric rise of ChatGPT coming? Who knew

that Twitter would rebrand as X? In 2024, we are sure to have some surprises, but there are also predictable trends that sharp marketers will want to stay on top of and fold into yearly planning. Plus, it's a leap year, giving us one extra day to make an impression, gain market share, inspire more conversions, and grow our businesses.

Our team at [We Are Teachers Studio](#) and [MDR](#) rolled up our sleeves to dig into the top marketing trends for the next year with a specific focus on education. We are experts at reaching educators with a [website](#) that has 5 million monthly pageviews, traditional marketing channels with trusted followers, and sponsored content that delivers award-winning advice about how to support teachers and students.



Photos (clockwise from top)
Laurence Dutton via Getty Images;
SDI Productions via Getty Images;
Robert Way via Getty Images

Keep a lookout! Each trend comes with a tip that you can use to maximize your marketing dollars and reach more educators in 2024.

Trend #1

No doubt about it, AI will up your marketing game in 2024.

Recent AI advancements make it easier than ever to optimize your marketing efforts.

For ROI: Publishers who use AI are better able to stay ahead of algorithm changes on platforms like Facebook and Google. Publishers who use tools like [Echobox](#) have only seen a 9.3% decline in traffic from Facebook, as opposed to the 40% decline other publishers are seeing. This traffic decline is attributed to algorithm changes that deprioritize news content in favor of video content to keep people in-platform.

9.3%
vs 40%

For email: Consider using AI tools like [SubjectLine.com](#) to develop subject lines for A/B testing. You'll get options for more engaging, urgent, and suspenseful wording. You can also use AI to analyze your data, generate customer profiles, and even develop a strategy for the best send times.

For SEO: According to [Smart Insights](#), 58% of marketers are using or plan to use AI for generating website content to support SEO. AI tools like ChatGPT

make it easier to improve search rankings without purchasing expensive SEO tools or spending hours researching and crunching numbers. Use ChatGPT as your SEO assistant to generate keywords, understand search intent, and create a content plan that appeals to educators. You can also use it to optimize your content for SEO by writing title text, alt tags, meta descriptions, schema makeup, and more. You can even input website data, such as pageviews, and ask ChatGPT to offer suggestions for improvement.



Photo by Vertigo3d via Getty Images

For content creation: To get the most out of ChatGPT and similar tools, view them as collaborators rather than simply tech tools. Aim to provide AI prompts that mimic creative briefs in terms of length and content. At a minimum, be sure to define:

Persona – Who do you want the bot to pretend to be? (e.g., You are a 4th-grade math teacher at a Title I school.)

Context – What background information does the bot need to know? What problems does it face? (e.g., Many of your students are behind in math, and it isn't easy to motivate them. You don't have a budget for supplemental tools.)

Output – What information do you want to know? How do you want it presented to you? (e.g., Please give me a list of 20 article ideas that you would be interested in reading. Organize the ideas in a table by topic.)

Fine-Tuning – What revisions would you like the bot to make to its output? (e.g., Please add 10 more ideas focusing on parent involvement.)

Tip:

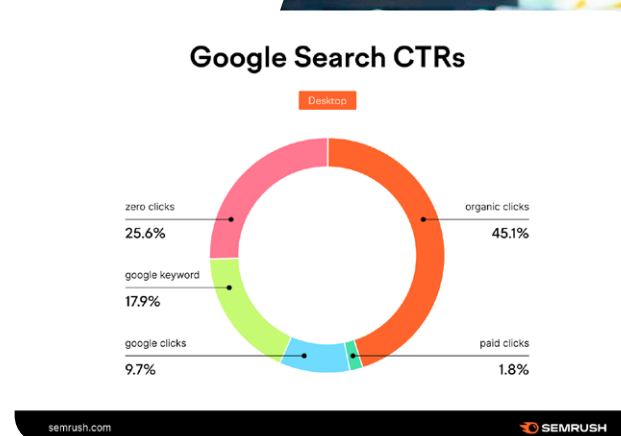
Always keep your audience in mind. Remember that human oversight is still needed to make sure the output you receive is accurate, aligns with your brand, and authentically speaks to educators.



Trend #2

Educators don't have time to click.

People are looking for a frictionless way to get their information—including teachers who are short on time. Optimizing your content to include easy answers to your target demographic's top questions could help showcase your brand on a zero-click results page and [increase organic traffic over time](#). This means adapting your SEO strategy for Google's move toward zero-click searches. A [zero-click search](#) is when Google displays the answer to your query at the top of the results page, removing the need to click to learn more. A [2022 Semrush study](#) found that 1 in 4 desktop and about 1 in 5 mobile searches result in zero clicks—meaning they're not heading to your site.



Tip:

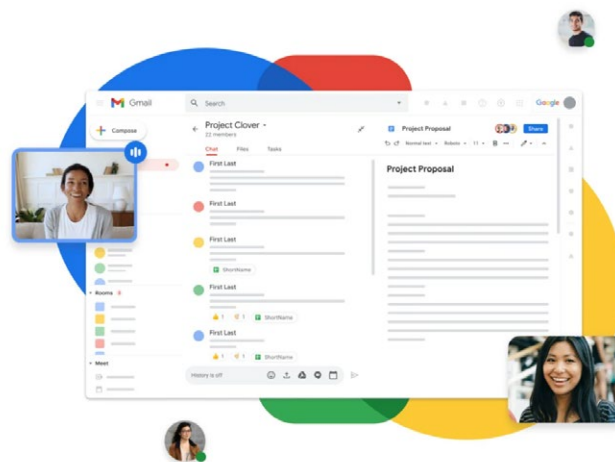
Decide whether you're most interested in [building awareness and credibility or driving traffic](#) to your site. To build more awareness, consider optimizing your SEO strategy to include zero-click content that answers a search query quickly and easily. To drive more traffic, focus ranking on keywords most likely to need additional information and drive clicks.



Photo by SolStock via Getty Images

Trend #3

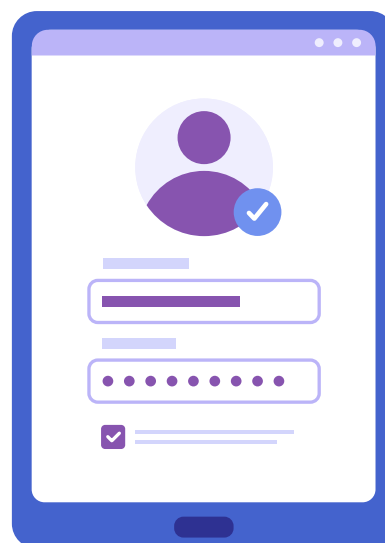
Gmail has new email requirements that everyone needs to follow.



Starting in February 2024, [Gmail is implementing new requirements](#) for email marketers who send 5,000 or more messages per day to Gmail accounts. [Yahoo also announced stricter regulations](#) along these same lines. What exactly is required? Email senders will now need to:

- Authenticate outgoing email.
- Avoid sending unwanted or unsolicited emails.
- Make it easier for recipients to unsubscribe with one click.

Since many school districts use Google Workspace (and thus Gmail), you'll want to follow these requirements as soon as possible to avoid landing in the spam folder.



Tip:

Set up SPF and DKIM email authentication for your domain and ensure your sending domains or IPs have valid forward and reverse DNS records. Not sure what this means? [Check out this article from Oracle!](#)



MDR's Connected Reach Can Help

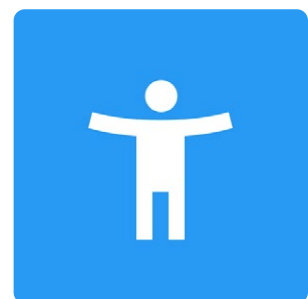
Our platform allows you to create, deploy, and manage your email and digital ad campaigns easily. Connected Reach includes:

- Email verification
- Email authentication
- CAN-SPAM compliance
- Deployment volumes to maximize deliverability

Trend #4

Email accessibility is a must-have.

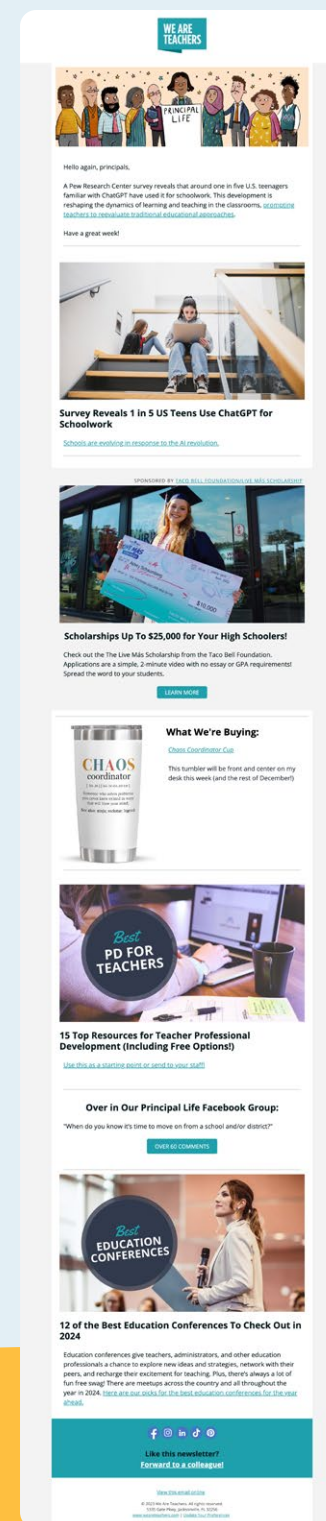
Email marketers spend a lot of time making sure their subject lines are perfect, their CTAs are above the fold, and their emails look amazing. But you should also ensure your emails are accessible so anyone can read them, regardless of any disabilities or assistive devices they might be using. This includes:



- Checking your contrast ratio if you use different colors.
- Adding alt tags to every image.
- Using proper HTML and semantic code for screen readers.
- Using emojis to emphasize a point, not to replace words.
- Using effective white space, larger font sizes, and increased line spacing.

Tip:

Take your accessibility one step further and use a free reader to read your email aloud. Send yourself a test email and use **Apple VoiceOver**, **Microsoft Narrator**, or **Android TalkBack**, depending on how you normally view emails.



Get Your Free Music Education Resources!

Chances are, if you have a music program, you've heard of the Wenger Corporation. Whether your students sit in their iconic black chairs during rehearsals, or sing their hearts out standing on their choir room risers, Wenger has been working with schools for over 75 years. Now, they've launched something new - just for your teachers.

[Wenger's Teacher Resources page](#) offers music educators free lesson plans, classroom posters, videos, activities, and more so you can continue teaching and inspiring young musicians every day. Take a minute to forward the Teacher Resource page today so your teachers can check out everything it has to offer!

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Trend #5

Open rates continue to be inaccurate. It's time to consider new metrics.

Email open rates are no longer an easy or valuable metric to use when looking at industry standards and the success of an email campaign. Over the past couple of years, we've seen an increase in inflated open rates tied to [Apple Mail Privacy Policy, Gmail prefetching, spam filters, preview panes, and more](#).

Instead, consider metrics that are more aligned with your KPIs. This could include pageviews, sign-ups, or sales. Keep an eye on your deliverability, unsubscribes, and bounces to determine impact and relevance to your audience.



Photo by NicoElNino via Getty Images

Tip:

Use your email open rates as a way to A/B test your subject lines, email design, and audience building. Don't compare your open rates to anyone else's!

Trend #6

Teachers videos.

Teachers continue to use video in creative and innovative ways to create content, seek out advice from peers, give tips, and share heartwarming classroom experiences. All of that community building is worth tapping into, and using teacher influencers will give you the biggest bang for your marketing buck.

More than [75%](#) of marketers say micro-influencers top their list of ideal influencers because of their authentic connection with their [niche audiences](#). For instance, [this teacher went viral](#) for using Taylor Swift lyrics to teach math. The #teachers hashtag on TikTok has generated over 61.3 billion views since TikTok launched in 2016. YouTube draws more than 2 billion logged-in users monthly—teachers among them. This expansive reach offers brands a unique opportunity to engage with a diverse audience actively seeking instructional content. And with YouTube’s new [“For you”](#) feed, marketers can deliver TikTok-like educator-friendly content that has a better chance of getting viewed—and shared.



48%

of brands value the close-knit relationship influencers have with their audience.

85%

of businesses use video as a marketing tool.

Tip:

Meet teachers where they already are by creating Reels and YouTube shorts. More and more tools, like [Canva for Campus](#), are making it easier to produce video. Collaborating with [teacher influencers](#) will help to get your brand in front of the right audience, and adding a pop culture reference or a bit of good, clean humor to your video content can increase its potential reach. Educate, entertain, and delight!

Tip:

YouTube has its own set of [SEO rules](#), separate (with some overlap) from Google, that you’ll need to follow. This includes creating a thumbnail that showcases the content, making sure the title is a clear indicator of the video, and uploading a transcript of the video. Following these rules for each video will help improve your SEO rank on YouTube.

Trend #7

Educational podcasts are a growing favorite for teachers and students.

Teachers are consuming audio content for [professional development](#) and searching for material they can use in the classroom or recommend to their students to augment lessons. Bite-sized, accessible audio content and learning materials that cater to learners' short attention spans are a [great addition to your content marketing strategy](#). According to a [Pew Research Center study](#), at least half of podcast listeners across all age groups say learning is a major reason they listen to podcasts. [Podcasts](#) work well for students and teachers because of the convenience and flexibility they offer. Listeners can learn while commuting, exercising, or doing household chores. And because students can pause a podcast, they are able to learn at their own pace and replay segments to lock in the messages.

72%
of podcast listeners ages 18 to 49
recommend podcasts to others.

Tip:

Turn your expertise into a series of short podcasts that educators can rely on as a learning resource for students and themselves. Develop brief yet focused mini-modules on specific topics and share them through email, mobile apps, learning management systems, and social media.

Trend #8

Educators want you to DM and text them.

The stats don't lie! If you're considering a social media or SMS customer service strategy, there's good reason to get started. According to a [2023 HubSpot survey](#), 1 in 5 Gen Z, Millennial, and Gen X social media users have contacted a brand through direct messages (DMs) for customer service in the past three months, and 76% of social media marketers say their company already offers customer service on social. A [McKinsey study](#) revealed that customers spend 20% to 40% more with companies that respond to comments and complaints on social media.

The [State of Texting and SMS Marketing 2023](#), a proprietary research study from SimpleTexting, shows that when businesses text their customers, they report success 217% more than the businesses that don't text. And 90% of businesses that text their customers say their marketing is successful. In 2023, 71% of customers had subscribed to receive texting from businesses. What are you waiting for?

Tip:

Know that educators are in the classroom during the day, so you should send your texts outside of school hours.

Employ these DM customer service pointers from [Zendesk](#):

- Plan how support and social will work together.
- Identify channels where educators or other customers live and are most active.
- Use AI and automation to provide immediate response and manage message volume.
- View negative feedback as an opportunity to help educators feel heard.

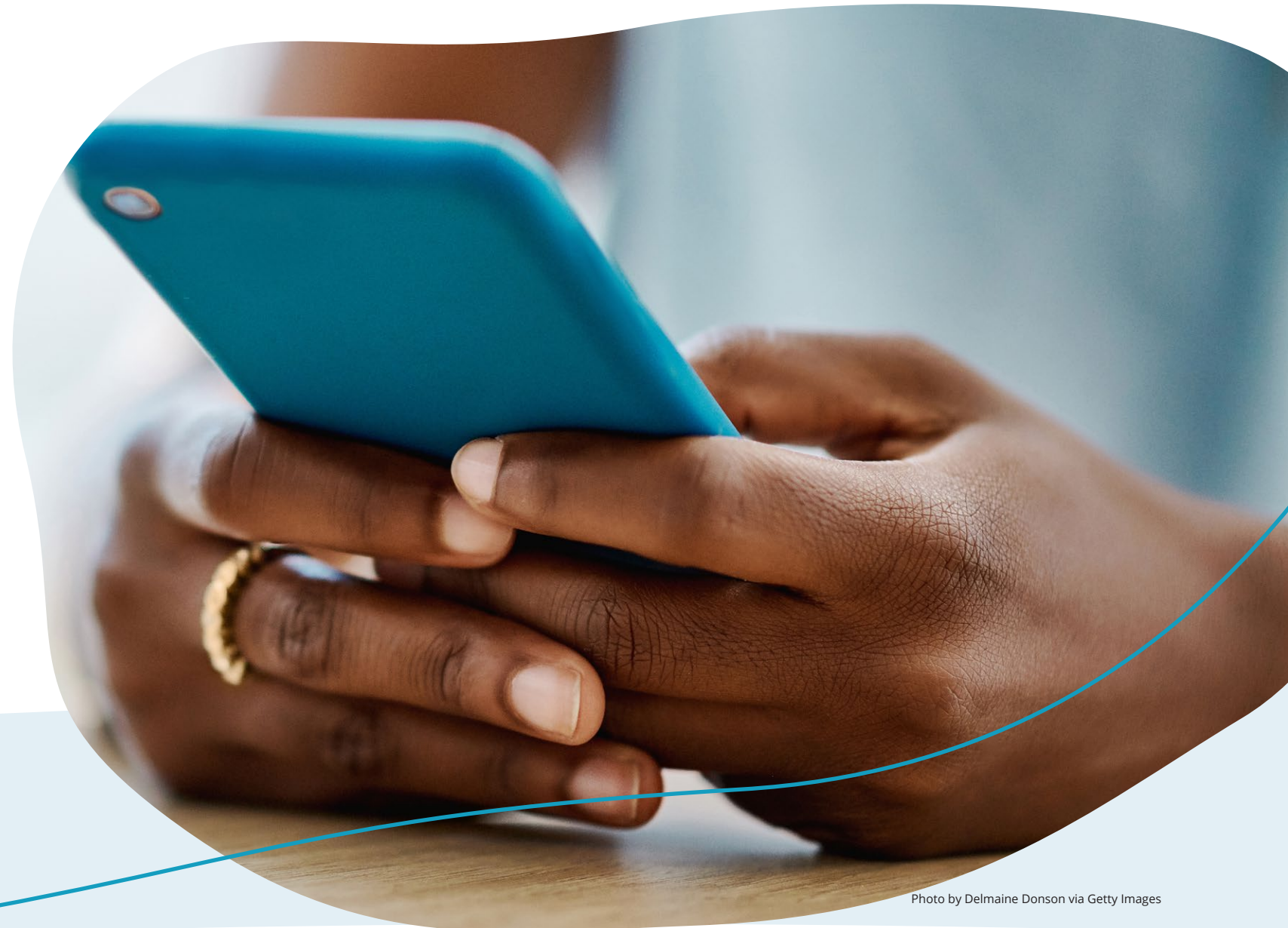
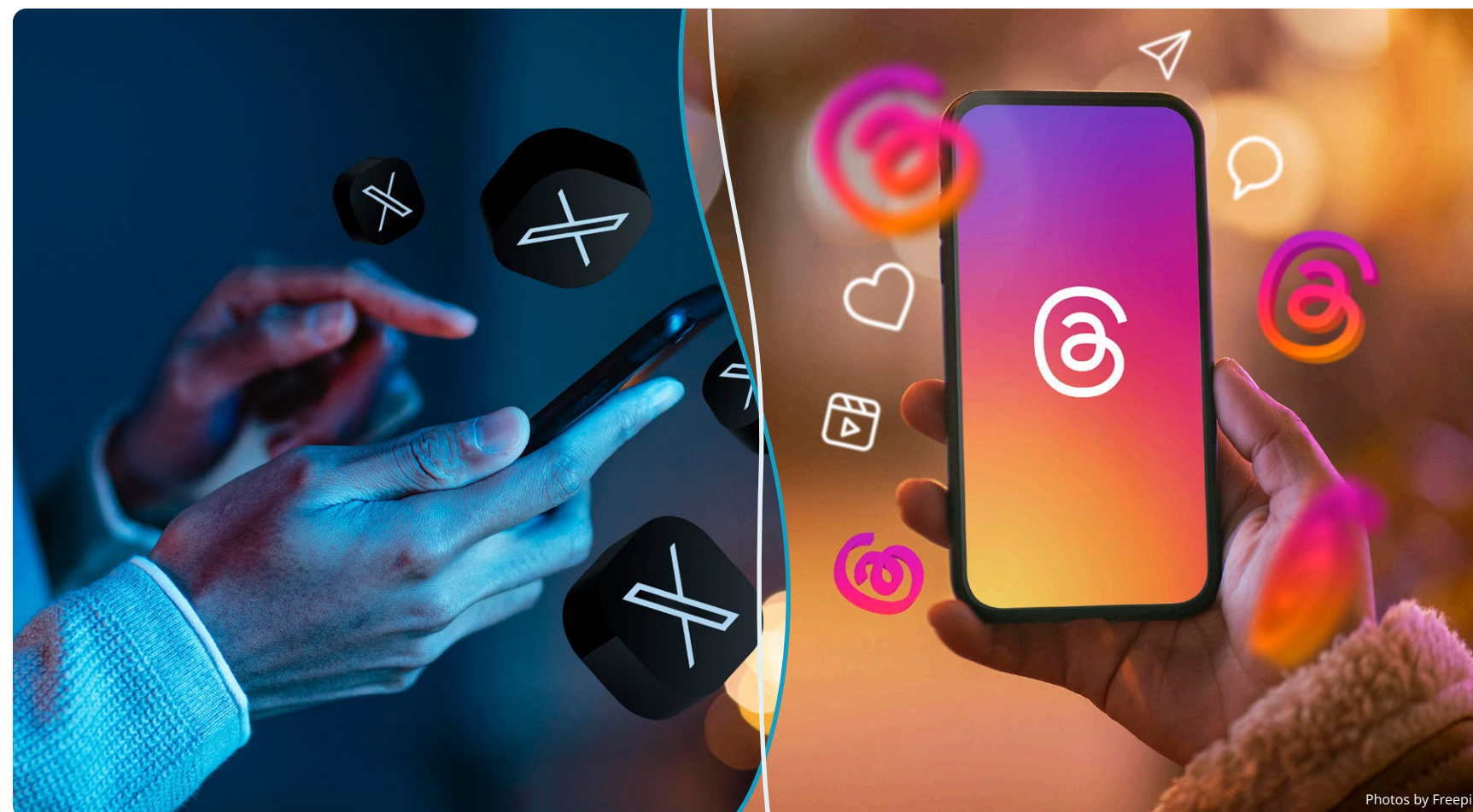


Photo by Delmaine Donson via Getty Images

Trend #9

Consumers and educators plan to stay on X, even as brands and advertisers bounce.

It's been a tumultuous year for Twitter ... ahem, X. NPR left X in 2023 and reports that there has been [zero impact on traffic](#). Advertisers are pulling back because of [safety concerns](#). At the same time, [HubSpot](#) reports consumers will remain loyal to X in 2024, and most of its competitors will struggle to compete. With a complete rebrand under its belt, [Elon Musk](#) says X will turn into a financial hub to compete with PayPal, Venmo, and our bank accounts by the end of 2024. Will that refocus meld with your marketing goals?



Meanwhile, Mark Zuckerberg is looking to take Threads to 1 billion users. It's early days for Threads, but marketers can find a large number of [Gen Zers](#), users who are leaving X, and a higher percentage ([68%](#)) of males on the new Meta platform.

Tip:

Bandwidth is stretched on marketing teams across the country. If your traffic or CTRs are declining, it's time to reexamine your strategy on X and Threads to decide if they are worth it for your brand.

70% of educators say their use of X remains unchanged since Musk's takeover.

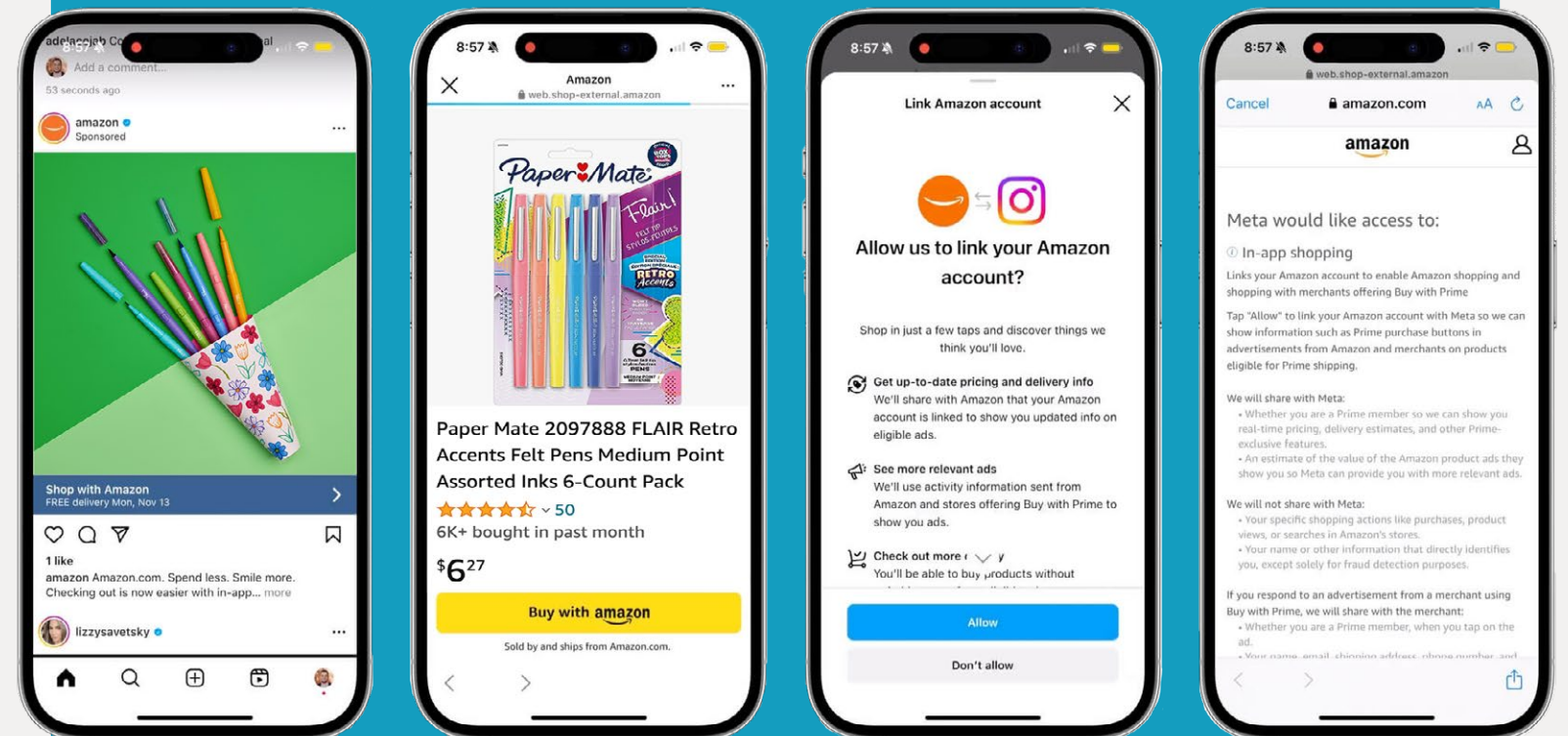
—EdWeek

Trend #10

Teachers are shopping on Facebook and Instagram with the ease of Amazon.

Meta is now working with Amazon to allow customers to [link their Facebook and Instagram accounts to their Amazon accounts](#) to shop. That means buyers will see ads on the social apps with the option to check out using their saved Amazon payment information and ship to their saved Amazon mailing address. U.S. customers will see real-time pricing, Prime eligibility, delivery time estimates, and product details without leaving the social media apps. Brands may see an [increase in transactions](#) because of the ease of one-tap shopping. Business growth through social commerce may finally be within reach.

Consumers can make **quicker purchases** directly from ads.



Tip:

“Find new customers unserved by other retail channels, invite them to fall in love, and deliver brand buy with a single click.”

—Debbie Ellison, Global Chief Digital Officer at VMLY&R Commerce

Trend #11

Creating diverse and inclusive content is no longer optional.

Good content brings people together and fosters true connection with others. But if your content doesn't represent a wide range of voices and perspectives, it can have the opposite effect—driving people away from your message. Readers want to see (and hear from!) individuals of different races, genders, cultures, and orientations. When readers see themselves represented in your content, their connection with your brand becomes even stronger and more authentic. Here are some strategies for creating diverse, inclusive content authentically:

- **Seek opportunities to represent diversity:** Whether in photos or images or within the written content you are presenting to your audience, be sure to give different cultures, genders, ethnicities, abilities, and ages space and consideration.
- **Use inclusive language:** Choose words and phrases that are respectful, inclusive, and avoid stereotypes. Using neutral and welcoming language adds a more inclusive feeling to your content.
- **Ensure accessibility:** In addition to representing diverse perspectives, it is important to make sure your content is easily accessible to all. Things like providing alt text for images, transcripts for videos, and ensuring people with different abilities can navigate your website or platform enhance inclusivity.

66%

of consumers surveyed say they are more likely to buy from a brand that showcases diverse people (i.e., different races, gender identities, ages, etc.).

—[Sprout Social](#)

Inclusive Language

Instead of this

Try this

Parents/Guardians	Grown-Ups/Adults/Caregiver
Boys and girls	folks, y'all, scholars, friends
Brother or sister	Sibling
Lunch lady	Cafeteria worker/ Lunch aide
Person with autism	Autistic person (Tip: the Autisum and Deaf community prefer identity-first, but it's good to defer to individual preferences .)
That's crazy!	That's silly, ridiculous, unbelievable, incredible

Tip:

Give your audience a platform to share their experiences and opinions. You'll create an authentic sense of community by actively listening to their feedback.

Trend #12

Americans expect brands to take a stand on big issues.

Americans are more worried about gun violence than healthcare and are 43% more likely to want brands to be socially responsible. That is, they want you to take a position on gun violence.

We know teachers across the country are [carrying gun violence trauma](#). Some schools are even considering rapid-deploy "[safe rooms](#)" in their classrooms. This is a very real issue for educators across the country.

Over the last several years, We Are Teachers has taken a strong stance against gun violence in the classroom. We choose to cover it in articles on our website and post resources for teachers on our social media channels with every school shooting. Yes, it often causes debate. No, we don't care. Teachers and students deserve to feel safe in the classroom.

Tip:

Listen to what teachers are saying about gun violence. Read their stories. Realize this is a reality of being an educator and decide as a team how you'll respond the next time another tragedy takes place.

The message from consumers:
Instead of doing nothing,
**be the brand
that stands out**
by doing something.

— [GWI](#)



Trend #13

Trustworthy content is more important than ever. Hire classroom teachers to write it.

Google is looking for content that shows *experience* and *expertise* and is *authoritative* and *trustworthy*. **E-E-A-T**, if you will. Does the person writing your content have firsthand experience with what they are talking about? Does your brand have authority on the subject? Do your articles have expert sources? Is it accurate? If you want your content to show up on top spots in search results, your content needs to demonstrate E-E-A-T. Content generated by AI often falls short of those requirements.



Tip:

Hire classroom teachers and education experts to write blogs, landing pages, and other content designed to reach and engage educators.



Every day, we speak to educators
and the future leaders of our schools.

Learn how we can help you
reach them, too.



For more info:

weareteachers.com/the-studio

We Are Teachers Studio is a creative agency from the team who built We Are Teachers into an award-winning media site. Let us help you connect your brand to millions of passionate educators and their students.



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